

# TEXAS RISING STAR CERTIFICATION GUIDELINES

A Quality Rating and Improvement System for Texas



**Texas**   
**Rising Star**

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# Section 1: Introduction to Texas Rising Star

The Texas Rising Star program is a voluntary quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) for child care programs participating in the Texas Workforce Commission's (TWC) subsidized child care program. Texas Rising Star certification is available to licensed centers and licensed and registered child care home facilities that meet the certification criteria.

The Texas Rising Star program offers three levels of quality certification (2-Star, 3-Star, and 4-Star) to encourage child care and early learning programs to attain progressively higher levels of quality. These certification levels are tied to graduated enhanced reimbursement rates for children receiving subsidies.

Numerous research studies have shown that children who attend higher-quality early learning programs are more prepared for school entry than children who do not attend high-quality programs. Child care and early learning programs that voluntarily achieve Texas Rising Star certification, offering quality care that exceeds the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) Child Care Regulation (CCR) minimum health and safety standards, are in a better position to positively affect the physical, social-emotional, and cognitive development of children. As programs advance through the levels of Texas Rising Star certification, they are increasingly able to positively affect the development of the children they serve daily.

## Historical Perspective

The movement to improve and standardize quality in child care and early learning programs began in the 1970s but did not gain momentum until the 1990s, when states began to implement *tiered* quality rating and improvement systems (TQRIS) and to tie enhanced subsidy reimbursement rates to levels of quality. The following is a brief history of the evolution of TQRIS in Texas:

- In the 1980s, a state workgroup was formed to research and develop standards for early learning programs in Texas, providing the basis for the *Texas Rising Star Provider Certification* criteria.
- From 1991 through 2000, the *Texas Rising Star Provider Certification* criteria were in use to evaluate quality in subsidized child care and early learning programs in Texas.
- In 1999, a new state workgroup formed to review and revise these criteria.
- In October 2000, the *Texas Rising Star Provider Certification Guidelines* (Guidelines) were released, reflecting the recommendations of the workgroup, including revamping assessment and certification processes.
- In 2003, TWC updated the recertification and monitoring time frames for certified Texas Rising Star programs.
- In 2009, Texas Governor Rick Perry established the Texas Early Learning Council (TELC), an advisory council tasked with developing a plan to improve early care and education in Texas.
- In September 2013, TELC released recommendations for the state to develop a statewide, cross-sector QRIS for Texas. One of the recommendations included Texas Rising Star as the basis for a QRIS in Texas. Additionally, in September of that year, the 83rd Texas Legislature passed House Bill (HB) 376, which required TWC to:
  - create a review workgroup to recommend revisions to the Texas Rising Star program;
  - establish graduated reimbursement rates for Texas Rising Star certification levels; and
  - make funds available to Local Workforce Development Boards (Boards) to hire Texas Rising Star mentors and assessors to provide technical assistance to child care and early learning programs.
- On January 27, 2015, TWC approved the changes proposed by the Texas Rising Star review workgroup, as required by HB 376. Full implementation of the revisions was completed September 1, 2015.

- In late 2015 and early 2016, TWC solicited further input on the Texas Rising Star program and the 2015 revisions. Based on the input from these stakeholder meetings, TWC modified the Guidelines to streamline the application and assessment process and to clarify and improve criteria.
- In 2018, TWC commissioned the [Texas Rising Star Implementation Study](#) to examine the reliability of the assessment and indicators of external validity of certification criteria.
- In 2019, TWC convened a [workgroup](#) to review the Texas Rising Star program, as required by HB 376. With support from TWC, the workgroup led an expansive and collaborative review of the program that involved stakeholders from across the state.
- In January 2020, TWC’s three-member Commission (Commission) approved the release of the workgroup’s recommendations for public comment. TWC conducted seven public meetings across the state in February 2020 on these recommendations.
- In July 2020, the Commission approved a Policy Concept outlining potential changes to Texas Rising Star for public review and comment.
- In October 2020, proposed rules regarding Texas Rising Star changes were published, and in January 2021, the final rules and updated Texas Rising Star Guidelines were adopted
- Modifications to the Texas Rising Star program became effective on January 25, 2021.

TWC continually monitors the Texas Rising Star program and conducts reviews at least every four years.

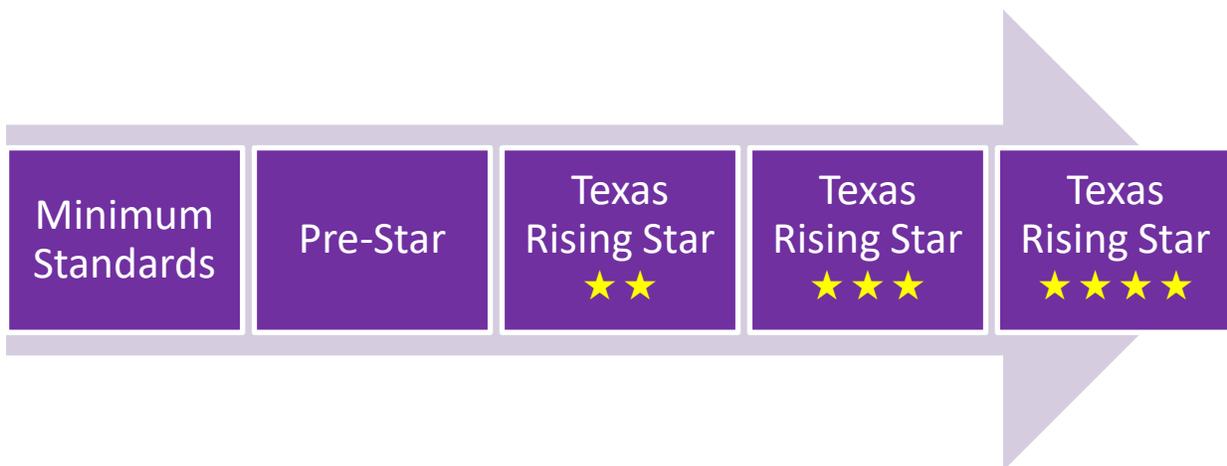
## A System for Progressive Quality Improvement

In Texas, child care and early learning programs must adhere to minimum standards defined by CCR. These standards help ensure the health and safety of children in care outside of the home. As the child care regulatory and licensing agency for Texas, CCR monitors programs for compliance with minimum standards and may issue corrective or adverse actions when programs fail to comply. CCR also makes this essential [licensing and inspection data](#) available to the public.

To participate in TWC’s subsidized child care program, child care programs must achieve Pre-Star status by demonstrating a high rate of compliance with CCR’s minimum standards. Texas Rising Star provides the next step.

For a program to meet and maintain Texas Rising Star certification criteria, the program must demonstrate consistent compliance with CCR minimum standards.

Texas Rising Star is intended to measurably improve the quality of child care and early learning programs and thereby enhance children’s development and promote school readiness.



Texas Rising Star provides a systematic approach to assess, improve, and communicate the level of quality in child care and early learning programs. Texas Rising Star assigns a score to programs that meet a set of defined program standards. These standards exceed those required by CCR minimum standards. By participating in Texas Rising Star, programs engage in a process of continuous quality improvement.

As a quality rating and improvement system, Texas Rising Star includes the following key components:

- *Standards criteria* that are understandable, measurable, and verifiable
- *Accountability* and transparent monitoring to assess achievement of and ongoing compliance with quality standards and to validate the assignment of scores
- *Support* to encourage participation and improve quality, including training, technical assistance, mentoring, and peer-learning opportunities
- *Consumer education* to inform families and the community about the importance of quality in child care and early learning programs
- *Financial incentives* to help programs improve learning environments, attain higher scores, and sustain long-term quality

### **Financial Incentives: Tiered Enhanced Reimbursement Rates**

Certified Texas Rising Star programs receive higher reimbursement rates for child care subsidies than noncertified programs. Texas Government Code §2308.315 requires the minimum reimbursement rate for a Texas Rising Star–certified program to be greater than the maximum rate established for a program that is not Texas Rising Star certified for the same category of care. Specifically, 2-Star rates must be at least 5% higher, 3-Star rates must be at least 7 percent higher and 4-Star rates must be at least 9 percent higher.

In accordance with TWC’s child care rules at [40 TAC §809.20\(a\)](#), the Commission may require Boards to establish their maximum reimbursement rates at or above a level established by the Commission. TWC has published each of the Board’s [maximum reimbursement rates as of October 1, 2020](#). The Commission requires Boards to set their Texas Rising Star maximum reimbursement rates at or above the following levels:

- For 4-Star providers, the 75th percentile of the most recent Market Rate Survey
- For 3-Star providers, at 90 percent of the 4-Star rate
- For 2-Star providers, at 90 percent of the 3-Star rate

TWC has also published a [Statewide Revenue Calculator Template for Texas Rising Star \(accessible version\)](#) to help child care and early learning programs forecast the revenue impact of enhanced reimbursement rates.

## **Summary of the Texas Rising Star Criteria**

Below is a summary of the Texas Rising Star certification criteria, which are based on the following types of measures:

- Structural “met” or “not met” measures are required for certification at any level (2- 3-, or 4-Star)
- Qualitative, points-based measures scored on a scale of 0–3 points determine the star level

Each subcategory contains required measures, points-based measures, or a combination of the two.

### *Category 1: Director and Staff Qualifications and Training*

Measures relating to the education, experience, and training of all staff, including directors:

<b>Subcategory</b>	<b>Structural Measures? (Met/Not Met)</b>	<b>Points-Based Measures? (Scored 0-3 points)</b>
Director Qualifications and Training	Yes	Yes
Staff Qualifications, Orientation, and Training	Yes	Yes

### Category 2: Teacher-Child Interactions

Measures relating to group size, staff-to-child ratio, and quality of interactions between teachers and children in the classroom:

Subcategory	Structural Measures? (Met/Not Met)	Points-Based Measures? (Scored 0-3 points)
Group Size/Staff Ratios (center-based only)	No	Yes
Warm and Responsive Style	No	Yes
Language Facilitation and Support	No	Yes
Play-Based Interactions and Guidance	No	Yes
Support for Children's Regulation	No	Yes
Instructional Formats and Approaches to Learning	No	Yes

### Category 3: Program Administration

Measures relating to education and involvement of parents and families in the program and how the program is managed:

Subcategory	Structural Measures? (Met/Not Met)	Points-Based Measures? (Scored 0-3 points)
Family Education	Yes	Yes
Family Involvement	Yes	Yes
Program Management	Yes	Yes

### Category 4: Indoor and Outdoor Environments

Measures relating to the equipment, materials, and arrangement of the indoor and outdoor learning environments:

Subcategory	Structural Measures? (Met/Not Met)	Points-Based Measures? (Scored 0-3 points)
Indoor Learning Environments	No	Yes
Outdoor Learning Environments	No	Yes

## Star-Level Scoring

If a program meets all the required measures for Texas Rising Star certification, the score of the points-based measures are used to determine the star level for each category and ultimately for the program as a whole. Points-based measures are scored and awarded through both in-person observation and document review.

A Texas Rising Star assessment assigns each of the four certification categories a star level based on the average score across the points-based subcategory measures. Additionally, each category is assigned a specific weight that is used to calculate the program's overall star level. Category 2, Teacher-Child Interactions, has the highest weight at 40 percent since teacher-child interactions are known to correlate strongly with high-quality care and positive child outcomes.

Below are the weights assigned to each of the four categories:

Certification Category	Weight
1: Director and Staff Qualifications and Training	20%
2: Teacher-Child Interactions	40%
3: Program Administration	20%
4: Indoor and Outdoor Environments	20%

The score for a points-based measure in which multiple classrooms are assessed is based on the median score of the measures, which are then averaged. The methodology for determining the star level of a category is based on the program's average score across all measures of a category:

- **4-Star**—average score is 2.4 or greater (80 percent of total possible points)
- **3-Star**—average score is 1.80 to 2.39 (60–79.9 percent of total possible points)
- **2-Star**—average score is below 1.80 (less than 60 percent of total possible points)

## Texas Rising Star Assessor and Mentor Roles

Texas Rising Star staff interact regularly with child care and early learning programs to recruit, assess, and onboard new programs and to mentor certified programs to help them attain increasing levels of quality. Texas Rising Star employs two key roles to work with programs: assessors and mentors.

- *Assessors* objectively evaluate a program's compliance with standards and level of quality. Assessors evaluate certification status for new and existing Texas Rising Star programs. Assessors must meet the minimum education requirements established by the Commission, and as outlined in TWC's child care rules at [40 TAC §809.134](#). Assessors are required to successfully complete the Texas Rising Star Certification course to demonstrate mastery of the Texas Rising Star certification criteria. Additionally, assessors must demonstrate their ongoing mastery of the criteria and their ability to reliably assess program quality through participation in quarterly checks.
- *Mentors* provide technical assistance and coaching support to assist child care and early learning programs in attaining, maintaining, and improving Texas Rising Star certification status. Mentors regularly consult with programs to develop and monitor Continuous Quality Improvement Plans (CQIPs), model best practices, provide constructive feedback, deliver targeted training, and refer programs to other helpful resources and training. Mentors must meet the minimum education requirements established by the Commission, and as outlined in TWC's child care rules at [40 TAC §809.134](#). Mentors are required to complete the Texas Rising Star Certification course training components and must pursue TWC's required coaching microcredential.

Texas Rising Star assessors and mentors have distinct roles, and the separation of duties is critical to ensure valid, reliable assessments. Boards must ensure the separation of assessor and mentor roles—a dual-role mentor/assessor must not act in both roles at the same program. For more information on the roles of assessors and mentors, please see the assessor and mentor protocols and best practices in the Texas Rising Star Staff Handbook and [TWC's Child Care Services Guide](#) (Section I-600: TRS Assessors and Mentors).

### Assessor and Mentor Roles in Relation to Child Care Regulation

Texas Rising Star staff are not trained in CCR minimum standards for regulated child care. However, many mentors and assessors are knowledgeable about the standards and may occasionally observe a possible licensing deficiency while on-site at a program.

The role of mentors and assessors is to assist programs with improving their level of quality through ongoing assessment, self-reflection, coaching, and tailored technical assistance. When a mentor or assessor observes a potential deficiency, he or she will share the observation with the program director, preferably while still on-site. If the potential deficiency is reportable, the mentor or assessor will encourage the director to file a self-report with CCR. Mentors work as partners with child care and early learning programs and will support programs to address potential as well as cited deficiencies.

Importantly, as defined in TWC Chapter 809 Child Care Services rule [§809.136\(6\)](#), Texas Rising Star staff are considered “mandatory reporters.” As such, when they observe a situation in which a child has been harmed, neglected, or placed in imminent danger, they must ensure that the incident is reported to CCR. Mentors and assessors will use their professional judgment in deciding whether to report an incident.

# Section 2: Certification Process

## Eligibility for Texas Rising Star

Texas Rising Star is a voluntary, quality-based child care rating system for child care and early learning programs participating in TWC's subsidized child care program.

All programs applying for Texas Rising Star certification must:

- have an active agreement with a Board to provide subsidized child care and a current [Pre-Star](#) designation;
- have a permanent (non-expiring) license or registration from CCR\*;
- have at least 12 months of licensing history with CCR\*;
- demonstrate a high level of compliance with CCR minimum standards\* over the preceding 12 months in accordance with the [Texas Rising Star Initial Screening Form](#); and
- ensure that a center director account is created in the Workforce Registry and that the director encourage their staff members to create individual accounts within the Workforce Registry.

\*Programs that are not regulated by CCR but are regulated by the US military and in good standing are also eligible to apply for Texas Rising Star certification.

## Star-Level Drop Deficiencies

Programs are not eligible to apply for Texas Rising Star if any of the noted deficiencies listed below are cited during the most recent 12-month CCR licensing period. Programs that are currently Texas Rising Star will incur a star-level drop for each deficiency cited during the most recent 12-month CCR licensing period. 2-Star certified programs will lose certification.

### Deficiencies Leading to a Star-Level Drop—Centers

- 745.635: Criminal Convictions or Central Registry Findings—Take Appropriate Action [High]
- 745.641: Background Checks Requirement—Providing Direct Care [High]
- 746.1201(4): Responsibilities of Employees and Caregivers—Ensure No Child is Abused, Neglected, or Exploited [High]
- 746.1201(5): Responsibilities of Employees and Caregivers—Report Suspected Child Abuse, Neglect, or Exploitation [High]

### Deficiencies Leading to a Star-Level Drop—Homes

- 745.635: Criminal Convictions or Central Registry Findings—Take Appropriate Action [High]
- 745.641: Background Checks Requirement—Providing Direct Care [High]
- 747.207(4): Reporting Suspected Abuse, Neglect, or Exploitation [High]
- 747.1501(a)(3): Responsibility of Caregivers—Ensure No Child is Abused, Neglected, or Exploited [High]

### Deficiencies Leading to a Star-Level Drop—School-Age Programs

- 745.635: Criminal Convictions or Central Registry Findings—Take Appropriate Action [High]
- 745.641: Background Checks Requirement [High]
- 744.1201(4): Responsibilities of Employees and Caregivers—Ensure No Child is Abused, Neglected, or Exploited [High]
- 744.1201(5): Responsibilities of Employees and Caregivers—Report Suspected Child Abuse, Neglect, or Exploitation [High]

## Probation Deficiencies

A child care program is not eligible to apply for Texas Rising Star if the program has any of the deficiencies listed below in its most recent 12-month CCR licensing compliance history. Programs that are currently Texas Rising Star will be placed on a six-month probation if any noted deficiency is cited during the most recent 12-month CCR licensing period.

### Deficiencies Resulting in a Probation—Centers

- 745.621: Background Checks Requirement—Submitting Requests [High]
- 746.1003: Director Responsibilities [(1), (3–6) High (2) Medium]
- 746.1201(1): Responsibilities of Employees and Caregivers—Demonstrate Competency, Good Judgment, Self-Control [High]
- 746.1203(4): Responsibilities of Caregivers—Supervision of Children [High]
- 746.1315: First Aid and CPR Requirements [Medium-High]
- 746.2805: Prohibited Punishments [High]
- 746.3805(a): Administering Medication—How to Administer Medication [High]
- 746.3805(b): Administering Medication—How to Administer Medication [(2) High; (1), (3) Medium-High]

### Deficiencies Resulting in a Probation—Homes

- 745.621: Background Checks Requirement—Submitting Requests [High]
- 747.207 (1–3), (5–7): Primary Caregivers Responsibilities [(6) High; (1–3), (7) Medium High, (5) Medium]
- 747.1501(c)(1): Responsibilities of Employees and Caregivers—Demonstrate Competency, Good Judgment, Self-Control [High]
- 747.1501(c)(4): Responsibilities of Caregivers—Supervision of Children [High]
- 747.1313: First Aid and CPR Training [High]
- 747.2705: Prohibited Punishments [High]
- 747.3605(a): Administering Medication—How to Administer Medication [High]
- 747.3605(b): Administering Medication [(2) High; (1), (3) Medium-High]
- 747.3501: Safety—Areas Free from Hazards [(1–7) Medium-High, (8) High]

### Deficiencies Resulting in a Probation—School-Age Programs

- 745.621: Background Checks Requirement [High]
- 744.1005(a)(1)–(6): Director Responsibilities [Medium-High]
- 744.1201(1): Responsibilities of Employees and Caregivers—Demonstrate Competency, Good Judgment, Self-Control [High]
- 744.1203(4): Responsibilities of Caregivers—Supervision of Children [High]
- 744.1315: First Aid and CPR Requirements [Medium-High]
- 744.2105: Prohibited Punishment [High]
- 744.2655(a): Administering Medication—How to Administer Medication [High]
- 744.2655(b): Administering Medication—How to Administer Medication [(2) High; (1), (3) Medium-High]

## On-Going Screening Process for Certified Programs

Texas Rising Star–certified programs are expected to maintain a consistent and high level of compliance with CCR minimum licensing standards. The Texas Rising Star Screening Form for currently certified programs must be completed before any assessment or annual monitoring visit and on a quarterly basis (every three months) by an assessor.

Assessors must complete the screening forms, as results of the screening can affect the program’s star level (Star-Level Drop deficiencies) or require that the program be placed on Texas Rising Star probation (based on specific deficiencies and/or the total of High and/or Medium-High CCR weighted deficiencies). Assessors should share screening results with mentor staff if it results in the program dropping a star level or needing to be placed on Texas Rising Star probation, as mentor staff may be able to provide mentoring, training, and resources to assist the program with compliance.

Per CCR, deficiencies are not posted on the website until after the appeals process has been completed. Once a deficiency is posted on the CCR website, it is considered final, and Texas Rising Star impacts are applied accordingly. As a best practice, for initial applicants, the assessor should check the CCR website when the application is received, again before the program’s assessment, and again before entering the Texas Rising Star certification start date into The Workforce Information System of Texas (TWIST). Any consequences from the screening form must be applied before the certification start date is entered into TWIST.

Additional information regarding impacts of screening form deficiencies are noted in [Table 4.1](#) in the Guidelines. Any impacts placed on a program will be noted within TWIST (as applicable), CLI’s Engage Event Log (as directed), and via the Texas Rising Star Impacts Notice form found in [Section 5: Resources](#).

*Note:* If a specific licensing standard is listed on the screening form, for example, 746.3805(a), only that specific standard would apply, whereas if whole sections are listed, rather than a specific standard, such as 746.280, any deficiency cited in the whole section would apply.

## Texas Rising Star Application Process

(for programs that are not nationally accredited)

All child care and early learning programs that are interested in applying for Texas Rising Star certification must comply with certain requirements, which includes the eligibility requirements described in TWC Child Care Services rule [§809.131](#). Those additional requirements include the following:

- Completion of Texas Rising Star orientation (see step 1 below)
- Creation of and participation in a continuous quality improvement plan (CQIP)
- Participation in the Texas Workforce Registry (WFR)
- Documentation submittal (see steps 3–5), including:
  - Application form
  - Completed screening form (applicable to facility type)
  - Facility Assessment Record Form (FARF) self-assessment (includes completed staff worksheet)
  - Classroom roster document (to include classroom name, staff names, and specified age group for each operating classroom)
  - National accreditation certificate (if applicable)

The steps below outline the high-level steps of how a child care and early learning program would apply for Texas Rising Star certification. Most interested programs will be assigned a mentor once they complete the interest form; the mentor will assist the program in moving through all requirements and steps.

### *Step 1: Orientation*

The Texas Rising Star [orientation](#) can be found at [www.TexasRisingStar.org](http://www.TexasRisingStar.org). The orientation includes an overview of the Texas Rising Star program application process, an overview of the required and points-based measures on which a child care and early learning program's quality certification is determined, and an introduction to the on-site assessment process through which a program attains Texas Rising Star certification. TWC Chapter 809 Child Care Services rule at [§809.133\(a\)](#) requires all prospective Texas Rising Star child care and early learning programs to participate in an orientation before submitting their application. A live orientation session may also be provided by local Texas Rising Star staff.

### *Step 2: Interest Form*

After receiving a Texas Rising Star orientation, programs are encouraged to complete the [Texas Rising Star Interest Form](#), also available at [www.TexasRisingStar.org](http://www.TexasRisingStar.org). This online form collects basic information about the program (for example, facility address and CCR licensing number) and submits it to the Board in the program's local workforce development area (workforce area). Submission of the interest form informs the Board of a program's interest in becoming a Texas Rising Star–certified program.

### *Step 3: Self-Assessment*

A self-assessment or self-evaluation is a way for programs to improve the quality of their services by reflecting on their own comfort with and expertise in areas known to enhance child care and early childhood environments and experiences. The purpose of the Texas Rising Star self-assessment tool is to provide applicants with a guided review of their programs to determine if they are ready to proceed with the Texas Rising Star Initial Assessment. The tools cover all Texas Rising Star required and points-based quality measures that are scored in the Initial Assessment.

TWC Chapter 809 Child Care Services rule [§809.133](#) requires that applicants complete a Texas Rising Star self-assessment of the Facility Assessment Record Form (FARF). The self-assessment must be submitted with the [Texas Rising Star application](#) and accompanying documents (see Step 4 below).

In addition to the FARF, which is required for the self-assessment, programs may opt to submit the Classroom Assessment Record Form (CARF) for each classroom in their program. Completing the CARF self-assessment can clarify whether a program would benefit from additional time and mentoring before the Initial Assessment. The FARF and the CARF are available on the [TRS Tools](#) tab of the Texas Rising Star website.

Programs are encouraged to contact their local Board for mentoring and technical assistance. Helpful resources are also available on the [Provider Resources](#) page of the Texas Rising Star website.

### Tips for Self-Assessment

- Read over the self-assessment tools, the FARF, and the age-appropriate CARF completely before beginning. Have staff read all information, too.
- Go back and look at each measure and item individually. Start with one that is manageable and look for required (met/not met) items—these will be shaded gray.
- Identify what items are ready for the assessment, what will need to be completed before the assessment, and what questions should be asked of Texas Rising Star staff in order to be completely prepared.
- Determine what changes or modifications may be needed before having the Texas Rising Star assessor come for the assessment.
- Contact a Texas Rising Star mentor or assessor, or the appropriate Board, to discuss the results of the self-assessment, ask questions, and take the next step in the assessment process.

#### *Step 4: Application*

Each program must complete the Texas Rising Star application. Additionally, programs must complete the appropriate Texas Rising Star Screening Form. Assessors will also screen the program for licensing deficiencies and corrective and/or adverse actions before the Initial Assessment.

As part of the certification eligibility packet, the program must complete the following documents for application. All forms are available on the [TRS Tools](#) tab of the Texas Rising Star website.

- Texas Rising Star Application
- Texas Rising Star Screening Form (applicable to the facility type)
- Texas Rising Star FARF
- Texas Rising Star CARF for each classroom (optional)

Finally, the program must collect several documents that are used to verify required and points-based measures for the facility and staff. **These documents must be made available for review during the Initial Assessment**, but they do not have to be submitted with the application, unless requested by the local Board. A detailed list of these documents is included in the [Facility Assessment Record Form \(all facilities\)](#).

Two checklists are provided within the FARF: the first refers to measures that are required for certification. The second refers to points-based measures. Programs are not required to meet all the points-based measures. *If the program does not have the document on the checklist for a points-based measure, the assessor will score that measure as a zero.*

Programs are asked to submit a copy of each checklist with their application as an attestation that they will have the documents available for review. If the program uses the WFR, the assessor will verify applicable uploaded items electronically through the registry.

#### *Step 5: Submission of Application*

Programs must submit the Texas Rising Star Application, Texas Rising Star Screening Form, and the FARF to the appropriate Board through the Board's preferred method. After Texas Rising Star staff receives the application package and confirms the program's eligibility, staff contacts the program within 20 calendar days with an estimated time frame for scheduling the Initial Assessment.

## Recertification Process

Recertification must occur at or before the end of the three-year Texas Rising Star certification cycle. Texas Rising Star-certified programs undergoing the recertification process must complete Steps 3–5 described in the Texas Rising Star Application Process.

To ensure that recertification is conducted before the end of the three-year certification cycle, these materials should be submitted to the appropriate Board at least three months before the three-year anniversary of certification. Late submission of the recertification materials could delay the program's recertification. A full, on-site recertification assessment is then conducted.

# US Department of Defense and Nationally Accredited Early Learning Programs

## Department of Defense–Operated Child Care and Early Learning Programs

Facilities operated and monitored by the US Department of Defense (DoD) are required to meet high-quality standards established and monitored by DoD. Therefore, DoD-operated facilities receive 4-Star certification without requiring submittal of application or an assessment. DoD-operated facilities are not subject to or monitored by CCR and, therefore, not subject to the screening process. Additionally, DoD-operated facilities are not subject to the unannounced annual monitoring visit or the three-year recertification visit.

## TWC-Recognized National Accreditations

Child care and early learning programs with a TWC-recognized national accreditation will receive a modified Initial Assessment. These facilities must meet Texas Rising Star eligibility requirements and are subject to and monitored by CCR and, therefore, are subject to ongoing screenings of licensing history. Additionally, programs with recognized accreditation are required to comply with the procedures for the annual monitoring visit and recertification assessments detailed in [Section 3](#) of these Guidelines. Texas Rising Star staff will also verify a program’s national accreditation status at least annually.

The following national accreditations are recognized by TWC:

- National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
- National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC)
- National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA)
- National Accreditation Commission for Early Child Care and Education (NAC)
- Council of Accreditation (COA)
- Cognia (previously AdvancED) Quality Early Learning Standards (QELS)
- Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI)
- Early Head Start and/or Head Start Programs regulated by CCR

National accrediting entities that wish to become recognized by TWC will need to complete the Texas Rising Star Accreditation Recognition Process. Refer to [Section 5: References](#) for more information.

## Application Process

TWC-recognized nationally accredited child care and early learning programs wishing to participate in Texas Rising Star are required to complete the following at initial application and upon recertification:

- Texas Rising Star Application
- Texas Rising Star Screening Form, applicable to the facility type
- Copy of current, valid national accreditation certificate

## Certification and Recertification Process

### Initial Assessment for Nationally Accredited Facilities

Upon receipt of the documents for application, nationally accredited facilities will receive a modified Initial Assessment, in which the assessor observes and scores Categories 2 and 4 for all classrooms. These facilities are subject to and monitored by CCR and, therefore, are subject to the screening process and annual unannounced monitoring visits.

### Recertification for Nationally Accredited Facilities

Recertification must occur on or before the end of the three-year certification cycle. All nationally accredited programs are required to have a modified recertification assessment on or before the end of the three-year certification cycle.

At recertification, all accredited programs must complete the steps described in the Texas Rising Star Application Process for TWC-recognized nationally accredited facilities.

## Free Online Resources for Texas Rising Star

TWC has partnered with the Children’s Learning Institute (CLI) at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston to provide an online platform—CLI Engage—for child care and early learning programs pursuing Texas Rising Star certification and for those who have already attained certification. CLI Engage offers free professional development tools and resources to improve the quality of child care and early education that programs provide.

CLI Engage hosts free professional development courses, offers child progress monitoring tools, and provides a classroom activity collection for Texas Rising Star–certified programs and programs pursuing certification. Program directors can track completion of staff professional development in language and literacy instruction; science, technology, and engineering instruction; classroom management; and more. Teachers have access to hundreds of lesson plans for [classroom activities](#) that address key early learning domains and are available in both English and Spanish. Many activities also include video exemplars to help teachers learn best practices for implementing lessons. Additionally, teachers have access to age-appropriate child assessment tools that provide real data to target instruction and monitor child progress over time.

To access CLI Engage resources and tools for Texas Rising Star programs, programs must register. Programs will be invited via email invitation from the assigned mentor after expressing interest in applying for Texas Rising Star. A link in the email invitation will go to the CLI Engage login screen. After logging in to CLI Engage, the user will be taken to the school summary page, where information about their program can be reviewed.

Texas Rising Star assessors and mentors use program information on CLI Engage to provide targeted technical assistance. CLI Engage provides a certification management and technical assistance tracking system for Texas Rising Star mentors and assessors. Texas Rising Star assessors use CLI Engage to capture scores and generate reports on all Texas Rising Star measures after all assessments. Texas Rising Star mentors use these reports to generate CQIPs through the CLI Engage online platform.

For more detailed information about CLI Engage, visit <https://cliengage.org>.

## Considerations for Programs Adhering to Specific Early Learning Philosophies

Many early learning programs follow specific early learning philosophies such as Montessori, Reggio Emilia, Waldorf, and faith based. Texas Rising Star certification criteria support the participation of such programs.

Programs may ensure that their curriculum aligns with developmentally appropriate standards by completing the applicable curriculum checklists (based on age range). These checklists are designed to recognize curricula that follow a scope and sequence of learning and development and are responsive to individual children’s needs. More information about scope and sequence of early learning and development are available in [Little Texans: Big Futures](#), Texas’ early learning guidelines for infants and toddlers, and in the [Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines](#) for three- and four-year-old children.

Additionally, programs that follow certain philosophies will find that they will earn high scores in certain categories for their emphasis on diversity, warm and responsive caregiving, and children’s access to real items. Faith-based, Reggio Emilia, Waldorf, and Montessori programs should work with their assigned mentor to understand the scoring methodology and how their philosophy aligns with Texas Rising Star.

# Section 3: Types of Program Assessments

Texas Rising Star requires several types of on-site visits to assess and monitor the ongoing quality of Texas Rising Star–certified child care and early learning programs. Programs should be aware that during any assessment following an Initial Assessment, if structural measures are not met, the program will lose Texas Rising Star certification.

Except for the required annual monitoring visit, assessors will provide programs with a *two-week window* during which an unannounced visit will occur. Programs should work with their assessor if there are any specific times during the two-week window that would be poor for a visit (for example, the director has jury duty, classes will be on a field trip, or it's picture day).

## Initial Assessment

The Initial Assessment is a full assessment of all Texas Rising Star measures. The assessor confirms all required measures, such as written policies, are verified. The assessor assesses the points-based measures, such as teacher-child interactions and environments in observation blocks of one to one-and-a-half hours per classroom. Programs may not become certified with only structural (required) measures reviewed.

Texas Rising Star assessors evaluate the program as a whole with the FARF and each classroom with the age-appropriate CARF by scoring each of the applicable measures specific to the facility type and/or the classroom's age group. screen

CLI Engage also uses the program's scores to generate reports that mentors can use to help refine the program's CQIP.

## Annual Monitoring Visit

The annual monitoring visit (annual monitoring) is unannounced and may be conducted at any time but must be conducted before the yearly anniversary date of the Texas Rising Star certification start date. Programs will receive two annual monitoring visits during the duration of their three-year certification period.

The unannounced annual monitoring is required by [§809.133\(d\)\(1\)](#)—there is no two-week window for annual monitoring visits, and the timing is at the sole discretion of Texas Rising Star staff. Before an annual monitoring visit, the assessor will also complete the appropriate Texas Rising Star Screening Form to review the program's recent CCR licensing history and determine whether there are any impacts on the program's certification status or mentoring needs.

If a program declines an annual monitoring upon the assessor's arrival, the assessor informs the program in writing that an annual monitoring is a requirement of Texas Rising Star and will occur within the next four to six weeks, citing these Guidelines and [§809.133\(d\)\(1\)](#). In this correspondence, the assessor also informs the program that failure to comply when the assessor arrives will result in an immediate loss of Texas Rising Star certification and the program will be required to wait six months to reapply.

## Classroom Observations

The assessor will observe and assess 50 percent of the classrooms, including at least one classroom for each age group and any new classrooms added since the previous visit. Newly added classrooms and classrooms in which the teacher has changed will be prioritized for observations.

## Director and Staff Training and Qualifications

During the annual monitoring, the assessor reviews all staff files. If, during the on-site visit, the assessor discovers that a change in director occurred and the current director does not meet the requirements of the program's current star level, then the program will be placed on a Service Improvement Agreement (SIA) for six months to assist the program with

retaining the current star level. Additionally, the same process would occur for programs that had staff turnover between visits. All new staff's qualifications are reviewed and scored as applicable.

### **Results of the Annual Monitoring Visit**

Results of the annual monitoring will not affect the program's star-level certification. Rather, the scores are used to develop a CQIP, or an SIA, as applicable, to help the program maintain or increase its star level.

The assessor will spend at least one hour in each observed classroom during annual monitoring visits. The assessor may observe for an additional 30 minutes in a classroom to ensure all measures can be scored accurately.

An annual monitoring can also result in the observation of significant improvements in a program's quality of care. In these cases, Texas Rising Star staff will work with the director to determine whether a future full assessment to increase the star level is appropriate (see *Star-Level Evaluation* in this section).

## **Recertification Assessment**

Texas Rising Star certification lasts three years. The Recertification Assessment will occur no later than three years to the month of the previous full-site assessment and certification for any Texas Rising Star-certified program.

Except for programs with TWC-recognized national accreditation, the recertification assessment requires that 100 percent of classrooms are assessed, all required measures are verified, and all points-based measures are scored for all categories. For nationally accredited programs, all classrooms are assessed for Categories 2 and 4 only.

A program's star level before the Recertification Assessment does not affect the assessment result; programs may lose, gain, or maintain a star level as a result of the Recertification Assessment.

Certified Texas Rising Star programs are responsible for submitting a Texas Rising Star application, Texas Rising Star Screening Form, and FARF self-assessment no later than three months before the three-year anniversary from the Texas Rising Star certification end date.

The recertification process slightly differs for nationally accredited facilities. Please see the [section](#) specific to these programs for more information.

## **Star-Level Evaluation**

Texas Rising Star 2- and 3-Star programs may make significant improvements across Texas Rising Star measures that could result in a higher star-level certification upon reassessment. In these cases, the program may request a Star-Level Evaluation to determine the new star-level certification. Star-Level Evaluations are conducted upon mutual agreement between the Texas Rising Star program and the appropriate Board and can occur at any time. Star-Level Evaluations are full assessments of all classrooms, categories, and applicable measures.

Because the Star-Level Evaluation is a full assessment, the three-year recertification cycle resets to the date of the Star-Level Evaluation (that is, the date of the Initial Assessment is no longer used to determine the recertification date), regardless of the star level resulting from the Star-Level Evaluation.

*Note:* Nationally accredited programs may request a Star-Level Evaluation, which will include assessing all classrooms for Categories 2 and 4.

## **Category Reassessment**

After any full assessment such as an Initial, Recertification, or Star-Level Evaluation, programs may request, within 30 days from the Texas Rising Star certification effective date, that a reassessment of not more than two of the program's lowest-rated categories be conducted without requiring a reassessment of the other categories. If a program requesting

a reassessment of the lowest-rated category or categories has experienced a change of director or staff within the three months, then *Category 1—Director and Staff Qualifications* must also be reassessed. Reassessments for programs under this provision will be completed within 60 days of the request. Only one Category Reassessment can be requested per full assessment.

For nationally accredited Texas Rising Star programs, a Category Reassessment may be requested following the same protocols detailed above; however, only one category is chosen for reassessment—either Category 2 or 4. Changes in director or staff will not require assessment of *Category 1—Director and Staff Qualifications* for nationally accredited programs.

*Note:* A Texas Rising Star program that is on Texas Rising Star probation or has had a loss of star level due to licensing violations is not eligible for a Category Reassessment.

## Facility Changes

There are varying types of changes a program may go through while being Texas Rising Star certified. These changes may affect the type of care that is being provided, requiring action by the Board and/or assessor.

**Facility expansions** are defined as a facility continuing to operate at an existing location with the existing classrooms and age groups served, while the owner/program opens a new facility within the same city, ZIP code, or county to expand and add classrooms or age groups served.

**Facility splits** are defined as a facility continuing to operate at an existing location while the owner/program opens an additional facility within the same city, ZIP code, or county and moves a subset of the staff and the children served to the new facility. A facility split also involves a modification of the current classroom structure and staffing.

Both facility expansions and facility splits involve establishing a new director at either the existing or new location. For licensing purposes, CCR considers both facility expansions and facility splits to be new facilities and requires a new permanent license. Under Texas Rising Star, facility expansions and splits require programs to request a review of the program's certification status. Licensing history for the certification will be based on CCR monitoring conducted while the facility was operating under the initial license. The need for assessment and observation will be based on the type and degree of facility changes, as determined by the assessor using the [Facility Change Rubric](#).

**Facility moves** are defined as a facility closing and relocating to a new location within the same city, ZIP code, or county in which the program is currently operating. A facility move does not alter the current composition of director or staff but may involve an increase in capacity or age groups served.

**Facility-type changes** are defined as a program changing facility type (for example, changes from a registered child care home to a licensed child care home). A facility-type change may alter the current composition of director or staff and may involve an increase in capacity or age groups served.

**Facility ownership changes** are defined as a program changing owners, which may alter the current composition of staff or current policies and procedures.

When a facility incurs one of the noted facility changes above, it must initiate a new CCR facility application and obtain a new license number from CCR. The facility may or may not carry its 12-month licensing history with it to the new license number.

A Texas Rising Star program that experiences **any** one of these changes (expansion, splits, facility type, changes ownership, or moves to a new location within the same city, ZIP code, or county in which the program is currently operating) will retain its star level during the move or change. The program will undergo a Texas Rising Star

reassessment per the Facility Change Rubric within the initial three-month period from the date the new CCR permit associated with the move or change is issued.

The program's new Texas Rising Star star level will be based on the results of the reassessment. The program **must** have a full (permanent) permit with CCR but does not need to have 12 months of history in this situation. The CCR history that is available under the permit before the change will be used when completing the Texas Rising Star Screening Form for these assessments.

## Reconsideration

TWC Chapter 809 Child Care Services rule [§809.135](#) requires Boards to ensure a process for reconsideration of facility assessment at the Board level, as the Texas Rising Star program is not subject to TWC Chapter 823 Integrated Complaints, Hearings, and Appeals rules.

A reconsideration may be requested by a program that feels that the assessment was inaccurate or unfairly conducted. The reconsideration process may include scheduling a second assessment with the same assessor, a second visit with two assessors, or an assessment with a different assessor. The reconsideration may also involve a reassessment of a category and/or measure as requested by the program. Boards may also coordinate with other Board assessors for a second review of the program's assessment. Additionally, in responding to a reconsideration request from a program, the Board may make additional mentoring services available to assist the program in meeting Texas Rising Star standards.

Boards must make programs aware of policies regarding the reconsideration process, time restrictions on requesting a reconsideration, the number of reconsiderations allowed, and the elements eligible for reconsideration. Reconsideration policies may vary across Boards.

## Director and Staff Changes

Texas Rising Star–certified programs should report to Texas Rising Star staff when there is:

- a change of director; or
- staff turnover that causes the Texas Rising Star program to fall below its current star level based on the program's completion of the Staff Qualifications and Training section of the FARF.

Staff positions that have changed will be reassessed at the program's next annual monitoring or next Texas Rising Star assessment using the qualifications of the facility's new director and/or staff.

If the change in director or staff results in the program not meeting the requirements of the program's current star level, then the program will be placed on an SIA for six months to provide time for the program to address the shortfall and retain its star level.

## Texas Workforce Registry

Child care and early learning programs participating in Texas Rising Star are expected to participate in the Texas Early Childhood Professional Development System's Workforce Registry (WFR). The WFR is an online system where early childhood professionals can store and access their education and employment history, as well as the training hours they have completed.

During the application process for Texas Rising Star, mentors will assist programs and their staff in entering staff information into the WFR. Mentors will provide ongoing support to encourage and support programs to use the WFR, and assessors will review the program's use of the WFR at the initial assessment, each annual monitoring, and any subsequent assessment visits.

If a program fails to use the WFR and to encourage staff to use it, a mentor will provide technical assistance and work with the program to include use of the WFR in its CQIP.

Mentors will also work with child care and early learning programs that were a part of Texas Rising Star before the requirement to participate in the WFR to determine an appropriate timeline and technical assistance needs to ensure the programs' progress with implementing use of the WFR.

# Section 4: Continuous Quality Improvement

Texas Rising Star provides professional development resources and mentoring to sustain and improve the quality of child care and early learning in Texas Rising Star–certified facilities. Texas Rising Star–certified programs have access to three types of technical assistance: CQIPs, SIAs, and targeted assistance for programs on Texas Rising Star probation. The three types of assistance are summarized below.

## Continuous Quality Improvement Plans

- Why?** Generated upon initial interest in applying for Texas Rising Star as well as from scores on Texas Rising Star measures from any certification assessment, CQIPs provide a road map for continued quality improvement.
- How?** CQIPs are targeted toward Texas Rising Star measures that via collaboration the mentor/program feel will help the program maintain or improve its star level.
- How long?** CQIPs are required, ongoing, and continually updated by mentor recommendations and program goals.
- Results?** CQIPs may determine the decision for a Star-Level Evaluation Assessment—a full assessment that may be requested if the program and mentor feel the program is ready to move to a higher star level.

## Service Improvement Agreements

- Why?** SIAs go into effect when a program fails to maintain its certified star level at the annual monitoring visit. SIAs give programs an opportunity to receive mentoring and supports before potentially losing a star level of Texas Rising Star certification at the next recertification assessment.
- How?** Technical assistance is targeted to the Texas Rising Star categories that led to the SIA.
- How long?** SIAs last a mandatory six months.
- Results?** An SIA assessment for all classrooms will be conducted within 30 days of the SIA end date on the Texas Rising Star categories found deficient to determine the new star level, if applicable. SIA assessments that result in a lower star level will have the opportunity to revise their CQIP with goals focused on increasing the star level.

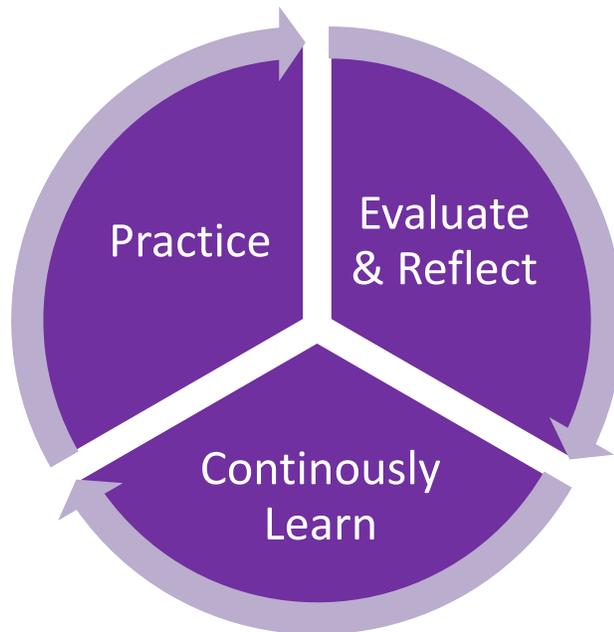
## Targeted Assistance for Texas Rising Star Probation

- Why?** Child care and early learning programs are placed on Texas Rising Star probation based on results within sections 4 or 5 of the facility’s screening form.
- How?** Targeted technical assistance via a CQIP is made available to the program to address CCR licensing deficiencies.
- How long?** Probations and Star-Level Drops last a mandatory six months.
- Results?** If the facility is cited for any section 4 or 5 CCR deficiencies within a six-month probation, without exceeding 14 total High and/or Medium-High weighted deficiencies, the facility loses a star level and a second six-month probation is established at the point of discovery. If the facility is cited for any section 4 or 5 deficiencies within the second six-month probation, the facility loses certification.

Please note that programs that are applying for Texas Rising Star certification may also access resources to help them prepare for certification.

## Continuous Quality Improvement

Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) provides a systemic and intentional process for improving quality in child care and early learning programs and increasing positive outcomes for children. Texas Rising Star–certified programs and applicants work closely with a Texas Rising Star mentor to engage in a cyclical process that includes self-reflection, continuous learning, practice, and evaluation. CQI helps programs attain certification, achieve increasingly higher levels of quality, sustain high quality over time, and ensure high quality across classrooms and age groups.



### *For Texas Rising Star–Certified Programs*

CQIPs are designed to assist programs in increasing the quality of the child care and early learning experiences they provide with the goal of maintaining or increasing the program’s star level. A CQIP contains improvement goals for a targeted number of Texas Rising Star measures and/or categories, as well as resources to help reach those improvement goals, including professional development coursework, coaching from a Texas Rising Star mentor, and identification of other available resources and training material.

CQIPs can also address key areas for improvement that are not directly measured by Texas Rising Star but are still important indicators of quality, such as implementing inclusive caregiving practices, working with English language learners, and developing policies to prevent suspension and expulsion. Mentors work with programs to determine their specific needs and the best goals to incorporate in the CQIP over time. Mentors may provide direct support to help programs meet their goals or they may help identify and access appropriate resources to support improvement efforts. Mentors and programs work together to reach agreement on what goals and strategies are included in the CQIP.

CQIPs for Texas Rising Star programs are developed upon initial acknowledgment of desire to participate in Texas Rising Star and again after the first full assessment. CQIPs can be further refined at annual visits with the assistance of the mentor. Additional technical assistance plans for Texas Rising Star programs are automatically generated after each assessment for each classroom and the facility as a whole and can be used to further refine the CQIP. Participation in a CQIP is required.

A set of professional development resources is available to Texas Rising Star programs, including many hours of online learning modules featuring extensive video-based demonstrations of effective instructional practices for responsive interaction, language and literacy, mathematics, and science. Through the CQIP, Texas Rising Star programs and their teachers may be assigned specific courses to complete depending on their quality improvement needs.

Mentors will be assigned to work with directors and their staff on all Texas Rising Star measures, both points-based and required. The amount of time a mentor spends on-site at the facility will vary based on their caseload and the program's needs.

### *For Programs Not Currently Texas Rising Star Certified*

Child care and early learning programs that are not yet eligible for Texas Rising Star or that may not be ready to apply can still participate in technical assistance provided by their local Board and/or assigned mentor. Some professional development resources are available through the CLI website (<https://cliengage.org/>). Additionally, some mentoring services may be provided before Texas Rising Star certification, depending on Board resources. Contact the appropriate Board for more information.

## Service Improvement Agreement (SIA)

Texas Rising Star assessors conduct unannounced annual monitoring visits (annual monitoring) to ensure that Texas Rising Star–certified programs are maintaining the level of quality that is reflected in their current star-level certification. If an assessor finds that a program is unable to maintain certified star level during these visits, an SIA will go into effect. SIAs are six-month mandatory agreements designed to assist Texas Rising Star programs in maintaining their current star level. Technical assistance through the SIA focuses on the Texas Rising Star categories that resulted in a lower overall star level during an annual monitoring. SIAs are put in place alongside the program's current CQIP.

Texas Rising Star programs retain their current star level while on the SIA. After the six-month SIA, an assessment of the categories originally observed as deficient is conducted for all classrooms/staff, as applicable to the category. If deficiencies persist, a new star level will be determined, based on the observations at the end of the SIA assessment.

## Texas Rising Star Probation

A Texas Rising Star–certified program can be put on Texas Rising Star probation for six months based on licensing deficiencies incurred. Probation A is when the program is cited for any one of the noted licensing deficiencies within section 4 of the screening form. Probation B is when 10–14 total Texas licensing deficiencies weighted High and/or Medium-High are cited within a 12-month period (15 or more deficiencies result in a loss of Texas Rising Star certification; see [§809.132](#)).

During either of type of probationary period, a program will receive technical assistance, as noted in their CQIP, from their assigned mentor to assist with licensing issues, as appropriate. Texas Rising Star staff are not trained by CCR in the minimum standards for licensed child care; therefore, Texas Rising Star staff should collaborate with the program's CCR representative to ascertain what technical assistance can be provided.

If a Texas Rising Star–certified program is cited for any deficiencies within Section 4 or 5 of the screening form while on probation, the programs will lose a star level (2-Star loses certification) and be placed on a second probation. The program is eligible for reinstatement to its former star level at the end of a six-month period if deficiencies within Section 4 or 5 are not cited. If any new deficiencies are cited during this second probationary period, the program will lose Texas Rising Star certification.

A program that has been placed on probation must finish out the six-month probation (and not be placed on an additional probation) to be eligible for a Star-Level Evaluation and/or Category Reassessment. The program may request a Star-Level Evaluation or Category Reassessment during that six-month time frame; however, the assessment cannot be conducted until the conclusion of the probationary period.

## Losing a Star Level and Losing Texas Rising Star Certification

There are several circumstances that can result in a Texas Rising Star–certified program either losing a star level or losing Texas Rising Star certification, as described in Tables 4.1 and 4.2 below.

Child care and early learning programs losing Texas Rising Star certification shall be eligible to reapply for certification after six months following the loss of the certification, as long as no additional licensing deficiencies noted within sections 3, 4, and/or 5 of the screening form are cited during the disqualification period. The program must comply with eligibility requirements and apply as an initial applicant. Previous impacts can be waived, except the total of High and/or Medium-High weighted deficiencies. Detailed documentation should be placed into TWIST and CLI's Engage Event Log to ensure that proper procedures are followed for these situations.

Any child care and early learning program that has had its Texas Rising Star certification removed by the Board (TWC) due to not meeting structural measures during any assessment may apply after six months from the loss as an initial applicant, pending CCR licensing history compliance. Any previous violations within sections 3 and 4 that were already accounted for would not affect the new application. Any impacts placed on any program will be noted within TWIST (as applicable), CLI's Engage Event Log (as directed), and via the Texas Rising Star Impacts Notice form found in Section 5: Resources.

Programs that voluntarily withdraw from Texas Rising Star may apply to become certified again at any time, as an initial applicant, but must meet all the eligibility and screening form compliance requirements at the time of application.

**Table 4.1: Initial Impact of Certain Deficiencies on Texas Rising Star Status**

<b>Impact</b>	<b>TRS Applicant</b>	<b>TRS 2-Star Program</b>	<b>TRS 3-Star Program</b>	<b>TRS 4-Star Program</b>	<b>Duration/Reapplication Eligibility</b>
CCR Corrective Action; Board Corrective Action; or TWC Notice of Freeze	Not Eligible	End TRS	End TRS	End TRS	Eligible to reapply 6 months from certification loss; additionally, cannot currently be on CCR Corrective Action, Board Corrective Action, and/or TWC Notice of Freeze.
Cited for CCR firearms deficiency	Not Eligible	End TRS	End TRS	End TRS	Eligible to reapply 6 months from certification loss.
15 Total High and/or Medium-High-weighted CCR Deficiencies	Not Eligible	End TRS	End TRS	End TRS	Eligible to reapply 6 months from certification loss.
Any Star-Level Drop deficiency* (TRS Guidelines)	Not Eligible	End TRS	Dropped to 2-Star for 6 months	Dropped to 3-Star for 6 months	Eligible to be reinstated at former level if no denoted deficiencies are received within six-month reduction time frame.
Any Probation deficiencies (TRS Guidelines)	Not Eligible	6-month probation	6-month probation	6-month probation	Eligible to have probation ended if no denoted deficiencies are received within the six-month probation time frame.
10–14 Total High and/or Medium-High-weighted CCR Deficiencies	Not Eligible	6-month probation	6-month probation	6-month probation	Eligible to have probation ended if no additional High and/or Medium-High-weighted CCR deficiencies are received within the six-month probation time frame.

*Note:* The impact of Star-Level Drop deficiencies are applied for each deficiency cited. For example: November 1, 2020, two Star-Level Drop deficiencies are cited for a 4-Star program. The first Star-Level Drop deficiency moves the 4-Star program to 3-Star recognition. The second Star-Level Drop deficiency results in loss of an additional star level, moving the program to 2-Star recognition. A program at a 3-Star recognition that receives two Star-Level Drop deficiencies would lose certification.

**Table 4.2: Impact of *Additional* Deficiencies on Texas Rising Star Status**

<b>Impact Status</b>	<b>Additional Impact</b>	<b>TRS 2-Star</b>	<b>TRS 3-Star Program</b>	<b>TRS 4-Star Program</b>	<b>Duration</b>
Star-Level Reduction	Citation of additional Star-Level Drop deficiency	End TRS	End TRS	End TRS	Eligible to reapply 6 months from loss of certification.
1st Probation A (specified deficiencies)	New specified CCR Deficiencies (<15 total High and/or Medium-High weighted)	End TRS	2nd Probation (consecutive) and dropped to 2-Star for 6 months	2nd Probation (consecutive) and dropped to 3-Star for 6 months	Eligible to be reinstated at former level if no denoted deficiencies are received within 2nd 6-month reduction time frame.
1st Probation B (total)	New High or Medium-High-weighted CCR Deficiencies (<15 total High and/or Medium-High weighted)	End TRS	2nd Probation (consecutive) and dropped to 2-Star for 6 months	2nd Probation (consecutive) and dropped to 3-Star for 6 months	Eligible to be reinstated at former level if no high or medium-high-weighted CCR deficiencies are received within 2nd 6-month reduction time frame.
2nd Probation A (specified deficiencies)	New specified CCR Deficiencies (<15 total High and/or Medium-High weighted)	End TRS	End TRS	End TRS	Eligible to reapply 6 months from loss of certification if no specified deficiencies are received within that six months.
2nd Probation B (total)	New High and/or Medium-High-weighted CCR Deficiencies (<15 total High and/or Medium-High weighted)	End TRS	End TRS	End TRS	Eligible to reapply 6 months from loss of certification if no High or Medium-High-weighted CCR deficiencies are received within that 6 months.

# Section 5: References and Forms

[Application for Texas Rising Star Certification \(all facilities\)](#)

[Facility Change Rubric](#)

[Texas Rising Star Initial Screening Form—Licensed Child Care Centers](#)

[Texas Rising Star Current Screening Form—Licensed Child Care Centers](#)

[Texas Rising Star Initial Screening Form—Licensed/Registered Child Care Homes](#)

[Texas Rising Star Current Screening Form—Licensed/Registered Child Care Homes](#)

[Texas Rising Star Initial Screening Form—After-School Programs](#)

[Texas Rising Star Current Screening Form—After-School Programs](#)

[Continuous Quality Improvement Plan](#)

[Texas Rising Star Impacts Notice](#)

[Accreditation Recognition Application Process](#)

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## Application for Texas Rising Star Recognition

Texas Rising Star Recognition is voluntary and recognizes enrolled child care and early learning programs that exceed minimum Child Care Regulation (CCR) standards and meet certain additional criteria. All programs that have agreements with a Board's child care contractor are eligible to apply for assessment and recognition.

Initial Application

Recertification Application

Facility Name:

Child Care Regulation #:

Site Address:

Facility Phone:

Contact Phone:

Owner:

Director:

### TYPE OF FACILITY

- Licensed Child Care Center (all ages)  Licensed Child Care Home  
 Registered Child Care Home  Licensed Center (school-age only)

### AGE GROUPS SERVED

- Infants (0–17 months)  Toddlers (18–35 months)  
 Preschool (3–5 years)  School-age (5–12 years)

### TYPE OF NATIONAL ACCREDITATION (if applicable)

- National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)  
 National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC)  
 National Accreditation Commission for Early Child Care and Education Program (NAC)  
 National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA)  
 Council on Accreditation (COA)  
 Cognia (previously AdvancEd) Quality Early Learning System (QELS)  
 Early Head Start/Head Start (with wraparound services)  
 Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI)

### FACILITY INFORMATION

Total Classrooms Open: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Classrooms Closed: \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Total Enrollment: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Total Enrollment: \_\_\_\_\_

### DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

- Facility Assessment Record Form Self-Assessment (includes completed staff worksheet)  
 Classroom Roster Document (to include classroom name, staff names, and specified age group for each operating classroom)  
 Documentation of National Accreditation (if applicable)  
 Documentation of completion of Texas Rising Star Orientation (n/a for recertification)  
 Continuous Quality Improvement Plan

**ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

- Applicant meets requirements (1) through (5) below?  Yes  No
  - If no, explain: \_\_\_\_\_
- Initial Applicant complies with Texas Rising Star Screening form?  Yes  No
  - If no, explain: \_\_\_\_\_
- Renewal Applicant complies with Texas Rising Star Screening form?  Yes  No
  - If no, explain: \_\_\_\_\_

The Texas Rising Star Certification Guidelines (Guidelines) contain prerequisites that must be met in order for an early learning program to be assessed. The child care and early learning program’s signature below is assurance that these requirements are fully met, and the assessment/recognition process may be initiated. All early learning programs, except those governed by the US Department of Defense, receive an initial and recertification assessment. See the National Accreditation section of the Guidelines for information specific to these early learning programs.

A program is eligible to apply for Texas Rising Star certification if the early learning program has a current agreement to serve Commission-subsidized children and:

- (1) has a permanent (non-expiring) license or registration from CCR;
- (2) has at least 12 months of licensing history with CCR; and is not on:
  - corrective action with a Board pursuant to Subchapter F of TWC Chapter 809 Child Care Services rules;
  - a Notice of Freeze with the Commission pursuant to Chapter 213 of the Texas Labor Code (Enforcement of Texas Unemployment Compensation Act) or Chapter 61 of the Texas Labor Code (Payment of Wages); or
  - corrective or adverse action with CCR.
- (3) has at minimum created a center director account within the Texas Workforce Registry; and
- (4) has completed a Texas Rising Star program orientation; or
- (5) is regulated by and in good standing with the US military.

A program is also subject to CCR requirements as outlined in the Guidelines and the Texas Rising Star Screening forms. The program must complete the Texas Rising Star Screening Form as an attestation of eligibility.

*By signing below, I attest that I understand and meet the eligibility and application requirements of TWC § 809.131 of the Child Care Services rules listed above.*

*I understand and agree to abide by the responsibilities and requirements set forth by TWC Chapter 809, Subchapter G of the Child Care Services rules and the Guidelines and that my Texas Rising Star certification may be impacted if I or my child care facility:*

- *is on corrective or adverse action with CCR, the Local Workforce Development Board, and/or TWC;*
- *has substantial or critical high-risk licensing deficiencies as described in Section 2 of the Guidelines;*
- *fails to comply with annual unannounced monitoring visits; or*
- *fails to communicate any changes in my facility (owner, director, staff/location) in a timely manner to my local Board, as applicable.*

Name/Title of person authorized to apply for facility:

Signature:

Date:

<b>FOR TEXAS RISING STAR STAFF OFFICE USE ONLY</b>			
<b>Date application received:</b>		<b>Documentation returned:</b>	
<b>All documentation:</b>		<b>Requirements verified:</b>	
<b>TRS Mentor assigned:</b>		<b>TRS Assessor assigned:</b>	
<b>Assessment date:</b>		<b>Engage data entry date:</b>	
<b>Notes/Comments:</b>			

## Facility Change Rubric

Change	Impact for compliance	Impact for non-compliance
<b>Facility Expansion</b>		
Current certified Program opens a second location in the same city, county or zip code	<p>If new facility meets eligibility requirements (e.g. has a <u>full</u> permit) with the exception of 12-months of CCR history;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retains star level of current site;</li> <li>Full assessment within 3 months of opening</li> </ul>	<p>If new facility does not meet eligibility requirements (CCR history waived);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not retain star level</li> <li>Can be assessed once meets initial screening form</li> </ul>
Current certified Program opens a 3 <sup>rd</sup> or more location in the same city, county or zip code	<p>If new facility meets eligibility requirements (e.g. has a <u>full</u> permit) with the exception of 12-months CCR history;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retains star level of the lowest current site's star level;</li> <li>Full assessment within 3 months of opening</li> </ul>	<p>If new facility does not meet eligibility requirements (CCR history waived);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not retain star level</li> <li>Can be assessed once meets initial screening form</li> </ul>
<b>Facility Split</b>		
Current certified Program moves a subset of staff to new location in the same city, county or zip code (thus, only a subset of age groups are served at both locations, e.g. current site becomes an Infant Toddler center, while new site becomes a Preschool center)	<p>If new facility meets eligibility requirements (e.g. has a <u>full</u> permit) with the exception of 12-months of CCR history;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retains star level of previous site;</li> <li>Full assessment within 3 months of move</li> </ul> <p>Additionally, the current facility must also be reassessed within 3 months of the move.</p>	<p>If new facility does not meet eligibility requirements (CCR history waived);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not retain star level</li> <li>Can be assessed once meets initial screening form</li> </ul>
<b>Facility Moves</b>		
Current certified program physically moves location of the program within the same city, county or zip code	<p>If facility continues to meet eligibility requirements (e.g. has a <u>full</u> permit) with the exception of 12-months of CCR history;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retains star level;</li> <li>Assessed for only Category 4 within 3 months of move</li> </ul>	<p>If new facility does not meet eligibility requirements (CCR history waived);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not retain star level</li> <li>Can be assessed once meets initial screening form</li> </ul>
<b>Ownership Change</b>		
Current certified program changes ownership	<p>If facility continues to meet eligibility requirements (e.g. has a <u>full</u> permit) with the exception of 12-months of CCR history;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retains star level;</li> <li>Full assessment within 3 months of change</li> </ul>	<p>If new facility does not meet eligibility requirements (CCR history waived);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not retain star level</li> <li>Can be assessed once meets initial screening form</li> </ul>
<b>Facility-Type Change</b>		
Current certified program changes the type of facility it runs (e.g. registered home becomes licensed home; licensed home becomes licensed center)	<p>If facility continues to meet eligibility requirements (e.g. has a <u>full</u> permit) with the exception of 12-months of CCR history;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retains star level;</li> <li>Full assessment within 3 months of change</li> </ul>	<p>If new facility does not meet eligibility requirements (CCR history waived);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not retain star level</li> <li>Can be assessed once meets initial screening form</li> </ul>
<b>Changes that may result in a new License #</b>		
Change in Business Entity (e.g. becoming an LLC; profit to non-profit; etc.)	<p>If facility continues to meet eligibility requirements (e.g. has a <u>full</u> permit) with the exception of 12-months of CCR history after the change no impact incurred</p>	<p>If facility does not meet eligibility requirements (CCR history waived);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Certification is revoked</li> <li>Can be assessed once meets initial screening form</li> </ul>
Change in program name	<p>If facility continues to meet eligibility requirements (e.g. has a <u>full</u> permit) with the exception of 12-months of CCR history after the change no impact incurred</p>	<p>If facility does not meet eligibility requirements (CCR history waived);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Certification is revoked</li> <li>Can be assessed once meets initial screening form</li> </ul>

## Texas Rising Star Initial Screening Form—Centers

### Licensed Child Care Centers

Provider Name:  Address:

Director Name:  License #:

Initial Applicants for Texas Rising Star	
1.	Facility has Child Care Regulation (CCR) licensing history for the 12-month period? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Date of Review: <input type="text"/> <b>Review 12-month CCR licensing history.</b>  <b>Stop process if “No.”</b>
2.	On Corrective or Adverse Action with CCR? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No On Corrective Action with Board? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No On Notice of Freeze with TWC? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Cited for 746.3707 (b–d) by CCR? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Has 15 or more total CCR weighted High and/or Medium-High Deficiencies? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No  <b>Stop process if “Yes” for any of the above.</b>
3.	<b>CCR Deficiency Review</b> <b>Facility is unable to be Texas Rising Star if it has received any of the following deficiencies listed below:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 745.621 Background Checks Requirement</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 745.635 Criminal Convictions or Central Registry Findings—Take Appropriate Action</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 745.641 Background Checks Requirement—Providing Direct Care</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 746.1003 Director Responsibilities</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 746.1201(1) Responsibilities of Employees and Caregivers—Demonstrate Competency, Good Judgment, Self-Control</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 746.1201(4) Responsibilities of Employees and Caregivers—Ensure No Child is Abused, Neglected, or Exploited</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 746.1201(5) Responsibilities of Employees and Caregivers—Report Suspected Child Abuse, Neglect, or Exploitation</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 746.1203(4) Responsibilities of Caregivers—Supervision of Children</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 746.1315 First Aid and CPR Requirements</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 746.2805 Prohibited Punishments</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 746.3805(a) Administering Medication—How to Administer Medication</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 746.3805(b) Administering Medication—How to Administer Medication</li> </ul> <p><b>Stop process if any of the above has been received within the previous 12 months.</b></p>
<i>Place a copy of this form and screenshot of CCR licensing history within the Engage Event Log for applicable status update that results in an impact.</i>	
<b>Texas Rising Star Staff Signature:</b>	<b>Date:</b>

# Texas Rising Star Current Screening Form—Centers

## Licensed Child Care Centers

Provider Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Director Name: \_\_\_\_\_ License #: \_\_\_\_\_

### Current Texas Rising Star Programs

1. Facility has CCR licensing history for the 12-month period before the date of the Texas Rising Star monitoring/recertification visit?  Yes  No

Date of CCR Review: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Review 12-month CCR licensing history.

2. On Corrective or Adverse Action with CCR?  Yes  No

On Corrective Action with Board?  Yes  No

On Notice of Freeze with TWC?  Yes  No

Cited for 746.3707 (b-d) by CCR?  Yes  No

Has 15 or more total CCR weighted High and/or Medium-High Deficiencies?  Yes  No

Has incurred 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive probation (any level)?  Yes  No (If yes, denote previous probation start dates in last 3 years:\_\_\_\_)

Has incurred 5<sup>th</sup> probation (any level) within last 3 years?  Yes  No (If yes, denote previous probation start dates in last 3 years:\_\_\_\_)

**Repeat certification if "Yes" for any criterion above.**

### 3. STAR-LEVEL DROP

Facility is dropped one star level for **each occurrence** if it has received any of the following deficiencies listed below. 2-Star facilities would lose certification.

745.635 Criminal Convictions or Central Registry Findings—Take Appropriate Action

745.641 Background Checks Requirement—Providing Direct Care

746.1201(4) Responsibilities of Employees and Caregivers—Ensure No Child is Abused, Neglected, or Exploited

746.1201(5) Responsibilities of Employees and Caregivers—Report Suspected Child Abuse, Neglect, or Exploitation

Date star-level drop is effective: \_\_\_\_

### 4. PROBATION A

Facility is placed on Probation A if it has **any** of the following deficiencies listed below:

745.621 Background Checks Requirement

746.1003 Director Responsibilities

746.1201(1) Responsibilities of Employees and Caregivers—Demonstrate Competency, Good Judgment, Self-Control

746.1203(4) Responsibilities of Caregivers—Supervision of Children

746.1315 First Aid and CPR Requirements

746.2805 Prohibited Punishments

746.3805(a) Administering Medication—How to Administer Medication

746.3805(b) Administering Medication—How to Administer Medication

*If facility is cited for any Probation A deficiencies within the 6-month probation, without exceeding 14 total High and/or Medium-High deficiencies, the facility loses a star level and a second 6-month probation is established at the point of discovery. If facility is cited for any Probation A deficiencies within the second 6-month probation, facility loses certification.*

Date probation is effective: \_\_\_\_

Denote which probation:  1<sup>st</sup>  2<sup>nd</sup>

### 5. PROBATION B

Facility that has 10–14 total CCR weighted High and/or Medium-High deficiencies only is placed on Probation B.

Total number of High and/or Medium-High Deficiencies: \_\_\_\_

*If any additional CCR weighted High and/or Medium-High deficiencies are incurred but do not exceed 14 total, within this 6-month probation, the facility loses a star level for 6-months and a second 6-month probation is established at the point of discovery. If new High and/or Medium-High deficiencies are incurred within the second 6-month probation, facility loses certification.*

Date Probation is effective: \_\_\_\_

Denote which probation:  1<sup>st</sup>  2<sup>nd</sup>

**For any facility on a 6-month star-level reduction, no additional deficiencies denoted in section 3 or 4 can be incurred within that 6-month time frame in order to be reinstated at the previous certified star level.**

*Place a copy of this form and screenshot of CCR licensing history within the Engage Event Log for applicable status update that results in an impact.*

Texas Rising Star Staff Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Texas Rising Star Initial Screening Form—Homes**  
**Registered or Licensed Homes**

Provider Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Director Name: \_\_\_\_\_ License #: \_\_\_\_\_

**Initial Applicants for Texas Rising Star**

1. Facility has Child Care Regulation (CCR) licensing history for the 12-month period?  Yes  No

Date of Review: \_\_\_\_\_

**Review 12-month CCR licensing history.**

**Stop process if “No.”**

2. On Corrective or Adverse Action with CCR?  Yes  No

On Corrective Action with Board?  Yes  No

On Notice of Freeze with TWC?  Yes  No

Cited for 747.3505 by CCR?  Yes  No

Has 15 or more total CCR weighted High and/or Medium-High Deficiencies?  Yes  No

**Stop process if “Yes” for any of the above.**

3. **CCR Deficiency Review**

**Facility is unable to be Texas Rising Star if it has received any of the following deficiencies listed below:**

- 745.621 Background Checks Requirement
- 745.635 Criminal Convictions or Central Registry Findings—Take Appropriate Action
- 745.641 Background Checks Requirement—Providing Direct Care
- 747.207(4) Reporting Suspected Abuse, Neglect, or Exploitation
- 747.207 (1–3), (5–7) Primary Caregiver Responsibilities
- 747.1313 First Aid and CPR Requirements
- 747.1501(c)(1) Responsibilities of Employees and Caregivers—Demonstrate Competency, Good Judgment, Self-Control
- 747.1501(a)(3) Responsibilities of Employees and Caregivers—Ensure No Child is Abused, Neglected, or Exploited
- 747.1501(c)(4) Responsibilities of Caregivers—Supervision of Children
- 747.2705 Prohibited Punishments
- 747.3501 Safety—Areas Free from Hazards
- 747.3605(a) Administering Medication—How to Administer Medication
- 747.3605(b) Administering Medication—How to Administer Medication

**Stop process if any of the above has been received within the previous 12 months.**

*Place a copy of this form and screenshot of CCR licensing history within the Engage Event Log for applicable status update that results in an impact.*

**Texas Rising Star Staff Signature:**

**Date:**

# Texas Rising Star Current Screening Form—Homes

## Registered or Licensed Homes

Provider Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Director Name: \_\_\_\_\_ License #: \_\_\_\_\_

### Current Texas Rising Star Programs

1. Facility has CCR licensing history for the 12-month period before the date of the Texas Rising Star monitoring/recertification visit?  Yes  No

Date of CCR Review: \_\_\_\_\_

**Review 12-month CCR licensing history.**

2. On Corrective or Adverse Action with CCR?  Yes  No

On Corrective Action with Board?  Yes  No

On Notice of Freeze with TWC?  Yes  No

Cited for 747.3505 by CCR?  Yes  No

Has 15 or more total CCR weighted High and/or Medium-High Deficiencies?  Yes  No

Has incurred 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive probation (any level)?  Yes  No (If yes, denote previous probation start dates in last 3 years: \_\_\_\_\_)

Has incurred 5<sup>th</sup> probation (any level) within last 3 years?  Yes  No (If yes, denote previous probation start dates in last 3 years: \_\_\_\_\_)

**Repeal certification if "Yes" for any criterion above.**

3. **STAR-LEVEL DROP**

**Facility is dropped one star level for each occurrence if it has received any of the following deficiencies listed below. 2-Star facilities would lose certification.**

- 745.635 Criminal Convictions or Central Registry Findings—Take Appropriate Action
- 745.641 Background Checks Requirement—Providing Direct Care
- 747.207(4) Reporting Suspected Abuse, Neglect, or Exploitation
- 747.1501(a)(3) Responsibilities of Employees and Caregivers—Ensure No Child is Abused, Neglected, or Exploited

Date star-level drop is effective: \_\_\_\_\_

4. **PROBATION A**

**Facility is placed on Probation A if it as any of the following deficiencies listed below:**

- 745.621 Background Checks Requirement
- 747.207 (1–), (5–7) Primary Caregiver Responsibilities
- 747.1501(c)(1) Responsibilities of Employees and Caregivers—Demonstrate Competency, Good Judgment, Self-Control
- 747.1501(c)(4) Responsibilities of Caregivers—Supervision of Children
- 747.1313 First Aid and CPR Requirements
- 747.2705 Prohibited Punishments
- 747.3501 Safety—Areas Free from Hazards
- 747.3605(a) Administering Medication—How to Administer Medication
- 747.3605(b) Administering Medication—How to Administer Medication

*If facility is cited for any Probation A deficiencies within the 6-month probation, without exceeding 14 total High and/or Medium-High deficiencies, the facility loses a star level and a second 6-month probation is established at the point of discovery. If facility is cited for any Probation A deficiencies within the second 6-month probation, facility loses certification.*

Date probation is effective: \_\_\_\_\_

Denote which probation:  1<sup>st</sup>  2<sup>nd</sup>

5. **PROBATION B**

Facility that has 10–14 total CCR weighted High and/or Medium-High deficiencies only is placed on Probation B.

**Total number of High and/or Medium-High Deficiencies: \_\_\_\_\_**

*If additional CCR weighted High and/or Medium-High deficiencies are incurred but do not exceed 14 total, within this 6-month probation, the facility loses a star level for 6-months and a second 6-month probation is established at the point of discovery. If new High and/or Medium-High deficiencies are incurred within the second 6-month probation, facility loses certification.*

Date Probation is effective: \_\_\_\_\_

Denote which probation:  1<sup>st</sup>  2<sup>nd</sup>

**For any facility on a 6-month star-level reduction, no additional deficiencies denoted in section 3 or 4 can be incurred within that 6-month time frame in order to be reinstated at the previous certified star level.**

*Place a copy of this form and screenshot of CCR licensing history within the Engage Event Log for applicable status update that results in an impact.*

Texas Rising Star Staff Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Texas Rising Star Initial Screening Form—After-School

## Licensed Child Care After-School Programs

Provider Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Director Name: \_\_\_\_\_ License #: \_\_\_\_\_

### Initial Applicants for Texas Rising Star

1. Facility has Child Care Regulation (CCR) licensing history for the 12-month period?  Yes  No

Date of Review: \_\_\_\_\_

**Review 12-month CCR licensing history.**

**Stop process if “No.”**

2. On Corrective or Adverse Action with CCR?  Yes  No

On Corrective Action with Board?  Yes  No

On Notice of Freeze with TWC?  Yes  No

Cited for 744.2607 (b–d) by CCR?  Yes  No

Has 15 or more total CCR weighted High and/or Medium-High Deficiencies?  Yes  No

**Stop process if “Yes” for any of the above.**

3. **CCR Deficiency Review**

**Facility is unable to be Texas Rising Star if it has received any of the following deficiencies listed below:**

- 745.621 Background Checks Requirement
- 745.635 Criminal Convictions or Central Registry Findings—Take Appropriate Action
- 745.641 Background Checks Requirement—Providing Direct Care
- 744.1201(4) Responsibilities of Employees and Caregivers—Ensure No Child is Abused, Neglected, or Exploited
- 744.1201(5) Responsibilities of Employees and Caregivers—Report Suspected Child Abuse, Neglect, or Exploitation
- 744.1005(a)(1)–(6) Director Responsibilities
- 744.1201(1) Responsibilities of Employees and Caregivers—Demonstrate Competency, Good Judgment, Self-Control
- 744.1203(4) Responsibilities of Caregivers—Supervision of Children
- 744.1315 First Aid and CPR Requirements
- 744.2105 Prohibited Punishments
- 744.2655(a) Administering Medication—How to Administer Medication
- 744.2655(b) Administering Medication—How to Administer Medication

**Stop process if any of the above has been received within the previous 12 months.**

*Place a copy of this form and screenshot of CCR licensing history within the Engage Event Log for applicable status update that results in an impact.*

**Texas Rising Star Staff Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

# Texas Rising Star Current Screening Form—After-School

## Licensed Child Care After-School Programs

Provider Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Director Name: \_\_\_\_\_ License #: \_\_\_\_\_

### Current Texas Rising Star Programs

1. Facility has CCR licensing history for the 12-month period before the date of the Texas Rising Star monitoring/recertification visit?  Yes  No

Date of CCR Review: \_\_\_\_\_

**Review 12-month CCR licensing history.**

2. On Corrective or Adverse Action with CCR?  Yes  No

On Corrective Action with Board?  Yes  No

On Notice of Freeze with TWC?  Yes  No

Cited for 744.2607 (b-d) by CCR?  Yes  No

Has 15 or more total CCR weighted High and/or Medium-High Deficiencies?  Yes  No

Has incurred 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive probation (any level)?  Yes  No (If yes, denote previous probation start dates in last 3 years: \_\_\_\_\_)

Has incurred 5<sup>th</sup> probation (any level) within last 3 years?  Yes  No (If yes, denote previous probation start dates in last 3 years: \_\_\_\_\_)

**Repeal certification if "Yes" for any criterion above.**

3. **STAR-LEVEL DROP**

**Facility is dropped one star level for each occurrence if it has received any of the following deficiencies listed below. 2-Star facilities would lose certification.**

745.635 Criminal Convictions or Central Registry Findings—Take Appropriate Action

745.641 Background Checks Requirement—Providing Direct Care

744.1201(4) Responsibilities of Employees and Caregivers—Ensure No Child is Abused, Neglected, or Exploited

744.1201(5) Responsibilities of Employees and Caregivers—Report Suspected Child Abuse, Neglect, or Exploitation

**Date star-level drop is effective: \_\_\_\_\_**

4. **PROBATION A**

**Facility is placed on Probation A if it has any of the following deficiencies listed below:**

745.621 Background Checks Requirement

744.1005(a)(1)–(6) Director Responsibilities

744.1201(1) Responsibilities of Employees and Caregivers—Demonstrate Competency, Good Judgment, Self-Control

744.1203(4) Responsibilities of Caregivers—Supervision of Children

744.1315 First Aid and CPR Requirements

744.2105 Prohibited Punishments

744.2655(a) Administering Medication—How to Administer Medication

744.2655(b) Administering Medication—How to Administer Medication

*If facility is cited for any Probation A deficiencies within the 6-month probation, without exceeding 14 total High and/or Medium-High deficiencies, the facility loses a star level and a second 6-month probation is established at the point of discovery. If facility is cited for any Probation A deficiencies within the second 6-month probation, facility loses certification.*

**Date probation is effective: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Denote which probation:**  1<sup>st</sup>  2<sup>nd</sup>

5. **PROBATION B**

Facility that has 10–14 total CCR weighted High and/or Medium-High deficiencies only is placed on Probation B.

**Total number of High and/or Medium-High Deficiencies: \_\_\_\_\_**

*If additional CCR weighted High and/or Medium-High deficiencies are incurred but do not exceed 14 total, within this 6-month probation, the facility loses a star level for 6-months and a second 6-month probation is established at the point of discovery. If new High and/or Medium-High deficiencies are incurred within the second 6-month probation, facility loses certification.*

**Date Probation is effective: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Denote which probation:**  1<sup>st</sup>  2<sup>nd</sup>

**For any facility on a 6-month star-level reduction, no additional deficiencies denoted in section 3 or 4 can be incurred within that 6-month time frame in order to be reinstated at the previous certified star level.**

*Place a copy of this form and screenshot of CCR licensing history within the Engage Event Log for applicable status update that results in an impact.*

**Texas Rising Star Staff Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_



<b>Goal 2</b>	
<b>Related Category and/or Measures</b>	
<b>Action Steps</b>	
<b>Resources Needed</b>	
<b>Timeline</b>	
<b>Projected Date of Completion</b>	
<b>Date Completed</b>	

<b>Goal 3</b>	
<b>Related Category and/or Measures</b>	
<b>Action Steps</b>	
<b>Resources Needed</b>	
<b>Timeline</b>	
<b>Projected Date of Completion</b>	
<b>Date Completed</b>	

<b>Goal 4</b>	
<b>Related Category and/or Measures</b>	
<b>Action Steps</b>	
<b>Resources Needed</b>	
<b>Timeline</b>	
<b>Projected Date of Completion</b>	
<b>Date Completed</b>	

<b>Goal 5</b>	
<b>Related Category and/or Measures</b>	
<b>Action Steps</b>	
<b>Resources Needed</b>	
<b>Timeline</b>	
<b>Projected Date of Completion</b>	
<b>Date Completed</b>	

Authorized Representative Name:

Mentor Name:

Authorized Representative Signature:

Mentor Signature:

Date:

Date:

Comments/Notes:

## Texas Rising Star Impacts Notice

This form acknowledges that the program noted below has been placed on a Texas Rising Star impact as described within the table.

Facility name: \_\_\_\_\_

CCR license number: \_\_\_\_\_

Date impact began: \_\_\_\_\_

Length of impact: \_\_\_\_\_

From the impact column below, select which impact has occurred and complete the columns as denoted.

<i><b>Impact</b></i>	<i><b>Specified criteria</b></i>	<i><b>Reason for impact (evidence)</b></i>
<b>Star-Level Drop</b>	Denote current star level: __ Denote new star level: __	
<b>Probation A or B</b>	Denote which, A or B	
<b>Probation continued</b>	Denote which, A or B	
<b>Loss of Certification</b>	Denote which, Screening Form or SIA redetermination	
<b>Service Improvement Agreement</b>	Denote which categories, 1,2,3, or 4	

### ***Requirements for eligibility reinstatement***

<i><b>Impact</b></i>	<i><b>Requirements for eligibility reinstatement</b></i>
<i>Star-Level Drop (Screening Form) or Probation</i>	<i>Facility is not cited for specified deficiencies relating to impact.*</i>
<i>Loss of Certification</i>	<i>Facility has not been Texas Rising Star for 6 months and meets initial application requirements (considering previous impacts).*</i>
<i>Service Improvement Agreement</i>	<i>Facility maintains current star level upon assessment of specified categories.</i>

(\*) see Table 4.1 or 4.2 in the Guidelines for specific information regarding screening impacts reinstatement eligibility

*I understand that for my facility to be removed from this status, it must meet the requirements of the eligibility reinstatement applicable to its impact.*

Program Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

TRS Staff Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Once the required time frame for impact has ended, Texas Rising Star staff will determine whether removal of action is warranted. For screening impacts that are not met and a new action is placed, a new form is completed.

Met requirement      Date ended: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Did not meet requirement:     New impact/New form       SIA determined new star level: \_\_

Program Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

TRS Staff Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Accreditation Recognition Application Process

## **US Department of Defense Recognition**

Accreditation entities not currently recognized by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) that would like to apply to be recognized through Texas Rising Star would be initially certified at the 4-Star level without a full Texas Rising Star assessment if the accreditation is:

- recognized by the US Department of Defense (DoD) for child care facilities operated by the US military on military installations; or
- recognized as participating in DoD's Off-Base Child Care Military Fee Assistance Program.

## **Established National Accreditation**

For national accrediting entities not recognized by DoD, the minimum criterion required to be eligible to apply for TWC recognition is that the accrediting entity must be well established and national in scope. To ensure this, the accrediting entity must have:

- accredited facilities in at least 26 states (50 percent of the 50 states and the District of Columbia);
- at least 500 nationally accredited facilities; and
- had the standards in place for at least five years.

## **Publicly Accessible Standards and List of Facilities**

Information regarding TWC-recognized national accrediting entities is provided to parents as part of consumer education required through the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014. Therefore, the national accreditation entity must have a public website that contains, at a minimum:

- its accreditation measures;
- its scoring thresholds; and
- a list of accredited facilities, searchable by state.

## **Minimum Assessor/Evaluator Qualifications**

The national accrediting entity must have minimum assessor/evaluator qualifications that align with the following Texas Rising Star requirements for assessors in TWC Chapter 809 Child Care Services rule §809.134(a).

Specifically, the assessor/evaluator qualifications must include one of the following:

- A bachelor's degree in early childhood education, child development, special education, child psychology, educational psychology, elementary education, or family consumer science
- A bachelor's degree with at least 18 credit hours in early childhood education, child development, special education, child psychology, educational psychology, elementary education, or family consumer science with at least 12 credit hours in child development
- An associate's degree in early childhood education, child development, special education, child psychology, educational psychology, elementary education, or family consumer science with two years of experience as a director in an early childhood program

## **Includes All Age Groups**

Texas Rising Star certification includes measures for all age groups served by the Texas Rising Star-certified facility. To be eligible for TWC recognition, the national accrediting entity's measures and certification must include all age groups served by the facility.

## Accreditation Recognition Application Process (Cont.)

### Application Requirements and Procedures

Accreditation entities must complete a profile, which describes their compliance with the eligibility criteria listed above, specifically:

- the number of states with accredited facilities;
- the total number of accredited facilities;
- how long the current accreditation standards have been in place;
- the accrediting entity's website with a link to the measures, scoring, and program search information; and
- minimum assessor/evaluator qualifications.

The profile must also include:

- content areas included in the accreditation standards;
- total number of criteria;
- total number and listing of the required measures;
- percentage and number of measures that must be met in order to be certified;
- length of the accreditation period; and
- the monitoring process.

### Submission of the Texas Rising Star Crosswalk

National accreditation entities must complete and submit a crosswalk document *provided by TWC* to compare the accrediting entity's standards to Texas Rising Star standards.

### Assessment of the Texas Rising Star Crosswalk

In the crosswalk, new accreditation entities must demonstrate that all Texas Rising Star 2-Star (required) measures are also required by the accrediting entity.

If the Texas Rising Star 2-Star required measures are not required by the accrediting entity, the entity must develop a separate assurance process to document that its accredited facilities in Texas will meet the Texas Rising Star–required measures as part of the entity's accreditation process for Texas.

### Scoring of the Texas Rising Star Crosswalk

TWC staff will review and evaluate the submitted crosswalk. If the entity meets the minimum thresholds listed below, a 2-Star, 3-Star, or 4-Star level will be assigned to the accreditation entity within the Texas Rising Star program:

<b>Texas Rising Star Certification Level</b>	<b>Accreditation Score Thresholds</b>
2-Star Certification	Accreditation requires all Texas Rising Star 2-Star (required) measures (or entity has submitted a separate assurance process for the Texas child care and early learning programs).
3-Star Certification	Accreditation requires all Texas Rising Star 2-Star (required) measures; plus, <i>80 percent</i> of Texas Rising Star points-based measures <i>per age group</i> are included in the accreditation measures.
4-Star Certification	Accreditation requires all Texas Rising Star 2-Star (required) measures; plus, <i>90 percent</i> of Texas Rising Star points-based measures <i>per age group</i> are included in the accreditation measures.