

Bronze Rating Requirement Summary



Step Up To Quality (SUTQ) is a three-level quality rating and improvement system that recognizes and promotes early care and education programs that exceed minimum health and safety licensing regulations.

This summary can help you determine whether your program meets the requirements for a bronze rating.

As you are working through this document, here are some resources available to assist in becoming a rated program.

- [Step Up To Quality \(SUTQ\) | Department of Children and Youth \(ohio.gov\)](#)
- Your local Child Care Resource and Referral Agency at [CCR&R Membership - OCCRRA](#)
- [State Support Teams | Ohio Department of Education and Workforce](#)

The above resources are available at no cost to provide the training and assistance you may need to participate in SUTQ.

Any licensed early care and education program wishing to provide Publicly Funded Child Care must be a rated program or meet an exemption per [PFCC SUTQ Exemption Scenarios.pdf \(ohio.gov\)](#). Any Early Childhood Education (ECE) program wishing to be an ECE grant recipient must be SUTQ Silver or Gold rated to participate. All Preschool Special Education programs funded by the Ohio Department of Children and Youth (DCY) are required to achieve a SUTQ Silver or Gold rating to maintain state funding. Silver and Gold Rating Requirement Summaries are available to assist programs.

Sample Forms: If a sample form is available for a standard, programs are encouraged, but not required, to use this sample form which are located at <https://childrenandyouth.ohio.gov/for-providers/step-up-to-quality/program-standards-rules-forms>.

Sample forms can be used by the program to document implementation of a standard that requires documentation to be on file for review. This documentation can be something the program has created or a sample form.

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I.

Eligibility to Register

1. Meet all the following criteria:

- Active early care and education program or school child program licensed by Department of Children and Youth (DCY)
- Not have an active enforcement case
- Children are enrolled and attending the program

- The early care and education program or family child care (FCC) provider is not to have an accumulation of 24 moderate risk non-compliance (MRNC) **and/or** serious risk non-compliance (SRNC) points within the previous 12 months.
- Preschool or school child program is not to have a SRNC 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://occrra.org/ohio-professional-registry/create-account-resources/>

III.

Staff Requirements

1. Ensure staff meet education requirements

Early Care and Education/School Based Program Administrator

On-site Administrator meets licensing requirements

**Administrator meeting on-site hours is the only one required to meet education.*

Early Care and Education/School Based Program Lead Teachers

Meets one the following:

- 50% have a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential or Career Pathway Level 2 (CPL)

FCC Provider

Must meet one of the following:

- CDA
- CPL 1
- SA Administrator Professional Endorsement (if serving only school-age children)



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(at least two)

- Associate of Arts (AA) or higher in an approved related field
(at least one)
- CPL 3 (at least one)
- School-Age (SA) Lead Teacher Professional Endorsement (in a school-age only group; at least one)

Administrator Credential 2
Lead Teacher
(if not FCC provider)

- CDA
- CPL 1
- SA Lead Teacher Professional Endorsement (if only serving school-age children)

2. Ensure staff meet minimum instructional 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.)
- 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 a 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 Professional Development (PD) requirements.

- Beginning in July 2025, all administrators, leads, assistants and FCC Providers must obtain 10 hours of Ohio Approved training annually.

The PD evaluation year runs from July 1 to June 30.

- Those hired between January 1 and May 31 are required to complete 5 hours by June 30.
- Those hired between July 1 and December 31 are required to complete 10 hours by June 30.
- Those hired between June 1 and June 30 will have until June 30 of the next year to complete 10 hours of PD.

PD Topics must include at least two of the following:

- Trauma
- Developmental Milestones
- Critical Conversations
- Behavior/Classroom Management
- Family Engagement



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- Curriculum & Assessment
- Science of Reading
- Inclusion

NOTE: Approved college coursework related to the field may be used to meet training requirements.

IV.

Program Standard Requirements

1. Curriculum and Assessment

- Obtain and implement for all infant, toddler, and preschool-age children, a comprehensive research-based curriculum that is aligned with the Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS) and the Science of Reading. School-age programs: Classrooms provide activities that are aligned with the Ohio K-12 Learning Standards.

2. Child Screening*

- Administer or confirm completion of a comprehensive screening tool within sixty days of enrollment for newly enrolled children and annually for all children.
- Share or confirm results with families within thirty days following completion of the screening. Exempt from the child screening standard are school-age children or children with a current Individual Education Program (IEP) or Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP).

3. Staff/Child Interactions

- Centers: Complete an annual self-assessment for each group of children
- FCC: Complete an annual self-assessment using a tool that measures the learning environment of the program

4. Continuous Improvement

- Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) that includes two program goals and two action steps.

5. Family Partnerships/Community Resources

- Program utilizes a tool that identifies the needs of the whole family within 30 days of enrollment and then annually thereafter.



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V.

Registration

1. Answer registration questions within the Ohio Child Licensing and Quality System (OCLQS).
2. Submit registration by entering your name and clicking "submit" in OCLQS.
3. 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.

VI.

After Registration

1. Ensure every lead teacher, assistant teacher, administrator, and/or family child care owner is listed and up to date in the OPR with current role, assigned group and schedule.
2. Prepare documentation for review at onsite visit.

VII.

Required Documentation to Maintain Onsite

1. Curriculum and Assessment

- Verification that the curriculum is aligned from the verified list.
- Verification of the availability of curriculum materials for lead teachers/FCC Providers.
- Documentation of current activity/lesson plans that support children's development and learning and include experiences from the verified curriculum for all hours of instructional time.
- Activity/lesson plans are required for infant, toddler, and preschool-age classrooms. School-age activity/lesson plans are required and follow the Ohio K-12 learning standards

2. Child Screening

- Documentation of completed screening tools and documentation that results are

3. Staff/Child Interactions

- Lead teacher(s)/FCC Provider is to maintain documentation of the completion of an assessment for each age group of children.
- The tool is to be developmentally appropriate to age groups served.
- The tool is to be completed annually.

4. Continuous Improvement

- Documentation of Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) that includes two program goals and two action steps.

5. Staff Education and Professional Development

- Documentation of verification of education and PD accessible for review either in file or electronically.

6. Family Partnerships/Community Resources

- Documentation of a completed tool that identifies family needs in at least three areas;



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shared with families. (For applicable children.)

including developmental or educational needs, health needs and resource needs (such as food, and utility assistance) and what resources were provided to the family.

VIII.

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, make sure that the documentation requested is submitted timely.

IX.

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 rating must submit an ongoing rating registration.