



Three-Star Requirement Summary

Step Up To Quality (SUTQ) is a five-star quality rating and improvement system that recognizes and promotes early learning and development programs that exceed minimum health and safety licensing regulations. Any licensed child care program wishing to provide publicly funded child care must be a star-rated program or meet an exemption.

This summary can help you determine whether your program meets the requirements for a three-star rating. For more information, visit boldbeginning.ohio.gov. You can work with your local resource and referral agency or Ohio Department Education (ODE) SUTQ Team to get the training and assistance you need to meet the three-star standards. Find your local agency at occr.org.

Note: If a prescribed form is listed in the standard, then it must be used. If a sample form is listed in the standard, programs are encouraged, but not required, to use this sample form. Sample Technical Assistance (TA) forms can be used by the program to better understand a standard and/or show implementation of a standard that requires documentation on file for review. This documentation can be something the program has available or a sample TA form.

I. Eligibility to Register (Initial Registrations only)

1. **Meet all the following criteria**
 - Active early learning and development program licensed by ODJFS or ODE
 - Operates during traditional hours (5101:2-16-10)
 - Not have an active enforcement case
 - Children are enrolled and attending the program
 - If licensed by ODJFS, not have an accumulation of 24 moderate risk non-compliance (MRNC) **and/or** serious risk non-compliance (SRNC) points within the previous 12 months. If licensed by ODE, then not have a six-point SNRC within the previous 12 months, or from the most recent inspection, if an inspection has not been completed in the last 12 months

II. Ohio Professional Registry (OPR)

1. **Ensure every lead and assistant teacher, administrator, and family child care owner has a profile in the OPR***
 - Submit education verification to the OPR for all lead and assistant teachers, administrators, and family child care owners*
 - Ensure education and professional development (PD) are verified in the OPR; only verified items will be considered for a rating
 - Ensure staff roles, schedules and hire dates are accurate in the OPR
2. **Link profiles to program within the OPR***

* Assistance for the above activities may be found at <https://occr.org/ohio-professional-registry/create-account-resources/>

III. Staff Requirements

1. Ensure staff meet education requirements	Center Lead Teachers	Family Child Care (FCC) Owner
<p>Center Administrator</p> <p>Meets one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Associate Degree (AA) or higher in an approved related field <input type="checkbox"/> Career Pathways Level (CPL) 3 <input type="checkbox"/> School-Age (SA) Administrator Professional Endorsement (if serving only school-age children) <p><i>*Administrator meeting on-site hours is the only one required to meet education.</i></p>	<p>50% of teacher meet one the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> AA or higher in an approved related field <input type="checkbox"/> CPL 3 <input type="checkbox"/> SA Lead Teacher Professional Endorsement (in a school-age only group) 	<p>Family Child Care (FCC) Owner</p> <p>Must meet one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> AA or higher in an approved related field <input type="checkbox"/> CPL 2 <input type="checkbox"/> SA Professional Administrator Endorsement (if serving-only school age children) <p>Lead Teacher (if not FCC owner)</p> <p>Must meet one of the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> AA or higher in approved related field <input type="checkbox"/> CPL 2



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- SA Lead Teacher Professional Endorsement (if serving only school-age children)

2. Ensure staff meet minimum instruction time

- Lead teachers are in the classroom interacting with children for at least 3½ hours daily, not including nap or rest times, for at least half the days of each week the program operates. (For example, the lead teacher is in the classroom from 8:30 a.m. to noon daily.)
- The assistant or co-lead teacher must meet this requirement on other days. (For example, the lead teacher works Monday-Thursday, and the assistant covers the requirement each Friday.)
- This requirement may be shared with no more than two regularly scheduled staff.
- If a program, or group within a program, operates less than 3½ hours daily, the lead teacher must be present for the entire day.
- School-age programs must have a lead teacher for the duration of either a total of 3½ hours or the complete before or after-school session. On non-school days, the program must meet the 3½-hour requirement as stated above.

3. Ensure staff meet PD certificate requirements

These are not required to be met for initial registrations. After the initial registration, they must be completed prior to the end of the current biennium to remain rated.

- Two required courses must be taken within 30 days of hire, if not previously completed. Both courses are offered online only, for free, through the OPR. These courses count toward PD hours required for the PD Certificate. The required courses are as follows:
 - Ohio's Approach to Quality**
 - Ohio's Overview of Child Development**
Alternative: Any post-secondary child development course completed with a grade C or better or a passing grade from a pass/fail course within the previous six years. Documentation of the course must be submitted to the OPR no later than 60 days prior to the end of the biennium.
- Ohio Approved PD hour requirements.

Year One		Year Two	
Quarter One (July 1–Dec. 31)	Quarter Two (Jan. 1–June 30)	Quarter Three (July 1–Dec. 31)	Quarter Four (Jan. 1–June 30)
20 hours required	15 hours required	10 hours required	5 hours required
Staff employed in quarter one are required to complete the full 20 credit hours by the end of year two.	Staff employed in quarter two are required to complete 15 of 20 credit hours by the end of year two.	Staff employed in quarter three are required to complete 10 of 20 credit hours by the end of year two.	Staff employed in quarter four are required to complete 5 of 20 credit hours by the end of year two. *

*Exceptions: Staff employed within the month of June, quarter four, are not required to begin their certificate hours (except for the required classes) and will begin the full 20 certificate hours July 1, quarter one, of the next biennium.

IV. Prepare Documentation to Upload with Registration and Save Electronically or Scan

1. Curriculum Alignment Tool for infant, toddler, and preschool groups served

- JFS 01590** "Curriculum Standards Assessment Alignment Tool: Infants, Toddlers And Preschoolers For Step Up To Quality (SUTQ) Programs"
- Or
- Publisher's Alignment Tool for each age group(s) served

2. JFS 01509 "Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) For Step Up To Quality (SUTQ)"

- Completed annually
- Minimum of two goals and at least two action steps
- Evaluated and revised as needed, includes staff and family input

V. Documentation to Prepare for Onsite

1. Developmental Screenings

(Does not apply to school-age only)

- Documentation of trained staff
- Name of the tool(s)
- Documentation that the tool is comprehensive and developmentally appropriate for the age groups served
- Tools must address the following domains:
 - Language
 - Cognitive
 - Motor
 - Social and Emotional
 - Behavioral

2. Developmental Screening Referral

(Does not apply to school-age)

- Results are formally communicated with families
- Referrals are made within 90 days
- Written documentation of referrals is maintained by the program

Sample JFS 01378 "Developmental Screening Referral Process For Three To Five-Star Ratings For Step Up to Quality (SUTQ)" may be used to meet this requirement

3. Wage Structure (Centers only)

Written structure used to determine compensation for staff.

- Must address full and part time staff
- Must have criteria

4. Community Resources

- Examples of at least two resources and community services provided to families to support the family and the development of their children

5. Written information given to families on transitioning

- For programs, must contain information for children transitioning into, within and out of the program
- For FCC, must contain information for children transitioning into and out of the program

Sample Technical Assistance Form JFS 01363, "Written Transition Information For One To Five-Star Ratings For Step Up To Quality" may be used to meet this requirement

6. Transition Activities

Documentation on age-appropriate activities to prepare children to transition to a new classroom or educational setting

- Age group
- Description of activity
- Purpose of activity
- Must have activities for each age group the program serves

11. Family Engagement Opportunities

- At least one opportunity annually offered to all families
- Documentation includes:
 - Description of activity
 - To whom it was offered
 - Date

12. Written records transfer request policy

- Procedure for obtaining written family consent
- Written consent shall include:
 - Child's name
 - Name of the new setting
 - Statement indicating the family would like the records released, including which records are to be transferred
 - Parent/guardian signature
 - Date of signature

Sample Technical Assistance Form JFS 01369 "Records Transfer Policy/Request For Two To Five-Star Ratings For Step Up To Quality (SUTQ)" may be used to meet this requirement

13. Staff Supports (not required for FCC)

- At least two documented approved supports:
 - A total of five days of paid leave (sick, vacation and/or personal)
 - Health benefits
 - Retirement
 - Discount on child care
 - Tuition reimbursement
 - T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Ohio
 - Paid professional membership
 - Flexible spending account
 - Life insurance
 - Five paid holidays
 - One hour of paid planning time weekly

14. Health Screening Policy

A written health screening policy that includes how the program:

- Ensures children have received comprehensive health screenings
- Or
- How the program is informing parents of the importance of health screenings and
 - Referrals communicated to families regarding community resources to obtain health screenings
- The health screening must include:
 - Vision



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Sample Technical Assistance Form JFS 01368 "Sample Transition Activities For Two To Five-stars Ratings For Step Up To Quality (SUTQ)" may be used to meet this requirement

7. Transition Meeting Process

- A written process describing transition meetings

8. Transition Plan

- Individualized plan that supports a child's needs during transitioning to another classroom or educational setting
- Plan must include:
 - Name of staff member completing the plan
 - Child's name
 - Parent/guardian signature
 - Date
 - Opportunities for family input

Sample Form JFS 01373 "Transition Plan For Three To Five-Star Ratings For Step Up To Quality (SUTQ)" may be used to meet this requirement

9. Family Education Information

- The program organizes at least one of the following annually for each age group served:
 - Educational training
 - Educational workshop
 - Educational event
- Documentation includes:
 - Date
 - Topic addressed
 - Type of activity
- May not be the same as the family engagement activity

10. Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS)

- Available and can access in each classroom or at FCC home

The ELDS can be located at: [Guidance and Implementation | BOLD Beginning! \(ohio.gov\)](#)

- Dental health
- Height
- Weight
- Hearing
- Blood lead and hemoglobin levels

Sample Technical Assistance Form JFS 01379 "Health Screening Process For Three To Five-Star Rating For Step Up To Quality (SUTQ)" may be used to meet this requirement

15. Ongoing Child Assessment Process

- A description of the process that includes:
 - Formal assessments are completed at least twice annually
 - Identification of the standardized tool(s) used for formal assessments, not applicable to SA children
 - Methods in which child observations are conducted and recorded
 - Identification of supporting evidence and the methods used to collect supporting evidence

Sample Technical Assistance Form JFS 01519 "Child Assessment Process For Step Up To Quality (SUTQ)" may be used to meet this requirement

16. Information on health and child development topics provided to families

Documentation provided to families must include:

- At least one health topic
- At least one child development topic
- Applicable to all age groups served
- Shared annually with families

17. Self-Assessment

- Classroom self-assessment tool for centers
- Family Child Care Environmental Rating Scale (FCCERS-R) or approved self-assessment tools for family child care

VI. Ongoing Documentation Requirements for Onsite

1. Developmental Screening Instrument Summary

(Does not apply to school-age only)

- Documentation of trained staff
- Name of the tool
- Documentation that the tool is comprehensive and developmentally appropriate for the age groups served
- Tools must address the following domains
 - Language
 - Cognitive
 - Motor

6. Plan of Activities including:

- Current, written, and dated plan for all hours of instruction time
- Teacher's name
- Name of the group
- Time frame the plan covers
- Daily activities to support children's development and learning and reflects current activities in the group

Sample Technical Assistance Form JFS 01513, "Activity Plan For Step Up To Quality" And/or



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- Social and Emotional
- Behavioral

- Must be completed for each child within 60 days of entry to the program and annually
- Necessary referrals are made within 90 days, and results are formally communicated with families

2. Classroom Self-Assessment

- Developmentally appropriate to the age groups served
- Addresses quality of the classroom environment and staff/child interactions
- Completed tools

3. Classroom Self-Assessment Action Plan

- Using the results of the classroom self-assessment, the lead teachers should identify at least one area of improvement and develop an annual action plan.

At a minimum, it should include:

- Teacher's name
- Group
- Date completed
- Name of tool used
- Goal
- Action steps for achieving the goal
- Timeframe for completing the goal

Sample Form JFS 01518 "Classroom Self-Assessment Action Plan For Step Up To Quality (SUTQ)" may be used to meet this requirement

4. Teacher Observation

- All lead and assistant teachers
- Completed by administrator or designee for programs or the FCC owner for FCC
- Within 30 days of hire and at least annually
- Must include:
 - Name of staff
 - Date observation was completed
- FCC owners must complete the Ohio Administrator Core Knowledge and Competencies (CKC) Self-Assessment

Sample Form JFS 01521 "Teacher Observation For Step Up To Quality (SUTQ)" may be used to meet this requirement

5. Professional Development Plan

- Completed within 30 days of hire at least annually thereafter
- Must be a written, individualized plan
- Plan must contain the following information:
 - Name
 - Date of hire
 - Position
 - Staff signature
 - Date of completion/update

Sample Technical Assistance Form JFS 01592 "Individual Child Plan For Step Up To Quality" may be used to meet this requirement

7. Developmental and Educational Goals

The program and parent(s) work together to create:

- Two written developmental and educational goals
- Completed within sixty days of enrollment and updated annually
- Written documentation shall include:
 - Name of the child
 - Developmental and/or educational goals
 - Parent/guardian signature
 - Date of completion

- Documentation of family's opportunity to develop the goals

Sample Form JFS 01514 "Developmental And Educational Goals For Step Up To Quality (SUTQ)" may be used to meet this requirement

8. Individualized Transition Plan

The plan includes:

- The name of the staff member completing the plan
- The child's name
- The parent/guardian signature
- Date of development
- Opportunities for family input
- Strategies to support the individualized needs of the child

Sample Form JFS 01373 "Transition Plan For Three To Five-Star Ratings For Step Up To Quality (SUTQ)" may be used to meet the requirement

9. Child Assessments

- Formal and informal methods, informal only for school-age programs
- Completed tools (ELA as directed by ODE) Evidence of results shared with families

10. Program Self-Assessment Tool

- Annually completed, scored, and dated
- Addresses the following program elements:
 - Human resource leadership and development
 - Family and community partnerships
 - Program development and evaluation
 - Business and operations management
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- Ongoing training and professional development needs related to meeting the performance goals indicated on the PD plan
- Includes written documentation that demonstrates observations were used to develop the individual's performance goals

11. Child Records Transferred

- Have available for review completed copies for the document used to obtain written family consent
- Or
- Sample document

VII. Registration

1. Answer registration questions within the Ohio Child Licensing and Quality System (OCLQS).
2. Upload required documentation – see section IV.
3. Submit registration by entering your name and clicking “submit” in OCLQS.
4. Confirm desired rating within OCLQS. If you cannot confirm your desired rating, please review your answers to ensure they are appropriate. The program will not be rated for a rating higher than the confirmed rating.

VIII. After Registration

1. Ensure every lead teacher, assistant teacher, administrator, and/or family child care owner is accurate in the OPR with current role, assigned group and schedule.
2. Prepare documentation for review at onsite visit.
3. Resubmit documentation returned for revision, if applicable.

IX. During Onsite

1. **Program Documentation**
 - Access to curriculum
 - Written Wage Structure (centers only)
 - Staff Supports
 - Written information to families on transitioning children
 - Program self-assessment tool
 - Input from staff and families used for Continuous Improvement Plan
 - Evidence of communication with families
 - Different modes of communication
 - At least one promotes two-way communication
 - Examples of one health topic and one child development topic provided to families
 - Example(s) of family engagement opportunities
2. **Classroom Documentation**
 - Written activity plan for all hours of instructional time
 - Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS)
 - Classroom self-assessment tool for centers; the FCCERS-R or approved self-assessment tools for family child care
 - Classroom Action Plan
3. **Child Documentation**
 - Completed formal and informal assessments
 - Completed developmental screenings
 - Evidence of sharing informal and formal assessment results with families
 - Child records transferred
 - Individualized transition plans
 - Child developmental and educational goals
4. **Staff Documentation**
 - Professional Development Plan
 - Teach Observation
5. **Observation**
 - Ohio Classroom Observation Tool (OCOT)
6. **Interview**
 - Lead teachers can describe the curriculum and explain how they implement the curriculum
 - Lead teachers can describe their activity planning process
 - Lead teachers can describe the selected assessment tool and explain the assessment process



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X. After Onsite

If your program is unable to meet the standards at the time of the visit, your program may be issued a deferral. If a deferral is issued, ensure that the documentation requested is submitted timely.

XI. After Rating Awarded

A program's SUTQ rating will be continuous from their rating effective date when the program continues to meet the SUTQ standards. Programs wishing to change their star rating must submit an ongoing rating registration.