



State of Maine Early Care and Education

# Quality Rating System



Improving Early Care and Education - One Step at a Time



July 2011





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# Maine's Early Care and Education

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## What is a Quality Rating System



### What is a Quality Rating System?

Maine's Quality Rating Systems is a voluntary four step program designed to increase awareness of the basic standards of early care and education, to recognize and support providers who are providing care above and beyond those standards, and to educate families and community about what high quality care is and why it is so important. *Maine's Quality Rating System, Quality for ME* has three goals:

- To recognize early care and education programs that provide quality care
- To encourage providers to increase their level of quality
- To provide parents with identifiable standards of quality

*Quality for ME* was created with input from many providers, parents, researchers, and child advocates who are involved in the early care and education (ECE) system. In 2004 a large group of these stakeholders met to begin discussions of how to develop a system to identify and recognize quality early care and education programs. Over the next two years the Early Childhood Division of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) held several focus groups to find out how parents and providers define quality in ECE set-

tings. That feedback was combined with national research to create a tiered system to classify Maine programs based on documented indicators of quality. Many providers throughout the state representing family-based and center-based care, and accredited and non-accredited programs, participated in the testing phase of development and their feedback helped shape the standards used by the system. State-wide implementation of these standards of quality will begin in March 2008.



### Why is a Quality Rating System important?

Because we all care and want what is best for Maine's children. Studies have shown that children in quality early care programs have better developed language skills, motor skills, and reasoning ability when they get to school. They are more likely to be successful throughout their school years, less likely to repeat grades, and more likely to graduate from high school. If all children receive high quality early care not only will they be better prepared for the future but communities can expect to spend less on remedial school programs where the costs for correction are much higher. Early Care and Education programs who choose to

voluntarily participate in *Quality for ME* will be recognized because they want to provide a higher level of care than what is required by licensing. The *Quality for ME* system will also help programs identify their needs for additional resources and/or supports to increase their level of quality.

## Who is eligible to participate in *Quality for ME*?

In order to participate in *Quality for ME* at a Step 1 rating, programs must meet the following minimum requirements:

- Been licensed for at least 12 months
- Been without any serious licensing violations in the past 12 months
- 100% of staff enrolled in the Maine Roads to Quality (MRTQ) Provider Registry

## Who is required to join?

- Licensed child care providers that accept CCDF subsidy vouchers are required to join *Quality for ME*. All Head Start programs in Maine are also required to join.

## Will *Quality for ME* replace Maine Roads to Quality (MRTQ) or the Resource Development Centers (RDC)?

No. Many professional associations are working to improve the quality of care nationally and here in Maine. Both Maine Roads and your Resource Development Center are working with the Early Childhood Division of DHHS as partners of *Quality for ME*. They provide support, technical assistance, and resources to the *Quality for ME* system. As a matter of fact, participants must be members of Maine Road's Early Care and Education Career Development Registry prior to completing a *Quality for ME* application. If you are not already registered you will find a Maine Roads application and some tips for completing it in this document.

## What is the difference between licensing and *Quality for ME*?

A license to operate an early care and education

facility is mandated by the state. Licensing/certification requirements set the minimum standards that ensure the basic health, safety, and developmental needs of children are being met. Participation in *Quality for ME* is voluntary and intended to recognize and promote higher quality care and support and reward providers who want to continuously improve. Both licensing and *Quality for ME* are administered by Maine's DHHS, but each is managed within a different division. Licenses are issued and monitored by the Division of Licensing and Regulatory Services, Child Care Licensing Unit. *Quality for ME* is managed by the Early Childhood Division, Early Care and Education Unit. The divisions will share information regarding a provider's current licensing status and compliance history but licensing staff do not make decisions about the Step at which a program is rated. The Early Childhood Division will issue your *Quality for ME* Step rating. Step ratings will be valid for a three-year period unless a program falls out of compliance.

All licensed programs are eligible to be placed at Step 1 if:

- They have been licensed for one year
- They have had no substantiated serious licensing violations within the last year (Appendix C of this document has clarification of serious licensing violations)
- All direct service staff (including executive staff who work with children) are members the Maine Roads Registry.

## What if my program has a substantiated serious licensing violation?

Serious licensing violations are those that pose a serious risk to children. Substantiation of serious violations will result in removal of a Step placement within *Quality for ME*. A list of violations that will disqualify a program from the system is included in Appendix C of this document. In the event this should happen it is your responsibility to inform parents of your change in Step, and to revise any publications used for marketing that indicate your *Quality for ME* Step.



## How is Quality for ME different from accreditation?

Accreditation is awarded by national professional early care and education associations to programs that meet their national standards of quality. Although accreditation is part of the requirement to be placed at Step 4, a similar but slightly different set of standards that are unique to Maine are used by the *Quality for ME* system. Many organizations award early care and education accreditation but for the purposes of placement at Step 4 the following accrediting bodies are part of the standards for the *Maine Quality Rating System*:

- For family child care homes, including Home Start programs, the only recognized accreditation is the National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC).
- For programs licensed as small facilities accreditation by either the National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC) or the National Association for the Education of Young Children is allowed depending on the program design. To qualify for NAFCC accreditation as a small facility the provider must be the responsible person providing direct care at least 80 percent of the time or 60 percent of the time if two providers are in partnership. NAEYC will accredit small facilities that serve at least ten children.
- For center-based care programs Maine recognizes only three accreditation, those awarded by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the American Montessori Society (AMS), or those programs that meet the National Head Start Performance Standards as evidenced by zero non-compliance.
- Programs licensed as nursery schools with ten or more children will need to be accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children of the AMS.
- For center based school age programs, Maine recognizes accreditation by the Council on Accreditation (COA).



## Where do Quality Certificates fit into Quality for ME?

The new requirements for obtaining or renewing Quality Certificates will require placement at Step 4 within *Quality for ME*. This means that family child care providers who have held a Quality Certificate in the past based on a Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential and those who have qualified based on academic credentials will no longer be eligible until they are NAFCC accredited and meet the additional standards at Step 4 within *Quality for ME*.

The twenty five percent (25%) quality subsidy reimbursement differential for each child whose care is subsidized by the DHHS- Early Childhood Division and the double tax credit incentives for parents will continue to be limited to programs holding Quality Certificates that are placed at Step 4 in the *Quality for ME* system.



## What are the benefits/incentives for joining Quality for ME?

Many providers are already providing a level of care above what licensing requires but may not be ready for accreditation yet. This is an opportunity to be recognized for that extra effort *Quality for ME* as is intended to educate families about the differences in quality for programs at each Step. Rather than simply letting families know whether a program is accredited or not accredited, *Quality for ME* will outline the levels of quality that exist at each level.



## Other benefits/incentives for joining Quality for ME?

**Technical Assistance:** Each program participating in *Quality for ME* will have access to targeted technical assistance from:

- The Maine Afterschool Network
- Maine's Infant/Toddler Specialist
- The Head Start Quality Initiative
- Maine Roads to Quality
- The Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies
- Maine's eight local Resource Development Centers

An Education Specialist at your RDC will also receive a copy of your profile and will be available to assist you in making quality improvements that will qualify you to move to the next Step within the *Quality for ME* system.

Additionally, programs that choose to formally begin the accreditation process will be eligible for targeted technical assistance and to participate in accreditation support cohorts.

**Resources:** Programs will be able to access resources that will aid them in meeting many of the criteria within the *Quality for ME* system. Many of these materials are available online with additional materials available through the technical assistance providers at your request.

**Publicity:** Participating providers will have access to materials that will let your community know you are dedicated to quality.

**Financial Incentives:**

- Parents of any child enrolled in programs at a Step 4 level are eligible to receive a double child care tax credit on their state income tax.
- Programs that participate in *Quality for ME* are eligible for assistance in paying accreditation fees.
- Providers who are income eligible are eligible for scholarships to pursue early childhood education degrees.
- Programs who pay state taxes and have a Quality Improvement Plan may apply for a Child Care Investment Tax Credit for expenses made to improve quality. See [www.maine.gov/dhhs/occhs/businesssupport.htm](http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/occhs/businesssupport.htm) for more information.
- Providers who care for children receiving subsidy support are eligible for quality bumps.
  - For providers currently at a Step 2, the bump payment is 5%
  - For providers currently at a Step 3, the bump payment is 13%
  - For providers currently at a Step 4, the bump payment is 25%



## What are the expectations of participating providers?

*Quality for ME* participants will agree to:

- Ensuring that all direct service staff (including executive staff who work with children) are members of the Maine Roads to Quality Registry. Once you have completed your on-line Maine Roads application(s) and forwarded your supporting documentation, your Maine Roads records will be updated within 30 days. Once your records are current you can apply to the *Quality for ME* system.
- Self - evaluate your program against the standards at each step. Each Step of the four Step system has a unique set of criteria. All standards within each Step must be satisfied before moving to the next Step. The checklists with the standards and required documentation can be found in Appendix A at the end of this folder. Accredited Programs will need to meet some additional standards. These standards are also outlined in Appendix A of this folder. If you are not sure where your program fits into *Quality for ME*, your local RDC and Maine Roads to Quality are available to answer your questions. Contact information for the RDC and Maine Roads can be found in this folder.
- Apply and submit information using either the on-line application or by submitting a paper application to DHHS. The requirements of each Step and documentation required to support your self-assessment can be found on the checklists in Appendix A of this folder. The on-line application will take you step-by-step through the application process. If you have any questions about where your program will be placed, completing the *Quality for ME* application will help you clarify your placement. If, after going through the application process, you decide not to apply to *Quality for ME*, the information you provided will not be saved and your request will not be processed.



- Assemble a portfolio of supporting documentation. This is evidence that standards at each level have been met. The materials should be gathered into a portfolio or notebook, kept on your premises, and made available if you are chosen for an on-site observation. You will be given notification if you are chosen for a visit but please note that you will likely not be given enough notice to assemble all the supporting documentation in the time between the notification and the visit. Please refer to the checklists in Appendix A for guidance around the documentation that will support your placement at the appropriate Step in *Quality for ME*. Your RDC has many resources to help you make quality improvements. Please do not hesitate to contact them before, during, or after your application to *Quality for ME*.
- Participate and/or have staff members participate in a telephone survey of approximately 20–25 minutes in length. During the telephone interview the interviewer will ask multiple choice questions that will list three or four scenarios, and ask you to choose the scenario that most closely describes your program. If an interviewer calls at an inconvenient time, please let the interviewer know that the time is not good for you and the two of you can work out a mutually convenient time to complete the interview.
- Encourage families to fill out an on-line parent survey regarding their experience with your program.

at a time that is most representative of what a typical day is like in your setting. While no two days in this business are really alike, times when you have the most typical groupings of children, staff, and activities are best. Days that include special visitors, substitute staff, field trips, or the days just before or after holidays or vacations are not likely to be the most representative. Observations typically last approximately 3–4 hours, the last 30 minutes of which may include an interview with you or there may be a brief follow-up telephone call. The observer will complete a standardized checklist of items that provide a picture of your program’s environment. Inevitably the presence of a stranger will impact your day but be assured the observer will do his/her best to minimize the impact of the visit. General information on observations and the environmental rating scales can be found online at [www.fpg.unc.edu/~ecers](http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~ecers)

## 2. Portfolio Review

The purpose of this announced and mutually agreed upon visit is to review supporting documentation to validate your self assessment, which you completed as part of your *Quality for ME* application process. This process is based on program’s conditions for participation in *Quality for ME*, Maine’s Early Care and Education Rating System. Programs are selected from a random list of program’s with Step 2, 3, or 4 ratings based on geographic regions. This process is important in the continuing efforts to maintain integrity of all programs enrolled in *Quality for ME*.

## What can I expect during an on-site observation?

### 1. Research Study

By enrolling in *Quality for ME* you are granting permission for a reviewer to come into your program to observe your setting using the appropriate environmental rating scale tool, FCCERS, ITERS, SAC-CERS and/or ECERS. The observer will contact you prior to the visit to arrange a mutually acceptable time. Ideally observations happen on a day and

## What if I operate multiple sites?

Just as each site requires a separate license, each site will require a separate application for the *Quality for ME* system.

## What if I need more information before deciding to apply?

Lists of contact people and information on how to contact them are included in the folder in the section “How to get Answers”. Our goal is to get answers for you as quickly as possible. To accomplish

this, we are providing the most direct connection to the information you will need to make a decision about participating and/or to assist you with your application.

We have also included a short glossary to clarify the meaning of some of the terms used in this manual. The glossary is included as a separate insert.



### *How do I apply?*

You can find the application at the following web address: [www.qualityforme.org/qcare/login.aspx](http://www.qualityforme.org/qcare/login.aspx)

Log on to the website and follow the step-by-step process to complete the application. Once you have completed your on-line application and know where your program will be placed, you can decide whether or not to submit the application to DHHS. If, after going through the on-line application process, you decide not to apply to *Quality for ME* the information you provided will not be saved and your request will not be processed. If you are unable to access the internet, please contact the Early Childhood Division at DHHS to obtain a paper application or for assistance in completing an application, please contact your local RDC. Information on how to contact them can be found in the section “How to get Answers”.



### *How will I know my program has been accepted into the Quality for ME system and at which Step?*

When you complete the online application, you will know which step your program will be placed at within *Quality for ME*. You will be formally notified by DHHS–Early Childhood Division within six weeks if your program is eligible for participation. Potential reasons for being ineligible would include operating without a valid license, programs in operation for less than one year, or programs with a substantiated serious licensing violation. Serious licensing violations are clarified at the end of this manual in Appendix C. Another reason a program may not be eligible for *Quality for ME*, or may experience a delay in their application, is because they have not completed an application to the Maine Roads to

Quality Registry (MRTQ). All staff who work with children must be members of the MRTQ Registry for a program to participate in *Quality for ME*.

If you do not hear back from us within six weeks after completing your application please contact DHHS–Early Childhood Division at (207) 624–7909 to ask about the status of your application. Once accepted into the program, you will be notified by mail and you will receive a letter and certificate indicating your Step placement within the system.



### *What if I don't agree with the Step rating from DHHS's Early Childhood Division?*

Programs that believe their rating is incorrect, or who do not feel the rating granted by the Department is accurate, may appeal the decision regarding their Step designation by requesting an informal review by the Early Childhood Division. If a provider is not satisfied with the result of this informal review they may request an administrative hearing. The following policy is in place for this purpose:

A provider must request an informal review and obtain a decision before requesting an administrative hearing. If the provider is dissatisfied with the informal review decision, he or she may write the Commissioner of the Department of Health and Human Services to request a hearing provided he/she does so within thirty (30) calendar days of the date of the Director's report on the Department's action. Subsequent appeal proceedings will be limited only to those issues raised during the informal review. The Office of Administrative Hearings shall notify the provider in writing of the date, time and place of the hearing, and shall designate a presiding officer. Providers will be given at least twenty (20) calendar days advance notice of the hearing date. The hearing shall be held in conformity with the Maine Administrative Procedures Act, 5 M.R.S.A. §8001 et seq. and the Administrative Hearings Regulations.



### *What do all these terms mean?*

There are several unique terms used in the standards and throughout this folder. A glossary can be found as a separate insert.



## How to get answers to your questions

If you have questions regarding any aspect of [Quality for ME](#) we have answers. You may contact any member of the team with any question. You may receive the fastest response by going to the team member who specializes in the area of your concern. Contact information can be found on the next several pages.

 For questions regarding technical difficulties accessing the on-line application please contact:

### QRS help desk

**E-mail:** [help@qualityforme.org](mailto:help@qualityforme.org)

**Phone:** (207) 581-9061

 For questions specific to Maine Roads to Quality, Accreditation support, or applying to the Registry please contact:

Allyson Dean, Director

**E-mail:** [adean@usm.maine.edu](mailto:adean@usm.maine.edu)

**Phone:** (888) 900-0055 or (207) 780-5833

Priscilla Armstrong, Registry Coordinator

**E-mail:** [parmstro@usm.maine.edu](mailto:parmstro@usm.maine.edu)

**Phone:** (888) 900-0055 or (207) 780-5846

Sonja Howard

Statewide Director, NAFCC Accreditation

**E-mail:** [sonjahoward@hotmail.com](mailto:sonjahoward@hotmail.com)

**Phone:** (888) 900-0055 or (207) 230-0114

**Maine Roads to Quality Fax:** (207) 780-5817

**Maine Roads to Quality Address:** 1 Post Office Square,  
PO Box 15010, Portland 04112

 For questions specific to licensing, licensing violations, compliance history, or current status please contact:

Wes Uhlman, Androscoggin, Franklin, Oxford, Cumberland and York counties

**E-Mail:** [Wes.Uhlman@maine.gov](mailto:Wes.Uhlman@maine.gov)

**Phone:** (207) 287-9300

**Fax:** (207) 287-9325

**Address:** 41 Anthony Avenue, Augusta 04330

Bob Steinberg, Central Office and Northern counties

**E-Mail:** [Robert.Steinberg@maine.gov](mailto:Robert.Steinberg@maine.gov)

**Phone:** (207) 287-9300

**Fax:** (207) 287-9325

**Address:** 41 Anthony Avenue, Augusta, 04330

 Other Resources for  
Technical Assistance:

### Child Care Plus ME

The Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies

Contact: Linda Labas

**E-mail:** [llabas@umit.maine.edu](mailto:llabas@umit.maine.edu)

**Phone:** (866) 230-4520

**Fax:** (207) 892-2330

**Address:** 48 Tandberg Trail, Windham 04062



## Maine's Infant/Toddler Specialist

Contact: Karen White  
**E-Mail:** [kwhite@usm.maine.edu](mailto:kwhite@usm.maine.edu)  
**Phone:** (207) 780-4019  
**Fax:** (207) 780-5817  
**Address:** 35 Bedford St.  
P.O. Box 9300, Portland, ME 04104-9300

## The Maine AfterSchool Network

Contact: Deb Chase  
**E-Mail:** [Deborah.chase@maine.edu](mailto:Deborah.chase@maine.edu)  
**Phone:** (207) 778-7575  
**Fax:** (207) 778-7512  
**Address:** 186 High Street, Farmington 04938



## Resource Development Centers

[www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/ec/occhs/devcenters.htm](http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/ec/occhs/devcenters.htm)

### In Androscoggin, Franklin, and Oxford Counties:

Your RDC is Finders Seekers  
**[www.community-concepts.org](http://www.community-concepts.org)**  
**Phone:** (800) 866-5588  
**Fax:** (207) 333-6598  
**Address:** 240 Bates Street, Lewiston, ME 04240,

### In Cumberland County:

Your RDC is Child Care Connections  
**[www.childcaremaine.org](http://www.childcaremaine.org)**  
**Phone:** (888) 917-1100 or (207) 396-6566  
**Fax:** (207) 396-6581  
**Address:** 136 U.S. Route One, Scarborough 04074

### In York County:

Your RDC is CareLink  
**[www.carelinkkrdc.com](http://www.carelinkkrdc.com)**  
**Phone:** (207) 324-0735 or (888) 917-1100  
**Fax:** (207) 490-0595  
**Address:** 26 Amherst Street, Sanford 04073

### In Kennebec and Somerset Counties:

Your RDC is Child Care Options  
**[www.ccordc.org](http://www.ccordc.org)**  
**Phone:** (207) 582-3169 ext. 13 or (888) 917-1100  
**Fax:** (207) 582-3115  
**Address:** 337 Maine Avenue, Farmingdale 04344

### In Penobscot and Piscataquis Counties:

Your RDC is Penquis CAP RDC  
**[www.penguis.org/rdc](http://www.penguis.org/rdc)**  
**Phone:** (207) 973-3531 or (888) 917-1100  
**Fax:** (207) 973-3699  
**Address:** PO Box 1162, Bangor 04402

### In Aroostook County:

Your RDC is ACAP RDC  
**[www.acap-me.org](http://www.acap-me.org)**  
**Phone:** (207) 768-3045 or (800) 432-7881  
**Fax:** (207) 768-3021  
**Address:** PO Box 1116, Presque Isle 04769

### In Lincoln, Knox, Waldo and Sagadahoc Counties:

Your RDC is Mid-Coast RDC  
**[www.midcoastrdc.org](http://www.midcoastrdc.org)**  
**Phone:** (207) 443-1690 or (877) 684-0466  
**Fax:** (207) 442-0122  
**Address:** 34 Wing Farm Parkway, Bath 04530

### In Washington and Hancock Counties:

Your RDC is Child and Family Opportunities  
**[www.childcareopportunities.org](http://www.childcareopportunities.org)**  
**Phone:** (207) 667-2467 or (800) 834-4378  
**Fax:** (207) 667-7963  
**Address:** PO Box 648, Ellsworth 04605



## Maine's Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Child and Family Services, Early Childhood Division

For general information regarding the [Quality for ME](#) system:

**Phone:** (207) 624-7909

Contact: Kristopher Michaud, Early Childhood Quality Initiative Specialist

**E-mail:** [Kristopher.Michaud@maine.gov](mailto:Kristopher.Michaud@maine.gov)

**Phone:** (207) 624-7900

**Fax:** (207) 287-6165

**Address:** 2 Anthony Ave.,  
11 State House Station, Augusta, 04333

Contact: Therese Cahill Low, Child Care Administrator

**E-mail:** [QualityforME@maine.gov](mailto:QualityforME@maine.gov)

**Phone:** (207) 624-7957

Contact: Patti Woolley, Director, Early Childhood Division

**E-mail:** [QualityforME@maine.gov](mailto:QualityforME@maine.gov)

**Phone:** (207) 624-7901

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M a i n e ' s   E a r l y   C a r e   a n d   E d u c a t i o n

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# Quality for ME Standards

## Family Child Care Programs

*Checklists including standards and required documentation  
for programs applying to Steps 2, 3 or 4*



# Quality for ME Standards Family Child Care Programs Step 2

Step 2 programs must meet all minimum requirements (Step 1) plus the following standards

Standards	Step 2 Programs	Documentation Needed
Compliance History/ Licensing Status	Program is in compliance with licensing regulations.	Current State of Maine License for operation of a Family Child Care home.
	The facility has no substantiated serious violations in the past year.	Verification of license status upon application.
	100% of direct service members who work with children are registered in MRTQ Registry.	Verified by MRTQ on-line application process or after receipt of paper application.
Learning Environment/ Developmentally Appropriate Practice	The program follows a daily schedule and the learning environment supports the interests of the children.	Copy of daily schedule included in portfolio.
	The program has a written method for curriculum planning that includes planning from children's interests and skills.	Copy of written method for curriculum planning included in portfolio.
Program Evaluation	The program provides an opportunity to identify strengths and weaknesses and is inclusive of staff, administrators, and families. Family Child Care providers with staff will allow for discussion and feedback around assessment.	A written plan for improvement based on the reflective practice is included in portfolio.
Staffing and Professional Development	Owner/Director is at Level 3 or above on the MRTQ Direct Care Career Lattice.	Verified by on-line application process or after receipt of paper application.
	Programs (with hired staff members) hold staff meetings on a monthly basis.	Copy of minutes or agenda of staff meetings for at least three months included in portfolio.
Administrative Policies and Procedures	Programs (including FCC providers who employ staff not related to them) have an employee handbook detailing policies for at least hiring and firing, advancement, grievance, sexual harassment, and child abuse reporting.	Copy of employee handbook included in portfolio.
	The assistant, unless a family member, has a written job description defining responsibilities. The provider offers an annual review of the assistant's job performance.	Samples of job description included in portfolio. Sample of the annual review of the assistant's job performance should include evidence of the completed evaluation in the portfolio.



# Quality for ME Standards for Family Child Care Programs- Step 2 continued

Standards	Step 2 Programs	Documentation Needed
Administrative Policies and Procedures cont.	The provider gives written policies to parents: areas covered in written policies include- substitute care arrangement, persons authorized to pick up child, illness, administering medication, emergencies, guidance and discipline, parent conferences and visits, if relevant, religious teaching and activities and if relevant, transportation and/or field trips.	Copy of parent handbook/policies included in portfolio.
Parent/Family Involvement	The program has a written philosophy about the relationship between the parents and the program, which is shared with parents when their children are enrolled.	Copy of written philosophy is included in portfolio.
Family Resources	The program makes families aware of local and state resources available to them. These resources may include: Resource Development Centers, Child Development Services, Maine Parent Federation, WIC, MaineCare, local community events, etc. Ways to inform parents of these resources may include: Parent resource library, bulletin boards, enrollment packets etc.	
Authentic Assessment	<p>Evidence is collected 2 times per year on children's development in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social/Emotional</li> <li>• Cognitive</li> <li>• Physical (gross and fine motor) development</li> <li>• Communication</li> </ul> <p>Examples of evidence include children's work, observations, interview with families, audio tape, video tape, or photographs. This evidence is incorporated in curriculum planning.</p> <p>For programs serving infants and toddlers, the observations are linked to Supporting Maine's Infants and Toddlers-Guidelines for Learning and Development. For programs serving children aged 3-5 years the observations are linked to Maine's Early Childhood Learning Guidelines which are used as a guide for planning.</p>	Evidence is included in children's files and is made available during random on-site reviews. Documentation of curriculum planning based on observations is kept in portfolio.



# Quality for ME Standards for Family Child Care Programs- Step 3

Step 3 programs will need to provide evidence of meeting the following standards

Standards	Step 3 Programs	Documentation Needed
Compliance History/ Licensing Status	Program is in compliance with licensing regulations.	Current State of Maine License for operation of Family Child Care Home.
	The facility has no substantiated serious violations in the past 3 years.	Verification of license status upon application.
	100% of direct service staff members are registered in MRTQ Registry.	Verified by on-line application process or after receipt of paper application.
Learning Environment/ Developmentally Appropriate Practice	The program follows a daily schedule and the learning environment supports the interests of the children.	Copy of daily schedule included in portfolio.
	The program has a written method for curriculum planning that includes planning from children's interests and skills.	Copy of written method for curriculum planning included in portfolio.
	The Infant Toddler Learning Guidelines and/or Early Childhood Learning Guidelines are on site, available to staff and are referenced during curriculum planning.	Copy of guidelines is kept on site and made available during on site review.
Program Evaluation	The program is evaluated yearly using a self-assessment tool and has a written improvement plan based upon findings of a comprehensive self-assessment designed to analyze all aspects of the program.	A written plan for improvement based on the reflective practice is kept in portfolio.
Staffing and Professional Development	Owner/Director is at level 4 or above on the MRTQ Direct Care Career Lattice, has a professional development plan prepared annually, 10 hours of professional growth activities per year above the regulatory minimum.	Verified by on-line application process or after receipt of paper application.
Administrative Policies and Procedures	Programs (with hired staff members) hold staff meetings on a monthly basis.	Copy of minutes or agenda of staff meetings for at least three months included in portfolio.
	Programs (including FCC providers who employ staff not related to them) have an employee handbook detailing policies for at least hiring and firing, advancement, grievance, sexual harassment, and child abuse reporting.	Copy of employee handbook/policies is included in portfolio.



# Quality for ME Standards for Family Child Care Programs- Step 3 continued

Step 3 programs will need to provide evidence of meeting the following standards

Standards	Step 3 Programs	Documentation Needed
Administrative Policies and Procedures cont.	The assistant, unless a family member, has a written job description defining responsibilities. The provider offers an annual review of the assistant's job performance.	Copy of job description included in portfolio. Documentation for the annual review of the assistant's job performance should include evidence of the completed evaluation in the portfolio.
	The provider gives written policies to parents: areas covered in written policies include- substitute care arrangement, persons authorized to pick up child, illness, administering medication, emergencies, guidance and discipline, parent conferences and visits, and if relevant, transportation and/or field trips.	Copy of parent handbook/written policies included in portfolio.
	The provider gathers information about children's interests and needs through observation and conversations with parents. This information is used to set goals that support the children's development. Consistency of care- Children are not left with a substitute more than 20% of the time (such as 1 hour per every 5 hours, or 1 day per 5 day week, may be averaged over time)	Observations and goals recorded and kept in children's files which are made available during on-site review.  Documentation of weekly schedule and/or payroll records to indicate staffing patterns.
Parent/Family Involvement	The program has a written philosophy about the relationship between the parents and the program, which is shared with parents when their children are enrolled.	Copy of written philosophy is included in portfolio
	Parents are offered at least 1 parent conference a year to discuss the child's progress, behavior, social and physical needs.	Documentation of parent meeting (or signed waiver if parents did not wish to have a meeting) kept in children's file and made available during on site review.
	Parent Surveys are done annually. The survey tool must be approved by DHHS or the program may use the one provided by DHHS.	Surveys are kept on file and made available during on site review.
	Parents of infants and toddlers are provided with written daily communication about their child's day.	A copy of written daily communication (sample) included in portfolio.



# Quality for ME Standards for Family Child Care Programs- Step 3 continued

Step 3 programs will need to provide evidence of meeting the following standards

Standards	Step 3 Programs	Documentation Needed
Parent/Family Involvement cont.	The program makes families aware of local and state resources available to them. These resources may include: Resource Development Centers, Child Development Services, Maine Parent Federation, WIC, MaineCare, local community events, etc.	Ways to inform parents of these resources may include: Parent resource library, bulletin boards, Enrollment packets etc.
Family Resources	Program maintains current and accurate information about community resources by connecting with their local Resource Development Center at least twice a year.	A copy of a program's completed contact sheet is included in portfolio.
Authentic Assessment	Evidence is collected 3 times per year on children's development in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social/Emotional</li> <li>• Cognitive</li> <li>• Physical (gross and fine motor) development</li> <li>• Communication</li> </ul>	Evidence is included in children's files and is made available during random on-site reviews. Documentation of curriculum planning based on observations is kept in portfolio.
	Examples of evidence include children's work, observations, interviews with families, audio tape, video tape, photographs. This evidence is incorporated in curriculum planning.  For programs serving infants and toddlers, the observations are linked to Supporting Maine's Infants and Toddlers-Guidelines for Learning and Development. For programs serving children 3-5 years the observations are linked to Maine's Early Childhood Learning Guidelines which are used as a guide for planning.	



# Quality for ME Standards for Family Child Care - Step 4

Programs must be accredited by the National Association for Family Child Care, meet all the standards for Step 2 and 3, and the following additional standards to be at Step 4 of Maine's Quality Rating System - Quality for ME

Standards	Step 4 Programs	Documentation Needed
Compliance History/ Licensing Status	<p>Program is in compliance with licensing regulations.</p> <p>The facility has no substantiated serious violations in the past three years.</p>	<p>Current State of Maine License for operation of child care facility.</p> <p>Verified by online application process or after receipt of paper application.</p>
Learning Environment/ Developmentally Appropriate Practice	<p>Provider caring for children ages 3-5 has completed the training on implementing curriculum based on Maine's Early Childhood Learning Guidelines.</p>	<p>Verification through MRTQ training registry.</p>
	<p>Maine's Early Childhood Learning Guidelines are consistently used to guide the development of an age appropriate curriculum for children ages 3-5.</p>	<p>Copies of curriculum and assessments are kept on site and made available for review.</p>
Program Evaluation	<p>Holds current accreditation from National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC).</p>	<p>Verified through copy of accreditation certificate and online registry confirmation.</p>
Staffing and Professional Development	<p>Owner/Director is at a level 4 or above on MRTQ Direct Care Career Lattice and holds a valid CDA or college degree in ECE or related degree.</p>	<p>Verified by online application process or after receipt of paper application.</p>
Administrative Policies and Procedures	<p>The assistant, unless a family member, is paid at least the minimum wage. If the assistant works more than 15 hours a week, the provider pays the employer's share of social security and workers' compensation. (NAFCC 5.31)</p>	<p>Evidence is included in sites files and is made available during random on site reviews.</p>



## Quality for ME Standards for Family Child Care - Step 4 continued

Standards	Step 4 Programs	Documentation Needed
Parent/Family Involvement	<p>Program has a documented plan to involve families and offer opportunities for individualized parent involvement. This can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharing a meal with their child</li> <li>• Talent show</li> <li>• Circle time with a parent</li> <li>• Barbeque</li> <li>• fundraiser</li> </ul> (NAFCC 1.19 and 1.27)	Copy of plan included in portfolio.
Family Resources	And Same as previous Step	Copy of information sheets filled out for RDC updates included in portfolio.
Authentic Assessment	<p>Evidence is collected 4 times per year on children's development in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social/Emotional</li> <li>• Cognitive</li> <li>• Physical (gross and fine motor) development</li> <li>• Communication</li> </ul> <p>Examples of evidence include children's work, observations, interviews with families, audio tape, video tape, photographs.</p> <p>This evidence is incorporated in curriculum planning. For programs serving infants and toddlers, the observations are linked to Supporting Maine's Infants and Toddlers-Guidelines for Learning and Development and for programs serving children 3-5 years, the observations are linked to Maine's Early Childhood Learning Guidelines which are used as a guide for planning</p>	Evidence is included in children's files and is made available during random on site reviews. Documentation of curriculum planning based on observations is kept in portfolio.



# Quality for ME Standards Center Based Programs

*Checklists including standards and required documentation  
for programs applying to Steps 2, 3 or 4*



# Quality for ME Standards Center Based Programs Step 2

Step 2 programs must meet all minimum requirements (Step 1) plus the following standards

Standards	Step 2 Programs	Documentation Needed
Compliance History/ Licensing Status	Program is in compliance with licensing regulations.	Current State of Maine License for operation of Child Care facility.
	The facility has no substantiated serious violations in the past year.	Verification of license status upon application.
	100% of direct service staff members (including executive staff who work with children) are registered in MRTQ Registry.	Verified by online application process or after receipt of paper application.
Learning Environment/ Developmentally Appropriate Practice	The curriculum guides the development of a daily schedule that is predictable yet flexible and responsive to the individual needs of children. The schedule provides time and support for transitions, includes both indoor and outdoor experiences and is responsive to the child's need to rest or be active.	Copy of daily schedule included in portfolio.
	The program has a written method for curriculum planning that includes planning from children's interests and skills.	Copy of written method for curriculum planning included in portfolio.
	1 teacher or staff member responsible for educational programming has completed the training in Maine's Early Childhood Learning Guidelines.	Verification through MRTQ registry.
Program Evaluation	The program provides an opportunity to identify strengths and weaknesses and is inclusive of staff, administrators and families.	Written plan for improvement based on the reflective practice is kept in the portfolio and made available for on-site review.
Staffing and Professional Development	At least 50% of lead teachers are at a Level 5 or above on the MRTQ Career Lattice.	Verified by online application process or after receipt of paper application.
	Programs hold staff meetings on a monthly basis.	Copy of minutes or agenda of staff meetings for at least 3 months included in portfolio.



# Quality for ME Standards for Center Based Programs- Step 2 continued

Standards	Step 2 Programs	Documentation Needed
Administrative Policies and Procedures	Programs have an employee handbook detailing policies for at least hiring and firing, advancement, grievance, sexual harassment, and child abuse reporting.	Copy of employee handbook included in portfolio.
	All staff are evaluated at least annually by an appropriate supervisor.	Samples of documentation of performance review are made available for random on-site review.
	The program has a parent handbook that includes the handbook requirements within licensing and the following additional policies and procedures around attendance, discipline, health and safety, field trips, and holidays.	Copy of parent handbook included in portfolio.
Parent/Family Involvement	The program has a written philosophy about the relationship between the parents and the program, which is shared with parents when their children are enrolled.	Copy of written philosophy is included in portfolio.
Family Resources	The program makes families aware of local and state resources available to them. These resources may include: Resource Development Centers, Child Development Services, Maine Parent Federation, WIC, MaineCare, local community events etc. Ways to inform parents of these resources may include: parent resource library, bulletin boards, enrollment packets etc.	
Authentic Assessment	<p>Evidence is collected 2 times per year on children's development in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social/Emotional</li> <li>• Cognitive</li> <li>• Physical (gross and fine motor) development</li> <li>• Communication</li> </ul> <p>Examples of evidence include children's work, observations, interviews with families, audio tape, video tape, photographs. This evidence is incorporated in curriculum planning.</p> <p>For programs serving infants and toddlers, the observations are linked to Supporting Maine's Infants and Toddlers- Guidelines for Learning and Development and for programs serving children 3-5 years, the observations are linked to Maine's Early Childhood Learning Guidelines which are used as a guide for planning.</p>	Evidence is included in children's files and is made available during random on site reviews. Documentation of curriculum planning based on observations is kept in portfolio.



# Quality for ME Standards for Center Based Programs- Step 3

Must meet all the standards for Step 2 plus the following standards

Standards	Step 3 Programs	Documentation Needed
Compliance History/ Licensing Status	Program is in compliance with licensing regulations.	Current State of Maine License for operation of Child Care facility.
	The facility has no substantiated serious violations in the past 3 years.	Verification of license status upon application.
	100% of direct service staff (including executive staff who work with children) members are registered in MRTQ Registry.	Verified by online application process or after receipt of paper application.
Learning Environment/ Developmentally Appropriate Practice	The curriculum guides the development of a daily schedule that is predictable yet flexible and responsive to the individual needs of children. The schedule provides time and support for transitions, includes both indoor and outdoor experiences and is responsive to the child's need to rest or be active.	Copy of daily schedule included in portfolio.
	The program has a written method for curriculum planning that includes planning from children's interests and skills.	Copy of written method for curriculum planning included in portfolio.
	The Early Childhood Learning guidelines (ECLG) and/or Infant Toddler Learning Guidelines (ITLG) are on site, available to staff and are referenced during curriculum planning.	Copy of written method for curriculum planning that includes the use of Maine's Learning Guidelines in the process included in portfolio.
	50% of lead teachers working with children ages 3-5 have completed the training on implementing curriculum based on Maine's Early Childhood Learning Guidelines.	Verification through MRTQ registry.
	The program provides an opportunity to identify strengths and weaknesses and is inclusive of staff, administrators, and families.	A written plan for improvement based on the reflective practice is kept in the portfolio and made available for on-site review.
Program Evaluation	The program is evaluated yearly using a self assessment tool (Accreditation Guidelines, Head Start Standards, age appropriate environment rating scale, High Scope) and has a written improvement plan based upon findings of a comprehensive self-assessment designed to analyze all aspects of the program.	Copy of completed self-assessment tool as well as written improvement plan included in portfolio and made available for on-site review.



# Quality for ME Standards for Center Based Programs- Step 3 continued

Must meet all the standards for Step 2 plus the following standards

Standards	Step 3 Programs	Documentation Needed
Staffing and Professional Development	At least 50% of staff members in direct care positions are at least a Level 5 on MRTQ Career Lattice or meet NAEYC candidacy requirements and provide appropriate documentation verifying candidacy status. All staff have a professional development plan prepared annually and 10 hours of professional growth activities per year above the regulatory minimum, distributed across core knowledge areas which can include in-service trainings.	Verified by online application process or after receipt of paper application. Copies of staff training and professional growth activities kept in staff files and are made available for review.
Administrative Policies and Procedures	Staff members (with curriculum planning responsibilities) are provided with at least 1 hour of time per week out of the setting for curriculum planning that directly relates to the development of age appropriate activities.	Copy of schedule to include planning time included in the portfolio and made available for review. Teacher phone interview.
	Programs that employ staff offer a benefit package including, at minimum, 2 of the following: reduced child care rates for children of staff, tuition reimbursement, paid training, mileage reimbursement for training and education, health insurance, dental insurance, disability insurance, retirement plan, paid vacation, paid sick time, paid personal time, paid holidays.	Benefits package information should be included in employee handbook. Copy of employee handbook included in portfolio.
Parent/Family Involvement	Parents are offered at least 2 parent conferences a year to discuss the child's progress, behavior, social and physical needs.	Evidence of conferences being held – sign up sheets, memo to parents, etc. should be copied to portfolio.
	Parent surveys are done annually. The survey tool must be approved by DHHS or the program may use the one provided by DHHS.	Copy of survey results included in portfolio.
	Parents of infants and toddlers are provided with written daily communication about their child's day.	A copy of written daily communication (sample) included in portfolio.
	Program has a parent advisory/involvement group and provides opportunities for parent involvement in the program that embody the written philosophy of parent-program relationship.	List of membership as well as agendas or minutes from meetings included in portfolio.



# Quality for ME Standards for Center Based Programs- Step 3 continued

Must meet all the standards for Step 2 plus the following standards

Standards	Step 3 Programs	Documentation Needed
Family Resources	<p>The program makes families aware of local and state resources available to them. These resources may include: Resource Development Centers, Child Development Services, Maine Parent Federation, WIC, MaineCare, local community events etc. Ways to inform parents of these resources may include: parent resource library, bulletin boards, enrollment packets etc.</p> <p>Program maintains current and accurate information about community resources by connecting with their local Resource Development Center.</p>	
Authentic Assessment	<p>Evidence is collected 3 times per year on children's development in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social/Emotional</li> <li>• Cognitive</li> <li>• Physical (gross and fine motor) development</li> <li>• Communication</li> </ul> <p>Examples of evidence include children's work, observations, interviews with families, audio tape, video tape, photographs. This evidence is incorporated in curriculum planning.</p> <p>For programs serving infants and toddlers, the observations are linked to Supporting Maine's Infants and Toddlers- Guidelines for Learning and Development and for programs serving children 3-5 years, the observations are linked to Maine's Early Childhood Learning Guidelines which are used as a guide for planning.</p>	<p>Evidence is included in children's files and is made available during on-site reviews. Documentation of curriculum planning based on observations is kept in portfolio.</p>



# Quality for ME Standards for Center Based Programs - Step 4

Programs must be accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), or the American Montessori Society (AMS), meet all the standards for Step 2 and 3, and the following additional standards to be at Step 4 of Maine's [Quality Rating System - Quality for ME](#)

Standards	Step 4 Programs	Documentation Needed
Compliance History/ Licensing Status	Program is in compliance with licensing regulations.	Current State of Maine License for operation of child care facility.
	The facility has no substantiated serious violations in the past three years.	Verification of licensing status upon application.
Learning Environment/ Developmentally Appropriate Practice	Each classroom with 3-5 year olds has a lead teacher who has completed the training on implementing curriculum based on Maine's Early Childhood Learning Guidelines.	Verification through MRTQ training registry.
	Maine's Early Childhood Learning Guidelines are consistently used to guide the development of an age appropriate curriculum for children ages 3-5.	Copies of curriculum and assessments are kept on-site and made available for review.
Program Evaluation	Holds current NAEYC accreditation, is a Head Start Program with a Gold or Blue designation, or is accredited by the American Montessori Society.	Verified through copy of accreditation certificate and online registry confirmation.
Staffing and Professional Development	Director is at a level 5 or above on the MRTQ Administrative/Management Coordination Career Lattice OR at a level 6 or above on the MRTQ Direct Care Career Lattice AND 50% of lead teachers are at level 6 or above on MRTQ Direct Care Career Lattice.(Programs that meet NAEYC candidacy requirements may substitute verification of candidacy for the aforementioned professional development standard.)	Verified by online application process or after receipt of paper application  Copies of staff training and professional growth activities kept in staff files and are made available for review.
Administrative Policies and Procedures	Programs has a plan to implement a salary scale that is based on professional qualifications, length of employment, and performance evaluation. (NAEYC 10.E.01)	Copy of schedule to include planning time included in the portfolio and made available for review. Teacher phone interview. Copy of schedule to include planning time included in the portfolio and made available for review. Teacher phone interview. Evidence is included in sites files and is made available during random on site reviews.



# Quality for ME Standards for Center Based Programs - Step 4

Programs must be accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), or the American Montessori Society (AMS), meet all the standards for Step 2 and 3, and the following additional standards to be at Step 4 of Maine's *Quality Rating System - Quality for ME*

Standards	Step 4 Programs	Documentation Needed
Administrative Policies and Procedures cont.		Copy of minutes or agenda of staff meetings for at least 3 months included in portfolio.
Parent/Family Involvement	<p>Program has a documented plan to involve families and offer opportunities for individualized parent involvement. This can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteering ( not-for-profit centers only)</li> <li>• Sharing a meal with their child</li> <li>• Talent show</li> <li>• Circle time with a parent</li> <li>• Barbeque</li> <li>• fundraiser</li> </ul> <p>(NAEYC 7.A.12-14)</p>	<p>Copy of form used by program in portfolio.</p> <p>Parent survey.</p> <p>Copy of plan included in portfolio.</p>
Family Resources	Same as previous step.	Copy of information sheets filled out for RDC updates included in portfolio.
Authentic Assessment	<p>Evidence is collected 4 times per year on children's development in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social/Emotional</li> <li>• Cognitive</li> <li>• Physical (gross and fine motor) development</li> <li>• Communication</li> </ul> <p>Examples of evidence include children's work, observations, interviews with families, audio tape, video tape, photographs. This evidence is incorporated in curriculum planning.</p> <p>For programs serving infants and toddlers, the observations are linked to Supporting Maine's Infants and Toddlers- Guidelines for Learning and Development and for programs serving children 3-5 years, the observations are linked to Maine's Early Childhood Learning Guidelines which are used as a guide for planning.</p>	Evidence is included in children's files and is made available during random on site reviews. Documentation of curriculum planning based on observations is kept in portfolio.



# Quality for ME Standards Head Start Programs

*Checklists including standards and required documentation  
for programs applying to Steps 2, 3 or 4*



# Quality for ME Standards Head Start Programs

## Step 2

Step 2 programs must meet all minimum requirements (Step 1) plus the following standards

Standards	Step 2 Programs	Documentation Needed
Compliance History/ Licensing Status	Program is in compliance with licensing regulations.	Current State of Maine License for operation of Child Care facility.
	The facility has no substantiated serious violations in the past year.	Verification of license status upon application.
	100% of direct service staff members (including executive staff who work with children) are registered in MRTQ Registry.	Verified by online application process or after receipt of paper application.
Learning Environment/ Developmentally Appropriate Practice	The curriculum guides the development of a daily schedule that is predictable yet flexible and responsive to the individual needs of children. The schedule provides time and support for transitions, includes both indoor and outdoor experiences and is responsive to the child's need to rest or be active.	Copy of daily schedule included in portfolio.
	The program has a written method for curriculum planning that includes planning from children's interests and skills.	Copy of written method for curriculum planning included in portfolio.
	1 teacher or staff member responsible for educational programming has completed the training in Maine's Early Childhood Learning Guidelines.	Verification through MRTQ registry.
Program Evaluation	The program provides an opportunity to identify strengths and weaknesses and is inclusive of staff, administrators and families.	Written plan for improvement based on the reflective practice is kept in the portfolio and made available for on-site review.
Staffing and Professional Development	At least 50% of lead teachers are at a Level 5 or above on the MRTQ Career Lattice.	Verified by online application process or after receipt of paper application.



# Quality for ME Standards for Head Start Programs- Step 2 continued

Standards	Step 2 Programs	Documentation Needed
Staffing and Professional Development cont.	Programs hold staff meetings on a monthly basis.	Copy of minutes or agenda of staff meetings for at least 3 months included in portfolio.
Administrative Policies and Procedures	Programs have an employee handbook detailing policies for at least hiring and firing, advancement, grievance, sexual harassment, and child abuse reporting.	Copy of employee handbook included in portfolio
	All staff are evaluated at least annually by an appropriate supervisor.	Samples of documentation of performance review are made available for random on site review.
	The program has a parent handbook that includes the handbook requirements within licensing and the following additional policies and procedures around attendance, discipline, health and safety, field trips, and holidays.	Copy of parent handbook included in portfolio.
Parent/Family Involvement	The program has a written philosophy about the relationship between the parents and the program, which is shared with parents when their children are enrolled.	Copy of written philosophy is included in portfolio.
Family Resources	The program makes families aware of local and state resources available to them. These resources may include: Resource Development Centers, Child Development Services, Maine Parent Federation, WIC, MaineCare, local community events etc. Ways to inform parents of these resources may include: parent resource library, bulletin boards, enrollment packets etc.	
Authentic Assessment	<p>Evidence is collected 2 times per year on children's development in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social/Emotional</li> <li>• Cognitive</li> <li>• Physical (gross and fine motor) development</li> <li>• Communication</li> </ul> <p>Examples of evidence include children's work, observations, interviews with families, audio tape, video tape, photographs. This evidence is incorporated in curriculum planning.</p> <p>For programs serving infants and toddlers, the observations are linked to Supporting Maine's Infants and Toddlers- Guidelines for Learning and Development and for programs serving children 3-5 years, the observations are linked to Maine's Early Childhood Learning Guidelines which are used as a guide for planning.</p>	<p>Evidence is included in children's files and is made available during random on-site reviews.</p> <p>Documentation of curriculum planning based on observations is kept in portfolio.</p>



# Quality for ME Standards for Head Start Programs- Step 3

Must meet all the standards for Step 2 plus the following standards

Standards	Step 3 Programs	Documentation Needed
Compliance History/ Licensing Status	Program is in compliance with licensing regulations.	Current State of Maine License for operation of Child Care facility.
	The facility has no substantiated serious violations in the past 3 years.	Verification of license status upon application.
	100% of direct service staff (including executive staff who work with children) members are registered in MRTQ Registry.	Verified by online application process or after receipt of paper application.
Learning Environment/ Developmentally Appropriate Practice	The Early Childhood Learning Guidelines (ECLG) and/or Infant Toddler Learning Guidelines (ITLG) are on site, available to staff and are referenced during curriculum planning.	Copy of written method for curriculum planning that includes the use of Maine's Learning Guidelines in the process included in portfolio.
	50% of lead teachers working with children ages 3-5 have completed the training on implementing curriculum based on Maine's Early Childhood Learning Guidelines.	Verification through MRTQ registry.
Program Evaluation	The program is evaluated yearly using a self assessment tool (Accreditation Guidelines, Head Start Standards, age appropriate environment rating scale, High Scope) and has a written improvement plan based upon findings of a comprehensive self-assessment designed to analyze all aspects of the program.	Copy of completed self-assessment tool as well as written improvement plan included in portfolio and made available for on-site review.
Staffing and Professional Development	At least 50% of staff members in direct care positions are at least a Level 5 on MRTQ Career Lattice or meet NAEYC candidacy requirements and provide appropriate documentation verifying candidacy status. All staff have a professional development plan prepared annually and 10 hours of professional growth activities per year above the regulatory minimum, distributed across core knowledge areas which can include in- service trainings.	Verified by online application process or after receipt of paper application. Copies of staff training and professional growth activities kept in staff files and are made available for review.
	Staff members (with curriculum planning responsibilities) are provided with at least 1 hour of time per week out of the setting for curriculum planning that directly relates to the development of age appropriate activities.	Copy of schedule to include planning time included in the portfolio and made available for review. Teacher phone interview.



# Quality for ME Standards for Head Start Programs- Step 3 continued

Must meet all the standards for Step 2 plus the following standards

Standards	Step 3 Programs	Documentation Needed
Staffing and Professional Development cont.	Programs that employ staff offer a benefit package including, at minimum, 2 of the following: reduced child care rates for children of staff, tuition reimbursement, paid training, mileage reimbursement for training and education, health insurance, dental insurance, disability insurance, retirement plan, paid vacation, paid sick time, paid personal time, paid holidays.	Benefits package information should be included in employee handbook. Copy of employee handbook included in portfolio.
Administrative Policies and Procedures	Programs that employ staff offer them the opportunity to participate in the development and /or revision of program policies.	Copies of staff meeting agenda where policy issues are discussed, letter to staff soliciting input, etc. included in portfolio.
Parent/Family Involvement	Parents are offered at least 2 parent conferences a year to discuss the child's progress, behavior, social and physical needs.	Evidence of conferences being held – sign up sheets, memo to parents, etc. should be copied to portfolio.
	Parent surveys are done annually. The survey tool must be approved by DHHS or the program may use the one provided by DHHS.	Copy of survey results included in portfolio.
	Parents of infants and toddlers are provided with written daily communication about their child's day.	A copy of written daily communications (sample) included in portfolio.
	Program has a parent advisory/involvement group and provides opportunities for parent involvement in the program that embody the written philosophy of parent-program relationship.	List of membership as well as agendas or minutes from meetings included in portfolio.
Family Resources	The program makes families aware of local and state resources available to them. These resources may include: Resource Development Centers, Child Development Services, Maine Parent Federation, WIC, MaineCare, local community events etc. Ways to inform parents of these resources may include: parent resource library, bulletin boards, enrollment packets etc. Program maintains current and accurate information about community resources by connecting with their local Resource Development Center.	



## Quality for ME Standards for Head Start Programs- Step 3 continued

Must meet all the standards for Step 2 plus the following standards

Standards	Step 3 Programs	Documentation Needed
Authentic Assessment	<p>Evidence is collected 3 times per year on children's development in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Social/Emotional</li><li>• Cognitive</li><li>• Physical (gross and fine motor) development</li><li>• Communication</li></ul> <p>Examples of evidence include children's work, observations, interviews with families, audio tape, video tape, photographs. This evidence is incorporated in curriculum planning.</p> <p>For programs serving infants and toddlers, the observations are linked to Supporting Maine's Infants and Toddlers- Guidelines for Learning and Development and for programs serving children 3-5 years, the observations are linked to Maine's Early Childhood Learning Guidelines which are used as a guide for planning.</p>	<p>Evidence is included in children's files and is made available during on-site reviews. Documentation of curriculum planning based on observations is kept in portfolio.</p>



# Quality for ME Standards for Head Start Programs - Step 4

Head Start Programs must meet the National Head Start Performance Standards as evidenced by Zero non-compliance and All non-compliance items issued within the last three years by the Administration for Children and Families, meet all the standards for Step 2 and 3, and the following additional standards to be at Step 4 of *Maine's Quality Rating System - Quality for ME*

Standards	Step 4 Programs	Documentation Needed
Compliance History/ Licensing Status	Program is in compliance with licensing regulations.	Current State of Maine License for operation of child care facility.
	The facility has no substantiated serious violations in the past three years.	Verification of licensing status upon application.
Learning Environment/ Developmentally Appropriate Practice	Each classroom with 3-5 year olds has a lead teacher who has completed the training on implementing curriculum based on Maine's Early Childhood Learning Guidelines.	Verification through MRTQ training registry.
	Maine's Early Childhood Learning Guidelines are consistently used to guide the development of an age appropriate curriculum for children ages 3-5.	Copies of curriculum and assessments are kept on-site and made available for review.
Program Evaluation	Holds current NAEYC accreditation, is a Head Start Program with a Gold or Blue designation, or is accredited by the American Montessori Society.	Verified through copy of accreditation certificate and online registry confirmation.
Staffing and Professional Development	Director is at a level 5 or above on the MRTQ Administrative/Management Coordination Career Lattice OR at a level 6 or above on the MRTQ Direct Care Career Lattice AND 50% of lead teachers are at level 6 or above on MRTQ Direct Care Career Lattice.(Programs that meet NAEYC candidacy requirements may substitute verification of candidacy for the aforementioned professional development standard.)	Verified by online application process or after receipt of paper application  Copies of staff training and professional growth activities kept in staff files and are made available for review.
Administrative Policies and Procedures	Programs has a plan to implement a salary scale that is based on professional qualifications, length of employment, and performance evaluation. (NAEYC 10.E.01)	Copy of schedule to include planning time included in the portfolio and made available for review. Teacher phone interview. Copy of schedule to include planning time included in the portfolio and made available for review. Teacher phone interview. Evidence is included in sites files and is made available during random on site reviews.



## Quality for ME Standards for Head Start Programs - Step 4 continued

Head Start Programs must meet the National Head Start Performance Standards as evidenced by Zero non-compliance and All non-compliance items issued within the last three years by the Administration for Children and Families, meet all the standards for Step 2 and 3, and the following additional standards to be at Step 4 of *Maine's Quality Rating System - Quality for ME*

Standards	Step 4 Programs	Documentation Needed
Administrative Policies and Procedures cont.		Copy of minutes or agenda of staff meetings for at least 3 months included in portfolio.
Parent/Family Involvement	<p>Program has a documented plan to involve families and offer opportunities for individualized parent involvement. This can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteering ( not-for-profit centers only)</li> <li>• Sharing a meal with their child</li> <li>• Talent show</li> <li>• Circle time with a parent</li> <li>• Barbeque</li> <li>• fundraiser</li> </ul> <p>(NAEYC 7.A.12-14)</p>	<p>Copy of form used by program in portfolio. Parent survey. Copy of plan included in portfolio.</p>
Family Resources	Same as previous step.	Copy of information sheets filled out for RDC updates included in portfolio.
Authentic Assessment	<p>Evidence is collected 4 times per year on children's development in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social/Emotional</li> <li>• Cognitive</li> <li>• Physical (gross and fine motor) development</li> <li>• Communication</li> </ul> <p>Examples of evidence include children's work, observations, interviews with families, audio tape, video tape, photographs. This evidence is incorporated in curriculum planning.</p> <p>For programs serving infants and toddlers, the observations are linked to Supporting Maine's Infants and Toddlers- Guidelines for Learning and Development and for programs serving children 3-5 years, the observations are linked to Maine's Early Childhood Learning Guidelines which are used as a guide for planning.</p>	Evidence is included in children's files and is made available during random on site reviews. Documentation of curriculum planning based on observations is kept in portfolio.



# Quality for ME Standards

## School Age Programs

*Checklists including standards and required documentation  
for programs applying to Steps 2, 3 or 4*



# Quality for ME Standards School Age Programs

## Step 2

Step 2 programs must meet all minimum requirements (Step 1) plus the following standards

Standards	Step 2 Programs	Documentation Needed
Compliance History/ Licensing Status	Program is in compliance with licensing regulations.	Current State of Maine License for operation of Child Care facility.
	The facility has no substantiated serious violations in the past year.	Verification of license status upon application.
Learning Environment/ Developmentally Appropriate Practice	100% of direct service staff (including executive staff who work with children) are registered in MRTQ Registry.	Verified by online application process or after receipt of paper application.
	The program follows a daily schedule and the learning environment supports the interests of the children.	Copy of daily schedule included in portfolio.
Program Evaluation	The COA Accreditation Standards are used to guide the development of an age appropriate curriculum and activities.	Copy of written method for curriculum planning included in portfolio.
	The program is evaluated yearly using a self assessment tool (Accreditation Guidelines, age appropriate environment rating scale or another tool that has DHHS approval) and has a written improvement plan based upon findings of self-assessment. Staff members provide input for and receive feedback in the assessment.	Copy of completed self assessment for the year included in portfolio.
Staffing and Professional Development	25% of all direct service staff members are at a Level 3 or above on the MRTQ Direct Care Career Lattice. (this criteria exists until the appropriate credentials are developed or adopted as part of the Career Lattice at Level 4)	Verified by online application process or after receipt of paper application.
	Programs hold staff meetings on a monthly basis.	Copy of minutes or agenda of staff meetings for at least 3 months included in portfolio.



# Quality for ME Standards for School Age Programs - Step 2 continued

Standards	Step 2 Programs	Documentation Needed
Administrative Policies and Procedures	Programs have an employee handbook detailing policies for at least hiring and firing, advancement, grievance, sexual harassment, and child abuse reporting.	Copy of employee handbook included in portfolio.
	Program staff members have regular opportunities to refine their skills through a system of feedback and guidance (e.g. job performance evaluation).	Sample pf documentation of performance review are made available for random on-site review.
	The program has a parent handbook that includes the handbook requirements within licensing and the following additional policies and procedures around attendance, discipline, health and safety, field trips, and holidays.	Copy of parent handbook included in portfolio.
Parent/Family Involvement	The program has a written philosophy about the relationship between the parents and the program, which is shared with parents when their children are enrolled.	Copy of written philosophy is included in portfolio.
Family Resources	The program makes families aware of local and state resources available to them. These resources may include: Resource Development Centers, Child Development Services, Maine Parent Federation, MaineCare, local community events etc. Ways to inform parents of these resources may include: Parent resource library, bulletin boards, enrollment packets etc. Copy of information sheets filled out for semi-annual RDC updates included in portfolio.	
Authentic Assessment	<p>Evidence is collected 2 times per year on children's development in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social/Emotional</li> <li>• Cognitive</li> <li>• Physical (gross and fine motor) development</li> <li>• Communication</li> </ul> <p>Examples of evidence include children's work, observations, interviews with families, audio tape, video tape, photographs. This evidence is incorporated in curriculum planning.</p>	Evidence is included in children's files and is made available during random on-site reviews. Documentation of curriculum planning based on observations is kept in portfolio.



# Quality for ME Standards for School Age Programs - Step 3

Must meet all the standards for Step 2 plus the following standards

Standards	Step 3 Programs	Documentation Needed
Compliance History/ Licensing Status	Program is in compliance with licensing regulations.	Current State of Maine License for operation of Child Care facility.
	The facility has no substantiated serious violations in the past 3 years.	Verification of license status upon application.
	100% of direct service staff (including executive staff who work with children) are registered in MRTQ Registry.	Verified by online application process or after receipt of paper application.
Program Evaluation	Program conducts a child survey annually and uses information from these surveys in program improvement.	Copy of completed child survey results included in portfolio.
Staffing and Professional Development	At least 50% of all direct service staff are at a Level 3 or above on the MRTQ Direct Care Career Lattice, have a professional development plan prepared annually, 10 hours of professional growth activities per year above the regulatory minimum.	Verified by online application process or after receipt of paper application.
Administrative Policies and Procedures	Staff members (with curriculum planning responsibilities) are provided with at least 1 hour of time per week out of the setting for curriculum planning that directly relates to the development of age appropriate activities.	Verified during random on-site observation.
	Programs that employ staff offer a benefit package including, at minimum, 2 of the following: reduced child care rates for children of staff, tuition reimbursement, paid training, mileage reimbursement for training and education, health insurance, dental insurance, disability insurance, retirement plan, paid vacation, paid sick time, paid personal time, paid holidays.	Policies outlining benefits included in employee handbook- copy is included in portfolio.
	Programs that employ staff offer them the opportunity to participate in the development and /or revision of program policies. (ex. Policy review can be staff meeting agenda item)	Verified during staff survey.



# Quality for ME Standards for School Age Programs - Step 3 continued

Must meet all the standards for Step 2 plus the following standards

Standards	Step 3 Programs	Documentation Needed
Parent/Family Involvement	<p>Parents are offered at least 2 parent conferences a year to discuss the child's progress, behavior, social and physical needs.</p>	<p>Documentation of parent conferences included in children's files and made available during random on-site review.</p>
	<p>Parent Surveys are done annually. The survey tool must be approved by DHHS or the program may use the one provided by DHHS.</p>	<p>Copy of survey results included in portfolio.</p>
	<p>Program has a parent advisory/involvement group and provides opportunities for parent involvement in the program that embody the written philosophy of parent-program relationship.</p>	<p>Parent involvement policy outlined in parent handbook- a copy of which is included in portfolio.</p>
Family Resources	<p>The program makes families aware of local and state resources available to them. These resources may include: Resource Development Centers, Child Development Services, Maine Parent Federation, MaineCare, local community events etc. Ways to inform parents of these resources may include: Parent resource library, bulletin boards, enrollment packets etc. Program maintains current and accurate information about community resources by connecting with their local Resource Development Center Copy of information sheets filled out for semi-annual RDC updates included in portfolio.</p>	
Authentic Assessment	<p>Evidence is collected 3 times per year on children's development in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social/Emotional</li> <li>• Cognitive</li> <li>• Physical (gross and fine motor) development</li> <li>• Communication</li> </ul> <p>Examples of evidence include children's work, observations, interviews with families, audio tape, video tape, photographs. This evidence is incorporated in curriculum planning.</p>	<p>Evidence is included in children's files and is made available during random on-site reviews. Documentation of curriculum planning based on observations is kept in portfolio.</p>



# Quality for ME Standards for School Age Programs - Step 4

Programs must be accredited by the Council on Accreditation (COA), meet all the standards for Step 2 and 3, and the following additional standards to be at Step 4 of Maine's *Quality Rating System - Quality for ME*

Standards	Step 4 Programs	Documentation Needed
Compliance History/ Licensing Status	Program is in compliance with licensing regulations.	Current State of Maine License for operation of child care facility.
	The facility has no substantiated serious violations in the past three years.	Verification of licensing status upon application.
Learning Environment/ Developmentally Appropriate Practice	Same as previous step.	Copy of daily schedule included in portfolio.  Copy of written method for curriculum planning included in portfolio.
Program Evaluation	Holds current accreditation from COA.	Verified through copy of accreditation certificate and online registry confirmation.
Staffing and Professional Development	Program staff meets the experience/education/professional preparation as outlined in the COA accreditation standards. (Key 31)	Verified by online application process or after receipt of paper application Evidence is included in sites files and is made available during random on site reviews.
Administrative Policies and Procedures	Program has a plan to implement a salary scale that is based on professional qualifications, length of employment, and performance evaluation. (Key 34)	Evidence is included in sites files and is made available during random on site reviews.
Parent/Family Involvement	Program has a documented plan to involve families and offer opportunities for individualized parent involvement. This can include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteering (not-for-profit centers only)</li> <li>• Sharing a meal with their child</li> <li>• Talent show</li> <li>• Barbeque</li> <li>• fundraiser</li> </ul> (Keys 23d, 24)	Copy of plan included in portfolio.
Family Resources	Same as previous step.	Copy of information sheets filled out for RDC updates included in portfolio.
Authentic Assessment	Evidence is collected 4 times per year on children's development in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social/Emotional</li> <li>• Cognitive</li> <li>• Physical (gross and fine motor) development</li> <li>• Communication</li> </ul> Examples of evidence include children's work, observations, interviews with families, audio tape, video tape, photographs. This evidence is incorporated in curriculum planning.	Evidence is included in children's files and is made available during random on site reviews. Documentation of curriculum planning based on observations is kept in portfolio



## TIPS for Completing Your Initial Maine Roads Registry Application

By joining the Registry, early care and education professionals have the opportunity to receive recognition for their training, education and professional experience. Each Registry member receives a Registry Certificate that indicates their career path and level of professional development. Completing your Registry application is a very simple process.

### SECTION 1 - ABOUT YOURSELF

This section includes your personal information. Your Registry certificate packet will be sent to your home address unless you indicate otherwise.

### SECTION 2 - WORK SETTING

Please indicate the setting or role that best describes your current position and list your current job title. Please also indicate the age groups of the children with whom you work.

### SECTION 3 - EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION

Section A refers to your current work site. If you work for a multi-site program, please use the name of the center where you actually work. You will name your larger agency in Part C.

Date of Employment means the date when you started at your current location. Be sure to use the name of the center where you are actually located.

Section B describes your current program/agency. Please check all the categories that best describe the program's services.

Section C. If your program is part of a larger agency or a family child care network, please complete this section. It is very important that the Registry make the correct connection between an individual program and the sponsoring agencies,

Section D. Please indicate if your program/center where you work is accredited. The accrediting body and the expiration date.

### SECTION 4 - ABOUT EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION WORK EXPERIENCE

The section calculates your experience working with young children or families. You should include all relevant paid experience as well as supervised student teaching or field experience. Please do not include occasional volunteer work or baby sitting.

Be sure to include your current employment as well as past paid employment. Your Registry level will depend in part on your experience. Please do not include occasional volunteer work or baby sitting.

### SECTION 5 - ABOUT YOUR EDUCATION

Please indicate the highest level of education that you have completed to date. Check only one level. If you have completed any Early Childhood Education college course work or have earned a degree, you need to include a college transcript. It is especially important to include a college transcript even if your degree is not in Early Childhood education. You may have related course work that will count. We do not give credit for course work or degrees unless you include a transcript or grade report. Unofficial transcripts often do not include the name of the institution or indicate if you have graduated from the program. We do not give credit for any degree earned unless we verify the date you received the degree.

## SECTION 6 - ABOUT YOUR TRAINING IN EARLY CARE IN THE LAST 5 YEARS

Your placement on the Registry Career Lattice is based on three criteria:

Experience working in an Early Care and Education Setting,  
Your highest early care and education level and,  
Your participation in ongoing relevant training.

If you do not hold a degree or a CDA credential in Early Care and Education, Social Services, or a related degree, you may use relevant training hours to determine your initial Registry Level. You may submit a combination of all Maine Roads Core Knowledge Training hours that you have completed and up to 30 hours of other Early Education training hours that you have completed in the past five years. All workshop and conference certificates must clearly state the name of the training, the date of the training and the number of hours of training earned or they will not be counted. Please send copies of your certificates. We can not return originals. You may also submit a signed training log from your employer that documents training from the past five years. Do not include certificates for any training listed on the employee training log.

## SECTION 7 - ABOUT PROFESSIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS

This section gives you the opportunity to list your professional contributions to the Child Care and Early Education field.

## SECTION 8 - OPTIONAL INFORMATION

We encourage you to complete this optional section. The information you include is confidential and does not affect your Registry level. The data received give us information about professional development needs and the status of early care and education professional in the field.

## SECTION 9 - SIGNATURE AND MAILING INSTRUCTIONS

Please use the check list included in this section to ensure that you have included all the necessary documentation needed to process your application. Please sign and date your Registry application and return your Registry application packet

Maine Roads to Quality  
PO Box 9300  
34 Bedford St.  
Portland, ME 04104-9300

Revised: 2010

Maine Roads to Quality Registry Application is available at  
[www.muskie.usm.maine.edu/maineroads/Registry.html](http://www.muskie.usm.maine.edu/maineroads/Registry.html)  
or by contacting Priscilla Armstrong, Registry Coordinator at 207-780-5846



**Accreditation** - A process that validates a program is employing quality processes and procedures in delivering early care and education that conforms to national standards. Although many professional organizations accredit early care and education programs Maine's DHHS only recognizes accreditation by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) for center based care, by the National Association for Family Child Care (NAFFC) for family child care programs, the National After-School Association (COA) for school age care, the American Montessori Society (AMS) for Montessori programs, and Head Start Programs with Gold or Blue Designation.

**Advancement policy** - A policy for employees within a child care program that outlines the opportunities for advancement within the program.

**American Montessori Society (AMS)** - This society provides leadership and advocacy for the Montessori philosophy of education. The mutual association strengthens their members and promotes Montessori principles within the educational and greater communities. Their products and services include program improvement and accreditation, conferences, research, and public policy advocacy.

**American Montessori Society (AMS) Accreditation Standards** - The standards used by the American Montessori Society to measure the quality of early care and education programs adhering to their educational philosophies. The AMS accreditation system is recognized by the State of Maine - DHHS.

**Attendance policy** - A policy within the parent handbook that outlines the expectations around a child's attendance and payment for child care services in the child's absence.

**Benefit package** - An outline of benefits offered to employees working in the early care and education setting. These may include reduced child care rates for children of staff, tuition reimbursement, paid training, mileage reimbursement for training and education, health insurance, dental insurance, disability insurance, retirement plan, paid vacation, paid sick time, paid personal time, and/or paid holidays.

**Bulletin boards** - Visual display boards where owners/directors can post information that parents and/or employees should be aware of.

**Center Based Care (CBC)** - Refers to programs that are licensed as child care centers.

**Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies- Child Care Plus ME Project** – A State-University Partnership initiative with the Maine Department of Human Services, Office of Child Care & Head Start, designed to improve access to and quality of child care for all children in Maine, particularly those with challenging medical and behavioral health care needs and to prevent children from being excluded from mainstream childcare programs.

**Child abuse reporting** - All employees and volunteers in child care settings are required legally and ethically to report child abuse in accordance with state law.

**Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential** - An early care and education credential administered by the Council for Professional Recognition

**Child Development Services** - The system of early intervention service provision in the state of Maine for children birth through age five.

**Child survey** - A tool used in school age programs to measure the level of satisfaction children have with components of the program they attend

**Cognitive Domain** - The area of development that includes a person's ability to acquire knowledge through perception, reasoning or intuition.

**Communication Domain** - The area of development that includes a person's ability to exchange ideas or information through speech or signs.

**Council of Accreditation (COA)**- The largest independent accrediting body for organizations that provide high quality social and behavioral healthcare services to children, youth, seniors and families in the United States and Canada.

**Daily schedule** - A predetermined schedule of events that are followed each day to provide consistency for children within the program.

**Dental insurance** - A benefit offered to employees of an early care and education setting to provide full or partial financial assistance to an employee when obtaining dental/oral health care.

**Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)** – DHHS is Maine's administrative department that is home to the Office of Child and Family Services - Early Childhood Division. The Early Childhood Division, Early Care and Education Unit has overseen the development of Quality for ME and will continue sponsoring the project in an administrative capacity.

**Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP)** - Care and instructional practices that acknowledge the differing needs and developmental levels of children and offer a program that is responsive to those needs and levels.

**Disability insurance** - A benefit offered to employees of an early care and education setting to provide full or partial financial support in the event an employee is unable to work.

**Discipline policy** - A policy that outlines the methods a program uses to deal with children's challenging behaviors. Inappropriate methods of discipline are outlined in the State of Maine Child Care Licensing Rules.

**Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS)** - One of a series of standardized tools used to assess quality in early childhood group settings (ages 2 1/2-5). Aspects assessed include: space and furnishings, personal care routines, language-reasoning, activities, interactions, program structure, parents and staff. The tool can highlight areas of strength and opportunities for improvement.

**Early Childhood Learning Guidelines (ECLG)** – are a guide for early care and education practitioners’ to use when linking programming and practice to children’s developmental milestones between the ages of three and five.

**Employee handbook** – A handbook that includes the policies and guidelines for staff members employed within the program.

**Enrollment packets** – Information provided to families upon their child’s entrance into an early care and education program. This should include policies relating to the operation of the facility and care of children in the program.

**Environmental Rating Scales (ERS)** – One of a series of standardized tools used to assess quality in early care and education settings. Different settings are assessed using different standards. Early childhood group settings are assessed using the Early Childhood Scale (ECERS), family care settings use the Family Child Care Scale (FCCERS), infant and toddler programs use the Infant/Toddler Scale (ITERS), and school aged programs use the School Age Care Scale (SACERS). Aspects assessed vary by setting. The tool identifies areas of strength and opportunities for improvement.

**Family Child Care (FCC)** – Family child care programs and/or providers as defined in state of Maine licensing rules.

**Family Child Care Environmental Rating Scale (FCCERS)** – One of a series of standardized tools used to assess quality in family child care programs conducted in a provider’s home. Aspects assessed include: space and furnishings for care and learning, basic care, language and reasoning, learning activities, social development, and adult needs. The tool highlights a program’s areas of strength and opportunities for improvement.

**Field trips** – Organized, supervised opportunities for children to venture away from the child care program and experience a different setting.

**Grievance policy** – A policy that is included in the employee handbook that outlines the method in which staff members can address issues with program practices and/or personnel issues toward conflict resolution.

**Hiring and firing** – Employment policies that detail the expectations of early care and education employers before engaging program personnel and clarifying employee behaviors that may result in the termination of employment. The policy should include the progression of corrective steps or opportunities, if any, that may be taken prior to dismissal.

**Infants and toddlers** – Programs providing care to children from birth through twelve months (infants) and twelve to thirty-six months (toddlers) are considered infant and toddler programs within Quality for ME.

**Infant and Toddler Environmental Rating Scale (ITERS)** – One of a series of standardized tools used to assess quality in infant and toddler programs (birth through 30 months). Aspects assessed include: space and furnishings, personal care routines, listening-talking, activities, interactions, program structure, parents and staff. The tool can highlight areas of strength and opportunities for improvement.

**Intentional curriculum planning** – The connection between observing a child’s interests and development and planning for the provision of opportunities and experiences to support and expand that development.

**Job performance evaluation** – An opportunity for a supervisor to meet with a staff member and provide feedback on their job performance.

**Lead teacher** - The individual who has overall program or classroom responsibility for children enrolled in the setting.

**Learning Environment** - The characteristics and physical settings of an early care and education programs.

**MaineCare** - A program of DHHS that helps to assist families in achieving their maximum potential, independence, employability, safety and health by providing health care to individuals based on income eligibility guidelines. For more information on MaineCare see their web site, [www.maine.gov/dhhs/bms](http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/bms)

**Maine Parent Federation** - The Maine Parent Federation, Inc. is a statewide private non-profit organization that provides information, advocacy, education, and training to parents and professionals to benefit all children.

**Maine Roads to Quality (MRTQ)** - Maine's early care and education center dedicated to developing and sustaining quality learning environments for all Maine's children. The center's goals include addressing the training and educational needs of all early care and education professionals, developing multiple ways for professionals to achieve their career goals, and recognizing and rewarding professionalism. MRTQ is the home to the Maine Roads Registry and Career Lattice.

**Maine Roads to Quality (MRTQ) Career Lattice** - The Career Lattice awards levels of achievements to Early Care and Education (ECE) providers based on training and employment history or earned ECE credentials. There are three career lattices attached to the MRTQ Registry: the Direct Care Professional Lattice for practitioners who work in family child care, centers or school age programs, the social service professional lattice for practitioners who work in Early Care and Education settings but work primarily with families, and the administrative/manager/coordination professional lattice for practitioners who manage Early Care and Education programs or work in other programs that support early care and education practitioners.

**Maine Roads to Quality (MRTQ) Registry** - The Maine Roads Registry and Career Lattice is our state's child care and early education professional recognition system. As a Registry member, you receive recognition for your experience working with children and families, your ongoing training and your educational accomplishments in early childhood education or related fields.

**Mileage reimbursement for training and education** - A benefit offered to employees of an early care and education setting to provide full or partial financial support for an

**National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC)** - A national professional association dedicated to promoting quality child care by strengthening the profession of family child care. Their products and services include education, research, conferences, program accreditation, policy advocacy, and numerous publications.

**National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC) Accreditation Standards** - The standards used by the National Association for Family Child Care to measure the quality of family home based programs. The NAFCC accreditation system is recognized by the State of Maine - DHHS.

**National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)** - A national professional association dedicated to improving the well-being of all young children, with particular focus on the quality of educational and developmental services for all children from birth through age eight. Their products and services include education, research, conferences, program accreditation, policy advocacy, and numerous publications.

**National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Accreditation Standards** - The standards used by the National Association for the Education of Young Children to measure the quality of center based programs. The NAEYC accreditation system is recognized by the State of Maine- DHHS.

**Paid holidays** - A benefit offered to employees of an early care and education setting to provide full or partial financial support for an employee when observing holidays not worked when the setting may, or may not, be open.

**Paid personal time** - A benefit offered to employees of an early care and education setting to provide full or partial financial support in the event an employee misses time worked to attend to personal business.

**Paid sick time** - A benefit offered to employees of an early care and education setting to provide full or partial financial support in the event an employee is unable to work due to illness.

**Paid training** - A benefit offered to employees of an early care and education setting to provide full or partial financial support for an employee pursuing further training/educational opportunities.

**Paid vacation** - A benefit offered to employees of an early care and education setting to provide full or partial financial support for an employee when taking time away from the workplace when the setting may, or may not, be open.

**Parent advisory/involvement group** - A group of interested parents who advise an early care and education program's director/owner on program practices and organizes opportunities for family involvement.

**Parent conferences** - Opportunities for family members to connect with program staff and discuss children's development, strengths, areas of concern and any other issues that parents/guardians or program staff want to address.

**Parent resource library** - A collection of books, articles and other materials that parents can access at the child care program. Library items are often loaned out for a period of time and returned so that they may be loaned out to another family member or staff member.

**Parent survey** - A tool used to measure the level of satisfaction parents have with components of the program their child(ren) attend.

**Physical (gross and fine motor) development** - The area of development that includes a person's ability to acquire increased strength and coordination.

**Professional development activities** - Activities that promote professional development including training and attending professional organization meetings (Examples: Maine AEYC, NAEYC, MRTQ Recognition Event, Lunch and Learn events at your local RDC).

**Publicly funded child care/health insurance** - Maine's DHHS encompasses programs that provide both subsidized child care (child care vouchers and contracted slots) and health care (MaineCare) to qualifying Maine families. DHHS actively pursues opportunities to distribute information about these programs. Information about these programs is available on-line and through your RDC.

**Quality Certificates** - A certificate awarded by DHHS-OCFS to programs meeting criteria as indicated within the [Quality for ME](#) system. Certificates are awarded for a three year period and must be renewed. Parents whose children(ren) attend early care and education programs holding Quality Certificates are entitled to additional tax credits. For more information contact your tax preparer or Maine Revenue Service.

**Quality for ME** – Maine’s voluntary four step quality rating system.

**Quality Rating System (QRS)** – A set of standards used to evaluate the quality of an early childhood program.

**Reduced child care rates** – A benefit offered to employees of an early care and education setting to provide full or partial financial support for the attendance of the employee’s child(ren) at the setting.

**Resource Development Centers (RDC)** – A network of eight centers located throughout the state that serve as vital links connecting parents, providers, businesses, and child advocates. They provide parents with early care and education information and referrals and provide technical assistance, training, and resources to providers.

**Retirement plan** – A benefit offered to employees of an early care and education setting to provide full or partial financial support to an employee after a pre-determined length of service and/or upon reaching a pre-determined age.

**School Age Care (SAC)** – This designation applies to programs that operate as before- and after-school care programs.

**School Age Care Environmental Rating Scale (SACERS)** – One of a series of standardized tools used to assess quality in group care programs for children of school age (ages 5-12). Aspects assessed include: space and furnishings, health and safety, activities, interactions, program structure, and staff development. The evaluation process involves a visit to the setting by a trained observer. The tool can highlight areas of strength and opportunities for improvement.

**Self-assessment** – A process of self reflection to refine practices toward program improvement and the provision of high quality care.

**Sexual harassment policy** – Policies designed to protect employees from receiving unwanted sexual attention in the workplace. These policies provide clear expectations about unacceptable behaviors and spell out the consequences of not adhering to these expectations.

**Social/Emotional Domain**– The area of development marked by self awareness, self concept and interaction with peers and adults.

**Staff meetings** – Opportunities to discuss any matters pertinent to the program, track progress toward goals, disseminate information to staff regarding policies, changes, expectations, address issues particular to any child or group of children, celebrate accomplishments. Evidence that these staff meetings have occurred should be included in the portfolio of supporting documentation. Evidence can include agendas, log book, or minutes.

**Substantiated serious violations** – Licensing violations that pose serious risk to children (see Licensing Violations insert for clarification).

**Supporting Maine’s Infants and Toddlers: Guidelines for Learning and Development** – A guide for early care and education practitioners’ to use when linking programming and practice to the developmental milestones from birth to three.

**Tiered system** – Tiered quality rating systems require participants to satisfy all criteria of one step before moving on to the next higher step.

**Tuition reimbursement** - A benefit offered to employees of an early care and education setting to provide full or partial financial assistance when an employee pursues additional training and/or educational opportunities.

**Women, Infant, and Children (WIC)** - A program that provides access to supplemental nutrition for low-income pregnant and nursing women and their children (up to age 5) who are at nutritional risk. The program provides some foods, health care referrals, and information on eating healthy.

**Written daily communication** - Communication between caregiver and family member that includes information about daily routines (eating, napping, toileting, etc.) and any additional pertinent information about the child's day.

**Written improvement plan** - A written action plan based on program weaknesses identified through self assessment and/or as a result of a formal observation.

**Written philosophy about parents and the program** - The written expression of an early care and education program's concept of the role of parents in the program. Clear expectations between parents and program staff can minimize misunderstandings, avoid potential disappointments and notably enhance a child's early care experience





# Licensing Violations

## Clarification of serious Family Child Care licensing violations within the Quality for ME Quality Rating System

Programs applying to *Quality for ME* must be in compliance with licensing regulations and have no substantiated serious violations for 12 to 36 months prior to the date of the application. The length of time varies according to which Step the program is applying for. See the standards for details.

### Lack of Supervision

#### *Children shall never be left alone*

**No child left alone in vehicle.** The staff shall not leave any child alone in a motor vehicle.

#### *Ratios shall be maintained at all times*

**Number of children served.** A Family Child Care certificate permits a qualified person to care for three (3) to twelve (12) children between the ages of six (6) weeks old and thirteen (13) years old, according to age groups and staffing requirements detailed in Section IX.A of Rules for Family Child Care Providers.

Effective August 2008, children living in the home who are five (5) years and older are not counted in determining the certificate capacity of a Family Child Care.

All children in care who are younger than thirteen (13) years old shall be counted in child/staff ratios.

**Adult to child ratios in vehicles.** There shall be one adult present for up to six preschool children transported. Additional preschool children shall be supervised according to staff-child ratios specified in Section IX of Rules for Family Child Care Providers. One adult person shall be in the vehicle for every three non-ambulatory children.

#### *Children shall be actively supervised*

Providers or staff shall have knowledge of and accountability for the activity and whereabouts of each child in care, the ability to see or hear all children at all times and to provide prompt intervention when needed.

Sound monitors alone shall not be considered as an acceptable form of supervision.

**Constant supervision.** Staff must directly supervise children at all times. Children must be within sight and sound of staff.

**Provider to be awake.** The provider shall be awake and alert to the needs of children. (Night time Care)

**Supervision of play area.** The provider or a staff person shall supervise the children when they are using the play area.

#### **Swimming and Wading Activities**

Any family child care provider that operates a swimming pool over twenty-four inches (24") deep at any point must be in compliance with Department of Health and Human Services, Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Division of Environmental Health Rules Relating to Public Swimming Pools and Spas.

**Water safety attendant on duty.** The family child care provider must have an appropriately trained water safety attendant, as required by these rules, present at all times during swim instruction or other swimming or wading activity.

**Swimming pools.** For swimming pools, the water safety attendant must have completed within the past three (3) years a Department-approved basic water safety course that includes training in non-swimming water rescue techniques. A copy of the current certificate must be on file in the family child care. In a pool that is more than four (4) feet deep at any point, if a non-swimming rescue is not feasible, then a lifeguard must be on duty.

**Wading pools.** For wading pools the water safety attendant on duty must hold a valid CPR certificate and a valid first aid certificate

**Off-site activities.** For swimming and wading activities away from the family child care premises, the family child care provider must provide an adequate number of water safety attendants, including lifeguards, as required by these rules, if the wading pool, swimming pool, beach, lake or water park operator does not.

**Constant supervision.** Staff must directly supervise children at all times. Children must be within sight and sound of staff.

**Staff to child ratios.** The staff-to-child ratio must be maintained at all times.

- a) If the pool is more than four (4) feet deep at any point, only adults who can swim may be counted in the staff-to-child ratios.
- b) For swimming pools, water safety attendants, including lifeguards, and swimming instructors do not count toward staff-to-child ratios. Water safety attendants, including lifeguards, must be stationed outside and next to the swimming pool.
- c) Exception. If three (3) or fewer children are in the swimming pool and the water safety attendant is stationed outside and next to the swimming pool, the water safety attendant may count toward the staff-to-child ratio.
- d) Wading pools. For wading pools, water safety attendants may count toward staff-to-child ratios.

## Administrative negligence

### Children shall be cared for by qualified personnel

A Family Child Care Provider shall be at least eighteen (18) years old.

**Background checks required.** Criminal history reports, motor vehicle reports, Out-of-Home Abuse Investigation Reports and child protection reports shall be obtained for each

individual applicant for a certificate, and for each paid, unpaid, temporary or regular staff member or volunteer, in a Family Child Care. Criminal history reports, Out-of-Home Abuse and Neglect Investigation reports and child protection reports shall also be obtained for any adult living in or frequenting the Family Child Care.

Staff or volunteers who are at least 16 years old and under 18 years old, shall be under the direct supervision (within sight or sound) of a staff member who is over age 18.

A staff member who is certified in basic adult, child, and infant First Aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) shall be present at all times while child care is being provided.

**Driver requirements.** Any person assigned by the provider to drive children under care shall have the proper license to drive the class of motor vehicle being used.

### Children shall be protected from abuse and neglect

**Constructive methods of guidance.** The Family Child Care shall use only constructive methods of guidance. This may include, but is not limited to interventions such as conflict resolution, encouraging the use of language skills, redirecting, providing choices, positive reinforcement, recognizing of a child's strengths, and allow for individual differences.

**Actions that might be harmful to children are strictly forbidden.** No child shall be subjected to an action or practice detrimental to the welfare of children as defined by the Department of Health and Human Services in Section VIII.A.1, Rules for Family Child Care Providers.

**Abuse and Neglect in the Family Child Care.** The provider shall ensure that staff, volunteers and others living in the household or frequenting the Family Child Care do not abuse or neglect the children in any way, including physical, sexual, or emotional abuse.

**Reporting requirement.** The provider and all child care personnel (staff) are required to report to the Department of Health and Human Services when there is reasonable cause to suspect abuse or neglect of a child under the age of eighteen (18). The Family Child Care shall make all child care personnel aware of their status and responsibility as mandated reporters of suspected abuse or neglect of a child.

### Children shall have health and medication needs met safely

**Accidents and sudden illness.** The provider shall immediately notify the child's parent or guardian of any serious illness, injury, or accident involving their child. If the parent is not available at the time of emergency, the provider must notify an adult designated by the parent. For any serious illness or injury, the provider shall seek appropriate medical attention.

## Giving medication

1. The provider shall give a child prescription medication only upon written, signed and dated order from either a parent or a physician.
2. The provider shall only give medication prescribed for the specified child, according to the label instructions on the original container.
3. The provider shall not give any nonprescription medications to a child without written permission from the parent. Verbal permission is allowed in emergencies if the provider makes a written note and then gets written permission from the parent as soon as possible.
4. The provider shall keep a written record, noting each time any prescription and nonprescription medication is given to a child.

**Napping/resting.** Infants shall be placed on their backs for sleeping, unless contraindicated by a physician. Placing children on their abdomens for sleeping shall be avoided, unless specifically instructed by the child's physician to do so.

Sleeping infants shall be checked at least every thirty (30) minutes.

Smoking is prohibited on the premises when children are present. This includes all indoor and outdoor areas used by the Family Child Care where children may be present.

## Environmental Hazards

### *Children shall be cared for in facilities appropriately maintained and inspected*

The Family Child Care provider shall take immediate steps to correct any condition in the physical building or on the premises, which poses a danger to children's life, health or safety.

### *Children shall be provided with safely maintained space*

#### **Transportation**

**Safety in moving vehicles.** Children shall be seated with seat belts fastened or in child safety seats as required by State law, while the vehicle is in motion.

All children age twelve (12) and under shall ride in the back seat.

### *Children shall not be exposed or have access to unsafe equipment and materials*

**Safe Outdoor equipment.** All equipment shall be firmly secured, clean, and in proper repair.

**No weapons.** Weapons shall not be carried in any vehicle in which children are riding.

Firearms shall be kept unloaded and, along with any other weapons, shall be locked up to prevent contact by children. Ammunition shall be locked in a separate location from weapons.

Any medications, cleaning supplies, toxic substances, matches, lighters, power tools, and other items dangerous to children shall be kept where children cannot see or reach them.

**Size of toys, food or other objects.** Infants and toddlers shall not be allowed to use toys or objects which could be swallowed or cause choking. Foods that are choking hazards due to the size, shape or texture shall not be served to infants and toddlers.

**A crib or bed for each child.** A provider who offers nighttime care shall have a safe and sturdy crib for each infant, and a safe and sturdy bed or cot with mattress and a pillow for each older child.

## *Violating the Rights of Children in Family Child Care Settings*

**Right to freedom from abuse and neglect.** Children shall be free from mental, verbal, physical and/or sexual abuse, neglect and exploitation.

**Right to confidentiality.** Children's records and information kept by the Family Child Care are confidential. Family Child Care shall follow the Rules regarding confidentiality as outlined in Section V.D of these Rules.

**Right to freedom from harmful actions or practices.** Each child has the right to freedom from harmful actions or practices that are detrimental to his/her welfare and to practices that are potentially harmful to the child.

**Right to a safe and healthy environment.** Each child has a right to an environment that meets the health and safety standards in these Rules.

**Right to be free from discrimination.** A child shall be provided child care without regard to race, age, national origin, religion, disability, sex or family composition.

**Right to consideration and respect.** Children shall be treated with dignity, consideration and respect in full recognition of their individuality. This includes the use of developmentally appropriate practices by the Family Child Care.

**Right to be informed of services provided by the Family Child Care.** A child's legal guardian shall be fully informed of items or services which are included in the rate they pay for children attending the Family Child Care.

**Right to information regarding the Family Child Care's deficiencies.** A child's legal guardian has the right to be fully informed of findings of any certification review conducted by the Department. The Family Child Care shall inform chil-

dren's legal guardian that the certification review results are public information and available for examination upon request. Legal guardian shall be notified in a timely manner by the Family Child Care provider of any actions proposed or taken against the Family Child Care by the Department, including but not limited to, decisions to issue conditional certificates, refusal to renew a certificate or to impose fines or other sanctions.

**Right to a service plan.** Each child has the right to expect the provider to assist him/her in implementing any reasonable plan of service developed with community or state agencies.

**Right to a variety of appropriate activities, materials and equipment.** Each child has a right to a variety of activities, materials and equipment that meets the child's interests and capabilities.

**Mandatory report of rights violations.** Any person or professional who provides health care, social services or mental health services or who administers a Family Child Care who reasonably believes that the Rules pertaining to children's rights and the conduct of childcare have been violated, shall report this information to the Department's Child Care Licensing Unit. Any person reporting suspected abuse and neglect shall report this information to Child Protective Intake Services, pursuant to Title 22 M.R.S.A. § 4011-A and Section XVI of these Rules. Documentation shall be maintained in the Family Child Care that a report has been made.

**Reasonable modifications and accommodations.** To afford individuals with disabilities the opportunity to participate in a Family Child Care, the Family Child Care shall act as follows:

1. The Family Child Care shall make reasonable modifications to their policies and practices to include children, parents and guardians with disabilities, unless to do so would be a fundamental alteration of their program.
2. The Family Child Care shall make the home accessible to people with disabilities. Existing homes must remove any readily achievable barriers, while newly constructed homes and any altered portions of existing homes must be fully accessible. If existing barriers can be easily removed without much difficulty or expense, providers must remove those barriers immediately even if there are no children with disabilities using the program (rearranging tables, chairs or other furniture are examples of readily achievable barrier removal).

### **Additional Information:**

**Grounds for intermediate sanctions.** The following circumstances shall be grounds for the imposition of intermediate sanctions:

1. Impeding or interfering with the enforcement of laws or rules governing the certifying of a Family Child Care, or giving false information in connection with the enforcement of such laws and rules; and/or
2. Failure to comply with Rights for Children in Family Child Care, Section VI of these Rules.

### **Disclaimer:**

The Department will consider licensing violations on a facility by facility basis and reserves the right to determine whether serious risk to children was present, either as defined by these guidelines, or in some other manner not stated herein.

## Clarification of licensing violations within Quality for ME for Center Based Care including Head Start Centers and School Age Care Centers

Programs applying to **Quality for ME** must be in compliance with licensing regulations and have no substantiated serious risk violations for 12 to 36 months prior to the date of application. The length of time varies according to which Step the program is applying for. See the standards for details.

### Lack of Supervision

#### *Ratios shall be maintained at all times*

**Children under six (6) weeks of age.** No child under six (6) weeks of age, as verified by a birth certificate, shall be cared for in a Child Care Facility.

**Children of staff members.** Children of staff members shall be counted in the appropriate age groups when in care at the facility.

**Supervision for each child.** Each child, during both indoor and outdoor times, shall be supervised by a childcare staff member who is aware of and responsible for the ongoing activity of each child and who is near enough to the child to intervene when needed.

**Supervision while napping.** The facility shall provide supervision to children during napping and/or sleeping hours and at all other times by awake staff.

**Adult to child ratios in vehicles.** There shall be one (1) adult present for up to six (6) pre-school age children, infants or toddlers transported. Additional pre-school age children shall be supervised in accordance with staff/child ratios, Sections XXVII.A. and XXIX.A.1. *Rules for the Licensing of Child Care Facilities*

In addition one (1) staff person or adult volunteer per every three (3) non-ambulatory children must be present in the vehicle.

**Swimming and Wading Activities Water safety attendant on duty.** The child care facility must have an appropriately trained water safety attendant, as required by Section XVI of 10-148 Chapter 32 of the *Rules for the Licensing of Child Care Facilities*, present at all times during swim instruction or other swimming or wading activities.

**Constant supervision.** Staff must directly supervise children at all times. Children must be within sight and sound of staff.

**Staff to child ratios.** The staff-to-child ratio must be maintained at all times as outlined in section XVI of 10-148 Chapter 32.

If the pool is more than four (4) feet deep at any point, only adults who can swim may be counted in the staff-to-child ratios.

For swimming pools, water safety attendants, including life-guards, and swimming instructors do not count toward staff-to-child ratios. Water safety attendants, including life-guards, must be stationed outside and next to the swimming pool.

**Exception.** If three (3) or fewer children are in the swimming pool and the water safety attendant is stationed outside and next to the swimming pool, the water safety attendant may count toward the staff-to-child ration.

**Wading pools.** For wading pools, water safety attendants may count toward staff-to-child ratios.

**Outdoor supervision.** All parts of the playground must be under constant view of the supervising staff.

### Administrative negligence

#### *Children shall be cared for by qualified personnel*

There must be present at all times a staff member in each Child Care Facility who is currently certified in first aid and infant, child and adult Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR).

**Licensed driver.** Any person authorized by the facility to transport children shall be properly licensed to operate that class of vehicle.

All staff and volunteers who transport children as part of their regular duties shall complete the Department approved children's transportation training.

#### **Personnel Record must contain:**

Record of SBI (State Bureau of Identification) criminal history report. Record of a Child Protective Services Record Check. These shall be applied for prior to or at the time of employment;

Annual motor vehicle record check for all persons employed in any Child Care Facility in a capacity involving the transporting of minors as stated in the Child Protection Act, 17 M.R.S.A. § 2872;

## *Children shall be protected from abuse and neglect*

**Positive methods of child guidance.** Staff shall use positive methods of child guidance which encourage self-control, self-direction, self-esteem and cooperation. Child guidance shall meet the individual needs of each child.

**Actions that might be harmful to children are strictly forbidden.** No child shall be subjected to an action or practice detrimental to the welfare of children as defined by the Department of Health and Human Services in Section VIII.A.5. Rules for the Licensing of Child Care Facilities

## *Children shall have health and medication needs met safely*

**Accidents and sudden illness.** The facility shall immediately notify the child's parent or guardian of any serious illness, injury, or accident involving their child. An adult designated by the parent or legal guardian shall be notified immediately should the parent or legal guardian be unavailable at the time of emergency.

### **Administration of medication**

**Written orders required.** The facility shall administer prescription medication only upon written order from a physician or according to the labeled instructions on the original medicine container and with a written, signed and dated request from the parent or legal guardian.

**Recording the administration of medications.** The facility shall record the administration of all medications, including the amount, time, date and signature of the administrator of the medication.

**Nonprescription medications.** The facility shall not administer any nonprescription medications to a child without written, signed and dated parental permission naming the medication and dosage. Verbal permission is allowed in emergencies if the provider makes a written note and then gets written permission from the parent as soon as possible.

### **Infant Toddler Program**

**Napping/resting.** Infants shall be placed on their backs for sleeping, unless contraindicated by a physician. Placing children on their abdomens for any reason shall be avoided, unless specifically instructed by the child's physician to do so.

Smoking is prohibited on the premises when children are present. This includes all indoor and outdoor areas used by the facility, where children may be present.

**Mandatory reporting.** The facility shall make all childcare personnel aware of their status and responsibility as mandated reporters to the Department of Health and Human Services when there is reasonable cause to suspect abuse or neglect of a child under the age of eighteen (18).

## Environmental Hazards

### *Children shall be cared for in facilities appropriately maintained and inspected*

The facility shall take immediate steps to correct any condition in the physical facility or on the premises, which poses a danger to children's life, health or safety.

### *Children shall be provided with safely maintained space*

#### **Vehicle Requirements**

**Number of passengers.** The number of persons transported in any vehicle shall not exceed the seating capacity of the vehicle.

**Safety in vehicles.** No child shall be permitted to remain in any vehicle while it is unattended. Children must be seated with seat belts fastened or in child safety seats (when applicable according to State law) while vehicle is in motion.

**The driver shall wear a seat belt.**

**All children age twelve (12) and under shall ride in the back seat.**

**One child per seat belt.** The buckling of more than one child in a single seat is prohibited.

**Weapons in vehicles.** Weapons shall not be transported in any vehicle in which children are riding.

### *Children shall not be exposed or have access to unsafe equipment and materials*

Weapons, firearms and ammunition are prohibited in child care facilities.

All medications, cleaning supplies, toxic substances, matches, lighters, power tools, and items dangerous to children shall be stored in such a way as to be inaccessible to children, even in rooms which are not used by children.

A separate mat, bed, or cot with blanket or sleeping bag shall be provided to each toddler and pre-school age child in care for more than four hours per session.

## Violating the Rights of Children

**Right to freedom from abuse and neglect.** Children shall be free from mental, verbal, physical and/or sexual abuse, neglect and exploitation.

**Right to confidentiality.** Children's records and information kept by the Child Care Facility are confidential. Child Care Facilities shall follow the Rules regarding confidentiality as outlined in Section X.D of Rules for the Licensing of Child Care Facilities.

**Right to freedom from harmful actions or practices.** Each child has the right to freedom from harmful actions or practices that are detrimental to his/her welfare and to practices that are potentially harmful to the child.

**Right to a safe and healthy environment.** Each child has a right to an environment that meets the health and safety standards in these Rules.

**Right to be free from discrimination.** A child shall be provided child care services without regard to race, age, national origin, religion, disability, sex or family composition.

**Right to consideration and respect.** Children shall be treated with dignity, consideration and respect in full recognition of their individuality. This includes the use of developmentally appropriate practices by the Child Care Facility.

**Right to be informed of services provided by the Child Care Facility.** A child's legal guardian shall be fully informed of items or services which are included in the rate they pay for childcare services.

**Right to information regarding the Child Care Facilities' deficiencies.** A child's legal guardian has the right to be fully informed of findings of the most recent licensing review conducted by the Department. The Child Care Facility shall inform children's legal representatives that the licensing review results are public information and available for examination upon request. Legal representatives shall be notified in a timely manner by the Child Care Facility of any actions proposed or taken against the Child Care Facility by the Department, including but not limited to, decisions to issue conditional licenses, refusal to renew a license or to impose fines or other sanctions.

**Right to a service plan.** Each child has the right to expect the provider to assist him/her in implementing any reasonable plan of service developed with community or state agencies.

**Right to a variety of appropriate activities, materials and equipment.** Each child has a right to a variety of activities, materials and equipment that meets the child's interests and capabilities.

**Mandatory report of rights violations.** Any person or professional who provides health care, social services or mental health services or who administers a Child Care Facility or program who reasonably believes that the Rules pertaining to

children's rights and the conduct of childcare have been violated, shall report this information to the Community Services Center, Child Care Licensing Unit. Any person reporting suspected abuse and neglect shall report this information to Child Protective Intake Services, pursuant to Title 22, M.R.S.A. § 4011 and Section XXII of Rules for the Licensing of Child Care Facilities. Documentation shall be maintained in the facility that a report has been made.

**Reasonable modifications and accommodations.** To afford individuals with disabilities the opportunity to participate in a Childcare Program, the Child Care Facility shall act as follows:

1. The Child Care Facility must make reasonable modifications to their policies and practices to include children, parents and guardians with disabilities, unless to do so would be a fundamental alteration of their program.
2. The Child Care Facility must make the facility accessible to people with disabilities. Existing facilities must remove any readily achievable barriers, while newly constructed facilities and any altered portions of existing facilities must be fully accessible. If existing barriers can be easily removed without much difficulty or expense, providers must remove those barriers immediately even if there are no children with disabilities using the program. (Installing offset hinges to widen a door opening, installing grab bars in toilet stalls, or rearranging tables, chairs or other furniture are all examples of readily achievable barrier removal.)

### **Additional Information:**

Grounds for intermediate sanctions. The following circumstances shall be grounds for the imposition of intermediate sanctions:

1. Impeding or interfering with the enforcement of laws or rules governing the certifying of a Child Care Facility, or giving false information in connection with the enforcement of such laws and rules; and/or
2. Failure to comply with Rights for Children in a Child Care Facility, Section XI of these Rules.

### **Disclaimer:**

The Department will consider licensing violations on a facility by facility basis and reserves the right to determine whether serious risk to children was present, either as defined by these guidelines, or in some other manner not stated herein.





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# Early Care & Education Early Childhood Division



Department of Health  
and Human Services

*Maine People Living  
Safe, Healthy and Productive Lives*

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