

Getting Ready for the Gold Circle of Quality– Licensed Family Child Care Assessment Path

Working towards and/or maintaining an ExceleRate® Illinois Circle of Quality is a process with many parts. To assist programs in achieving their goal, this checklist is provided to be used as a working document- along with the ExceleRate Illinois Family Child Care Overview Chart - to help track the progress. While all areas are important, the following areas are highlighted due to the amount of time needed to accomplish the domain/standard.

Required Training

For the Gold Circle of Quality, the following training is required. Please check your local CCR&R's training calendar or the statewide training calendar for availability. For complete details refer to the Training Grid & the Family Child Care Overview Chart. Completion of required training is verified by INCCRRA and must appear on Section 3, 4, or 5 of the individual's Professional Development Record (PDR).

Domain/Standard	Required Attendees (minimum)	Topic/Title
NA	Provider	ExceleRate Illinois Orientation for Family Child Care (FCC) - <i>required for NEW applicants. Revised 1/22</i>
1A	Provider	An Introduction to the Environment Rating Scales/Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale (FCCERS-R) or How ERS Works
1E	Provider (<i>if provider conducts screening</i>)	Introduction to Developmental Screening Tools OR Early Childhood Developmental Screening (ECDS)
1F	Provider and Assistant (if applicable)	Welcoming Each & Every Child or Special Care
3A	Provider	Getting Ready for the Business Administration Scale (BAS) 2nd Edition
3A	Provider (recommended, not required)	Taking Your Program to a Higher Level with the BAS

Credentials

Domain/Standard	Minimum Provider Qualifications	FCC Minimum Assistant and Substitute Qualifications (if applicable)
4A	Bachelor's Degree AND Gateways FCC Credential Level 5	
4B		Assistant required for licensing ratios must have Gateways ECE Credential Level 2 OR Gateways FCC Credential Level 2 Any Substitute must have either a Gateways ECE Credential Level 3 OR Gateways FCC Credential 3

Provider, assistant and substitute, if applicable, must hold the applicable Gateways FCC Credential or have a pending application on file. If not meeting the applicable Credential, the provider may write a CQIP (using the letter received from the Credential Department), to outline goals and action steps, coursework & training to accomplish towards the applicable Credential. Updated CQIP of accomplishments towards Credential attainment will be required at annual report and progress must be shown.

Teaching and Learning

1A. Learning Environment	Evidence	Submit w/ Application	Completed
Provider completes self-assessment using the FCCERS-R	FCCERS self-assessment (completed within the last 6 months)- use to prepare for on-site assessment and CQIP development	NA	NA
FCCERS-R average overall score of at least 4.5 (excluding Personal Care Routines subscale and Item #26 Active Physical Play) <i>*Review applicable Scale Tip Sheets at: Preparing for Assessment</i>	Verified on-site by state approved assessor	NA	NA
1B. Safe and Healthy Environment			
Provider completes the Child Care Assessment Tool for Relatives (CCAT-R) every 3 months and maintains a completion log	Documentation of completed CCAT-R for ages cared for. Verified on-site by state approved assessor	NA	NA
FCCERS-R score of at least 5.0 on Item #25- Use of TV, Video &/or computer” <i>*Review applicable Scale Tip Sheets at: Preparing for Assessment</i>	Verified on-site by state approved assessor	NA	NA
1C. Interactions			
FCCERS-R score of at least 4.75 on “Listening and Talking” and 4.75 on “Interactions” <i>*Review applicable Scale Tip Sheets at: Preparing for Assessment</i>	Verified on-site by state approved assessor	NA	NA
1D. Curriculum and Child Assessment			
Provider identifies a curriculum and child assessment that is aligned with the IELG/ IELDS. Curriculum must address all ages that the provider is licensed to care for. (https://www.excelerateillinois.com/licensed-family-child-care/resources/resources-by-standard)	Use of aligned curriculum & child assessment <i>Narrative is accepted at application if not currently using aligned curriculum/assessment</i>	✓	
Evidence of lesson plans appropriate to ages of children enrolled in care.	Verified on-site by state approved assessor	NA	NA
1E. Child Screening			
Provider has policies and procedures in place to ensure that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All children (birth-5 years) are screened at least annually for the purpose of identifying special needs • All parents are provided screening results • Parents needing information are provided resources on additional evaluation and services 	Verified by state approved assessor. For credit to be given, all three points listed in the Standard must be addressed in policy. <i>Note: If screenings are conducted by Child & Family Connections or consultant, policy must address how it occurs and address all three points in the Standard.</i>	NA	NA

1F. Inclusion of Children with Disabilities and Developmental Delays	Evidence	Submit w/ Application	Completed
Provider has policy and procedures to support children with disabilities or developmental delays, including procedures sharing IFSP/IEP information between provider and parent.	Verified on-site by state approved assessor	NA	NA
1G. Linguistically and Culturally Appropriate Practice			
FCCERS-R score of at least 4.0 on Item #24 “Promoting Acceptance of Diversity” <i>*Review applicable Scale Tip Sheets at: Preparing for Assessment</i>	Verified on-site by state approved assessor	NA	NA

Family and Community Engagement

2A. Family – Provider Communication & Collaboration			
Provider engages in at least 3 modes of communication with parents <i>For example, newsletters, bulletin board, facebook page, website, email, notes, etc.</i>	Verified on-site by state approved assessor	NA	NA
Provider offers at least two parent-staff conferences per year <i>For example, parent handbook information, notes from actual conferences, calendar of conference dates.</i>	Verified on-site by state approved assessor	NA	NA
Provider gathers feedback annually from parents to assist in program improvement	Verified on-site by state approved assessor	NA	NA
2B. Connecting & Supporting Families			
Provider has a current list of local community services and organizations available to share with families if needed.	Verified on-site by state approved assessor	NA	NA
Provider offers at least 3 family supports <i>For example, referrals to community resources, extended care during evening/weekends, book/ toy lending library, transportation, family social functions, etc.</i>	Verified on-site by state approved assessor	NA	NA
Provider offers at least 3 formal/informal family gatherings per year	Verified on-site by state approved assessor	NA	NA
2C. Transitions			
Provider implements a plan of activities and strategies to assist in the transition of children/families into/out of the program, early learning environments or community services and school settings including kindergarten.	Verified on-site by state approved assessor	NA	NA

Leadership & Management

3A. Program Administration	Evidence	Submit w/ Application	Completed
Provider completes BAS self-assessment	BAS self-assessment (completed within last 6 months)- use to prepare for on-site assessment and CQIP development	NA	NA
BAS average score of 5.0 on these items: Fiscal Management, Record Keeping and Risk Management, plus 3 additional provider selected BAS items.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicate three additional subscales on application • Documentation varies based on subscales chosen • Provider interview – approximately 30-45 minutes • Review documentation as needed for BAS <p>Verified on-site by state approved assessor.</p>	NA	NA
3B. Ratios			
Provider meets State of Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) licensing standards	Copy of current license	✓	
Ratios and group size as indicated on the Standards overview chart for Gold.	Verified on-site by state approved assessor	NA	NA
3C. Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)			
Demonstrate progress made on self-assessment and CQIP	<p>Documentation of CQIP completion. At a minimum CQIP must address Standards 1A, 1C & 3A</p> <p>CQIP should include documentation of specific changes designed to improve the quality of overall learning environment (standard 1A); Interactions, including the quality of listening and talking/interactions used by provider (and assistant, if applicable) to promote learning (standard 1C) and business practices (Standard 3A)</p> <p>Verified on-site by state approved assessor</p>	✓	

Qualifications & Continuing Education			
4A. FCC Provider Qualifications & 4B. FCC Assistant & Substitute Qualifications (if applicable)	Evidence	Submit w/ Application	Completed
Provider has a Bachelor's Degree	Verified by INCCRRA using Gateways Registry	*	
Provider has Gateways FCC Credential Level 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provider, Assistant and Substitute (if applicable) must hold the applicable Gateways Credentials or have a pending application on file. If not meeting the applicable Credential, the provider may write a CQIP to outline goals, action steps, specific coursework/training the individual can accomplish over the year to work towards the applicable Credential. The provider/staff should use the letter each individual received from the Credential Department to guide CQIP development in what coursework/training is needed. Updated CQIP of accomplishments will be required at annual report and progress must be shown towards Standards 4A and 4B Credential attainment. Qualifications verified by INCCRRA using Gateways Registry 	*	
Any Assistant required for licensing ratios must have a Gateways ECE Credential Level 2 OR Gateways FCC Credential Level 2			
Any Substitute must have a Gateways ECE Credential Level 3 OR Gateways FCC Credential Level 3			
4C. FCC Provider Peer Support			
Provider demonstrates active and on-going participation as a member of a professional provider association, cohort or professional peer group <i>For example, proof of attendance on minutes of professional meetings, proof of involvement in CCR&R cohorts.</i>	Verified on-site by state approved assessor	NA	NA
4D. On-going Professional Development			
Provider and Assistant (if applicable) have a written Individualized Professional Development Plan (IPDP)	Verified on-site by state approved assessor	NA	NA
Provider has at least 20 hours of professional development annually, including 5 hours Gateways Registry-Approved training	Verified on-site by state approved assessor *INCCRRA will verify 5 training hours via the Gateways Registry	NA	NA
If applicable, any Assistant required for licensing has at least 20 hours of professional development annually, including 5 hours Gateways Registry-Approved training	Verified on-site by state approved assessor *INCCRRA will verify 5 training hours via the Gateways Registry	NA	NA

***Programs can have staff submit credential applications to INCCRRA at any time. Once provider's ExceleRate application is submitted, INCCRRA will verify within the Gateways Registry"**

<p>Provider has worked with the IDCFS licensing representative to clear all violations prior to submitting the application. <i>To check if your program has violations please visit https://sunshine.dcf.illinois.gov/</i></p>	<p>Yes No</p>
<p>Provider has an organized Program Portfolio inclusive of information for the assessor to review (all information noted above as “verified on site by state approved assessor” in Evidence column, including BAS documentation) <i>If no, your program is not yet ready to apply for the Gold Circle of Quality. All pieces of documentation must be available for review during the time of on-site verification. Please contact your CCR&R Specialist for technical assistance to complete your portfolio.</i></p>	<p>Yes No</p>

