

# Participation Bonus- Frequently Asked Questions



*These Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) were developed to support programs and providers in their understanding of the Great Start to Quality Participation Bonuses. Questions not addressed in this document can be directed to your local Great Start to Quality Resource Center by calling 1-877-614-7328. Questions may also be submitted via email to: [GSQIncentives@ecic4kids.org](mailto:GSQIncentives@ecic4kids.org).*

## Contents

<b>Eligibility</b> .....	2
<b>Application Process</b> .....	4
<b>Miscellaneous</b> .....	4

## Eligibility

### 1. How many Participation Bonuses are programs and providers eligible to receive?

- The Participation Bonus is a one-time incentive. Programs and providers are able to apply for, and receive the Bonus one time.

### 2. Do programs and providers need a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) or to be working with a Quality Improvement Consultant to receive bonus?

- The only programs that will require a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) are those that are non-Community Based Organization (CBO) Great Start Readiness Programs (GSRP). If the non-CBO GSRP also has additional programming under the license, such as a tuition-based child care, a QIP will not be required.
- No other programs or providers will need a Quality Improvement Plan to be eligible for the Participation Bonus.
- No programs or providers will need to be working with a Quality Improvement Consultant to be eligible for the Participation Bonus.

### 3. Are all programs and providers currently in Re-rating eligible for the Participation Bonus?

- Programs and providers that are in the Re-rating process would be eligible to apply for the Participation Bonus once they have completed the process **and** have received their published rating on [www.greatstarttoquality.org](http://www.greatstarttoquality.org), if all other additional eligibility requirements are met.

### 4. Are Great Start Readiness Programs (GSRP) and Head Start programs eligible?

- Yes, however non-CBO GSRPs that do not have other programming under their license must also have a QIP, with the status of 'created' or 'completed', on the Great Start to Quality STARS platform.
- Head Start and Early Head Start programs are eligible. There are no additional eligibility criteria for Head Start and Early Head Start programs.

### 5. Could a person or entity who owns multiple sites with different license numbers receive multiple bonuses?

- Yes, the Participation Bonus is awarded based on license number, not recipient name.

**6. Are programs and providers that received a 5 Star published rating prior to August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2015 eligible to apply for the Participation Bonus?**

- Yes, but only after they go through the Re-rating process and receive a published rating after August 3, 2015. A published rating on [www.greatstarttoquality.org](http://www.greatstarttoquality.org) is valid for two years; programs and providers are eligible to begin the Re-rating process ninety days before their published rating expires, and may receive a new published rating after the process is complete.
- Programs and providers who receive a published rating on or after August 3, 2015, after applying for Reassessment to make changes to key staff, licensing capacity, age ranges for children in care, or classroom designations may also be eligible. As 5 Star programs and providers cannot make changes in quality that would result in an increase in published quality rating, Reassessment applications for this reason will not be approved.

**7. Are programs and providers in the middle of Validation eligible?**

- Programs and providers that are in the Validation process would be eligible to apply for the Participation Bonus once they have completed the validation process **and** have received their published rating on [www.greatstarttoquality.org](http://www.greatstarttoquality.org).

**8. Are programs and providers who were awarded a Participation Bonus during the pilot eligible to receive a second bonus?**

- No, programs and providers are eligible to receive the bonus as a one-time incentive.

**9. For tribal programs, what will they use for a license number?**

- Tribal programs should use the identifier issued to them by WorkLife Systems when they request to have a profile on [www.greatstarttoquality.org](http://www.greatstarttoquality.org). Your local Great Start to Quality Resource Center should be contacted if assistance is needed in locating this identifier, by calling 1-877-614-7328.

**10. If a non-CBO GSRP has other programming under the license, are they eligible?**

- Yes, if they meet the eligibility criteria. If a non-CBO GSRP has additional programming under the license, such as tuition-based child care, a Quality Improvement Plan will not be required.

**11. Are non-CBO GSRPs considered school-based GSRPs?**

- Typically, yes. However, there are instances in which this is not true, therefore these programs are referred to as “non-CBO GSRPs” rather than “school-based GSRP”.

## 12. Are programs or providers with a provisional license eligible?

- No, as the first eligibility criteria is that the program ‘has a published rating on the Great Start to Quality system on or after August 3, 2015’. Programs and providers with a provisional license cannot have a published rating as they are not considered to be in good standing with licensing. Programs and providers with a provisional license may apply, if eligibility criteria is met, after they no longer have a provisional license.

## Application Process

### 13. When are programs and providers able to fill out the Participation Bonus application-when they submit their Self-Assessment Survey or when they have received their published rating?

- The eligibility criteria states that providers must have a published rating on [www.greatstarttoquality.org](http://www.greatstarttoquality.org). As providers do not receive a published rating at the time they submit their Self-Assessment Survey, they must wait until a published rating is received. If they apply before they receive a published rating, their application will be denied as that eligibility criteria will not be verifiable.

## Miscellaneous

### 14. Do programs and providers need to have the Great Start to Quality indicator referencing the Quality Improvement Plan checked on their Self-Assessment Survey?

- No, as the need for a Quality Improvement Plan is limited to non-CBO GSRPs and the eligibility criteria only states the need to have a status of ‘created’ or ‘completed’ on the Great Start to Quality STARS platform.

### 15. Who will receive the Participation Bonus award at each program? If there are multiple classrooms, how will bonuses be designated?

- The Participation Bonus award will be sent to the person identified on the application in the ‘Payment should be sent to’ section. It will be the responsibility of each licensed program receiving a Participation Bonus to determine how funds will be allocated, used or dispersed.

**16. Can programs or providers who currently have a published rating apply for Reassessment to receive a published rating after August 3, 2015?**

- Programs and providers that feel changes have occurred in their program that will impact their Great Start to Quality rating are encouraged to apply for Reassessment. When Reassessment applications are reviewed, the reason the program or provider is requesting a Reassessment is reviewed against the Reassessment eligibility criteria. If the program or provider does not meet Reassessment eligibility criteria the application will be denied. If the Reassessment application is approved and a published rating is received on or after August 3, 2015, the program or provider would meet this eligibility criteria and could apply for the Participation Bonus.

**17. Is the Participation Bonus tax free?**

- Programs and providers should consult their tax advisor to make sure the treatment of these funds are in accordance with Federal and/or State income tax laws.

**18. My program received a denial letter, but I believe it meets the eligibility criteria. What should I do?**

- Each denial letter includes an appeal form with instructions. Please complete this appeal form, following the provided directions. Completing this form is the most efficient way to appeal the decision made regarding the eligibility of your program.

**19. What should a program or provider do if their Participation Bonus award check was not made out to the correct person?**

- Checks are issued to the name listed on the application, under the authorization and payment information section. If you would like the check reissued to a different name, the original check should be mailed back to the address below, and a new check will be issued. Please include who you would like the check to be issued to.

Return incorrect checks to:

Early Childhood Investment Corporation  
105 W. Allegan St. Suite 200  
Lansing MI 48933

**20. Can programs and providers receive the Participation Bonus and Quality Improvement Grant?**

- Yes, if applicable eligibility criteria is met programs and providers could receive both a Participation Bonus and a QI Grant.