

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.

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Eligibility

1. What are the eligibility criteria to receive a Participation Bonus?

Programs and providers must meet **ALL** of the following criteria in order to be eligible to receive a Participation Bonus:

- Be a licensed or registered child care provider or preschool program, in good standing with Child Care Licensing.
- Have received a published rating on www.greatstarttoquality.org, on or after June 1, 2017.
 - Published rating may be an initial rating or received through Re-Rating or Reassessment.
 - Your published rating date is exactly two years prior to your program's expiration date. Your program's expiration date can be found on the Great Start to Quality STARS platform, on your program's self-assessment survey page.
- Has served at least one child receiving a child care subsidy (Child Development and Care subsidy) in last six months.

2. 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, if all eligibility requirements are met. Programs and providers whose rating has not yet been published will not be eligible.

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

Yes, Great Start Readiness Programs and Head Start/Early Head Start programs are eligible to receive the Participation Bonus so long as they meet all eligibility criteria. See question 1 for the list of eligibility criteria.

4. 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.

5. 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 or after June 1, 2017 on www.greatstarttoquality.org. Programs and providers will be denied if they submit an application prior to receiving a published rating.

6. Are programs and providers eligible to receive a Participation Bonus if they have previously received one?

Yes, any program or provider meeting all eligibility criteria are eligible to receive a Participation Bonus, whether or not they have previously received one. See question 1 for the list of eligibility criteria.

7. Are programs and providers eligible to receive a Participation Bonus if they were awarded a Quality Improvement Grant?

Yes, any program or provider meeting all eligibility criteria are eligible to receive a Participation Bonus, whether or not they were awarded a Quality Improvement Grant. See question 1 for the list of eligibility criteria.

8. What do tribal programs use for a license number?

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

9. 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 June 1, 2017”. 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 (and if the Participation Bonus is still available).

10. What type of child care subsidy will meet eligibility criteria for a program to receive a Participation Bonus?

In order to be eligible to receive the Participation Bonus, programs must have served at least one child receiving Child Development and Care (CDC) subsidy, in the last 6 months. Additional financial supports for child care from any other funding source such as foster care, Great Start Readiness Program, Head Start, special needs, or other scholarships for children do not meet this criteria.

The Child Development and Care subsidy program is administered through the Michigan Department of Education with funding from the federal Administration for Children and Families' Office of Child Care. Family eligibility criteria for CDC subsidy is set by the state of Michigan and eligibility is determined by the Michigan Department of Education. Once CDC assistance has been approved and authorized by the Department, child care providers are responsible for submitting billing information to the Department. If your child care program has billed the Department for a child receiving CDC subsidy payments within the last 6 months (from the date you submit the Bonus application) then you meet this eligibility criteria. All other eligibility criteria must also be met to receive the Participation Bonus.

Application Process

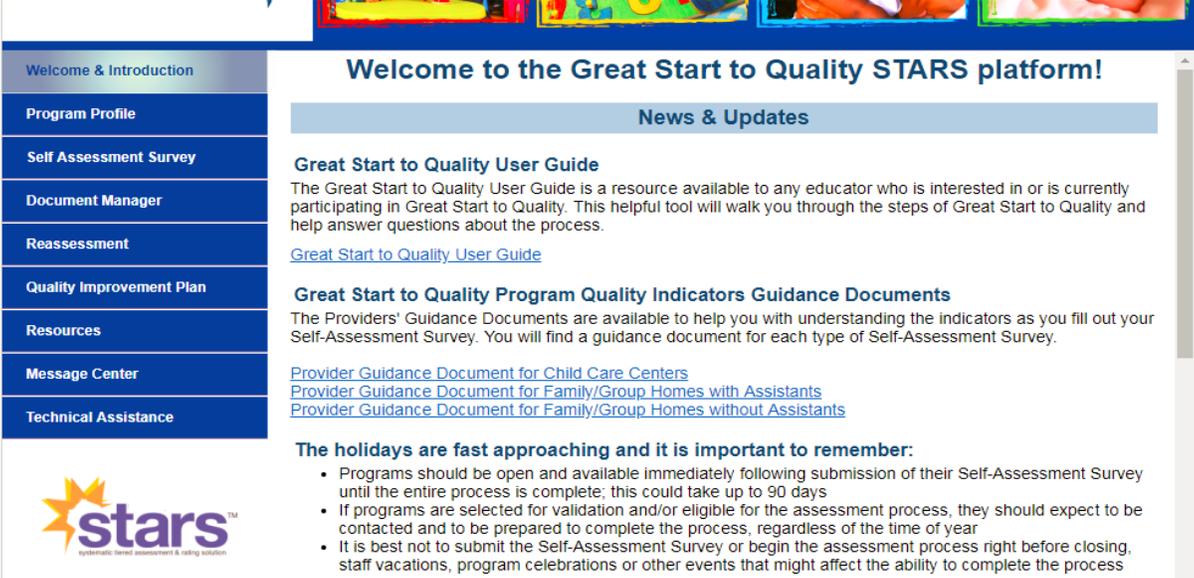
11. When should programs and providers fill out a Participation Bonus application?

The eligibility criteria states that providers must have a published rating on www.greatstarttoquality.org. As programs 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.

12. How can I determine what the date of my Great Start to Quality published rating is?

The eligibility criteria states that providers must have received a published rating on Greatstarttoquality.org on or after June 1, 2017. To determine your program's published rating date, visit the Great Start to Quality STARS platform, and select your program's self-assessment survey page. Your published rating date is exactly two years prior to your program's expiration date. See the steps with visual below to assist you with determining your program's published rating date.



The screenshot shows the Great Start to Quality STARS platform interface. On the left, there is a vertical navigation menu with the following items: Welcome & Introduction, Program Profile, Self Assessment Survey (highlighted with a green arrow), Document Manager, Reassessment, Quality Improvement Plan, Resources, Message Center, and Technical Assistance. The main content area features a header 'Welcome to the Great Start to Quality STARS platform!' and a 'News & Updates' section. Below this, there are two main sections: 'Great Start to Quality User Guide' and 'Great Start to Quality Program Quality Indicators Guidance Documents'. The 'User Guide' section includes a brief description and a link to the 'Great Start to Quality User Guide'. The 'Guidance Documents' section includes a description and three links: 'Provider Guidance Document for Child Care Centers', 'Provider Guidance Document for Family/Group Homes with Assistants', and 'Provider Guidance Document for Family/Group Homes without Assistants'. At the bottom of the main content area, there is a section titled 'The holidays are fast approaching and it is important to remember:' followed by a bulleted list of reminders.

1. Go to the Great Start to the Great Start to Quality STARS platform and select the Self-Assessment Survey tab in the blue panel to the left.

Published Rating



Program demonstrates quality across almost all standards. Program demonstrates high quality.

Valid until 06/26/2019

Regulatory Status

Regular

SAS Rating

Total Points: 47 / 50

Star Rating: 

SAS Submitted and Locked

SAS Validation

2. On the Self-Assessment Survey page, view the orange panel on the right side of the screen (as seen above). This program has a 4 Star published rating, valid until 06/26/2019. Two years prior to this date would be 06/26/2017 (this is the program's published rating date).

Miscellaneous

- 13. 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. The award is not based on the number of classrooms. It will be the responsibility of each licensed program receiving a Participation Bonus to determine how funds will be allocated, used or dispersed.

- 14. Can programs or providers who currently have a published rating apply for Reassessment to receive a published rating after June 1, 2017?**

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 (at any time). 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 June 1, 2017, the program or provider would meet this eligibility criteria and would be eligible to apply for the Participation Bonus.

15. 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.

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

All denial letters sent to applicants include the specific reason for denial. If you believe that there was a mistake in receiving a denial letter based on the reason provided, you should contact GSQincentives@ecic4kids.org. In your email, please include your program name, license number, and reason for contact. In most cases, GSQIncentives@ecic4kids.org will respond to you within 24-48 business hours.

17. 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 when sending back the original check.

Return incorrect checks to:

Early Childhood Investment Corporation
8164 Executive Court, Suite A
Lansing, MI 48917

18. How should Participation Bonus funds be used?

Participation Bonus funds should be used to support increasing program quality, based on the individual goals and needs of each program. For assistance determining areas for program quality improvement, contact your local Great Start to Quality Resource Center by calling 1-877-614-7328.

19. After submitting an application, when can a program expect to receive notification around approval and denials?

Programs and providers should expect to receive the determination around their application within 45 business days.

20. How long will Participation Bonuses applications be accepted and Bonuses awarded?

Participation Bonus applications will be awarded until the set aside funds for this activity are depleted. Please visit www.greatstarttoquality.org, and visit the Participation Bonus webpage accessed by going to the "providers and educators" tab at the top of the screen, selecting "benefits for providers and educators", and selecting "Provider Participation Bonus". This webpage will provide an update around how many Bonuses remain. Bonuses will be issued based on eligibility, and on a first come, first served basis. Updates to the number of remaining Bonuses will be made regularly.