

## How to get a STAR rating: the QRIS Process

The IdahoSTARS QRIS emphasizes **quality improvement**. Facilities in the QRIS are recognized for the quality practices already in place. At the same time, facilities must intentionally plan improvements for the three years a STAR rating is valid. Funding is available to support planned improvements as long as goals are met along the way and as long as funding is available.

Here are the steps, in more detail:

STEP 1: The facility obtains a license. All facilities must be licensed to participate in the QRIS. Licensed facilities must meet the health and safety requirements of the state of Idaho, including criminal history background checks.

- Bring a copy of the license to the QRIS Orientation

STEP 2: The facility owner attends an orientation to the QRIS. The QRIS Orientation is available in each region of the state through the CCR&R office.

- An *Application for a Facility Profile* is only available through the Regional Consultant.
- The QRIS Orientation offers a chance to officially participate in the QRIS by completing a *QRIS Letter of Intent* and a scholarship application for the owner enrolled in the IdahoSTARS PDS Registry. The request is for mentor/coaching, *Environment Rating Scales* assessment, and CDA coursework if the owner/director has a PDS pathway level of 1.1-2.4, a Technical Certificate, or an AA in an unrelated field.
- The owner may choose to take the *Letter of Intent* from the QRIS Orientation and send to the Regional Consultant at a later date.

STEP 3: The Regional Consultant visits the owner who has signed the *QRIS Letter of Intent*. During the site visit, the consultant will:

- Give the owner a copy of the QRIS poster
- Review the *QRIS Application for a Facility Profile*
- Preview a *Classroom Summary Report*
- Answer questions

STEP 4: The owner views the *Orientation to the Environment Rating Scales* on-line and completes the on-line review right away so the application can be completed on time. When the review is submitted the owner will be contacted regarding assessment.

STEP 5: The facility receives an environment assessment using the *Environment Rating Scales*.

- Assessments are unannounced during a two-week window selected by the facility owner; two black-out dates will be honored.
- More than half of the children must be in attendance the day of the assessment and if an infant is enrolled, the infant must be present.
- The assessment results in a report called the *Classroom Summary Report*.
- The *Classroom Summary Report(s)* will be delivered by the Regional Consultant or mentor.

STEP 6: The facility completes an *Application for a Facility Profile*. This is a self-study of current practices as they relate to the quality standards.

- The facility indicates which quality indicators are currently in place in the facility.
- Each indicator is verified with documentation.
- The *Facility Profile* is NOT a star rating; it is a report showing how the current practices in the facility compare to the quality indicators. The purpose of the *Facility Profile* is to begin the improvement planning process.
- IdahoSTARS mentor/coaches are available to help with the application process.

STEP 7: The owner submits the *Application for a Facility Profile* in to the QRIS Office **within 90 days of the first QRIS site visit.**

- The Regional Consultant and owner review the application together. The mentor/coach will review it as well.
- The Regional Consultant and/or mentor coach initials the application when it is complete.

STEP 8: A *Facility Profile* is generated by the QRIS office. The *Facility Profile* verifies the quality indicators that the facility has documented. The *Facility Profile* outlines the facility's strengths and areas needing improvement.

- An *IdahoSTARS QRIS Facility Profile Improvement Plan and Funding Request* are included with the *Facility Profile*.

STEP 9: The facility uses the *Facility Profile* to create an improvement plan toward highest quality, using the QRIS quality indicators as a planning tool.

- The plan identifies short, intermediate and long-term (1, 2 & 3-year) goals for improvement
- The plan indicates which Quality Indicators are targeted in the goals
- The plan identifies changes in practice and improvements to be made using existing IdahoSTARS systems (training, mentor/coaching, scholarships, career guidance)

STEP 10: The facility submits the *IdahoSTARS QRIS Facility Profile Improvement Plan and Funding Request* to the QRIS office.

- The funding request addresses the goals for year 1 and projects needs for consequent years

STEP 11: The facility implements the improvement plan (for 6 months or longer) to prepare to apply for a STAR rating. This application is due one year from the time the facility receives funds for the improvement plan. If a facility does not apply at the end of one year, the facility will be assigned a star rating based on the *QRIS Facility Profile* and the facility owner will not be eligible for IdahoSTARS incentives.

- Documentation of work toward each quality standard is submitted.
- A parent handbook and staff handbook are submitted with the application.
- Environment assessment is conducted.

STEP 12: The facility submits an application and requests a STAR rating. An assessor makes an on-site visit to verify information. The facility receives an Achievement Award based on the STAR rating earned, number of children served, ICCP participation, and the number of children who have identified disabilities..

- Each facility is given an anniversary date, similar to the PDS Anniversary.

STEP 13: The owner submits a QRIS Anniversary Report and improvement plan each year; the facility may be eligible for funding and incentives.

- Facilities outline the previous year's progress and plans for the coming year.
- Funding requests for years 2 & 3 require in-kind match (20% dollars, 10% dollars with non-staff volunteer time, or material donation).
- Incentives (Anniversary Awards and Improvement Plan Grants) are available yearly for facilities that increase quality, as long as funds are available.

STEP 14: Facilities apply for STAR rating renewal every third year.