

**Ohio Department of Job & Family Services
Bureau of Child Care Policy & Technical Assistance**

**Provider Technical Assistance Letter 19
Reminder: Professional Development Certificate**

July 15, 2016

Updated August 10, 2018

This letter is being reissued to include the following updates: remove outdated timeline and transition period, clarify functionality in the Ohio Professional Registry (OPR), clean up language and re-order subject topics for easier readability.

Glossary:

Biennium: A specified two-year period. For use in this document, it refers to the 24-month training period that begins on July 1 and ends on June 30 of odd years, (example July 1, 2017-June 30, 2019.)

PD Certification Period: The timeframe in which PD hours are completed and assessed. The certification period follows the state biennium, which includes July 1 of an odd year through June 30 of the following odd year. The two-year PD certification period begins and ends on the odd years (example July 1, 2017-June 30, 2019.)

PD Tier: The Ohio Professional Registry (OPR) assigns a Tier to each professional, based on the completion of PD hours each biennium. Multiple PD tiers provide recognition for professionals who exceed the minimum PD training requirements. Professionals need to achieve Tier 2 or Tier 3 to earn extra points towards the rating for 4- and 5- star programs. Tier 1 = 20 hours, Tier 2 = 25 hours and Tier 3 = 30 hours. (Professionals who have not worked at a SUTQ program during the current biennium and who begin employment partway through the two-year period may be eligible to follow the prorated training schedule below. This schedule is laid out in the appendices of Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) rule 5101:2-17-01.)

Professional Development Training Schedule				
Year One of Biennium			Year Two of Biennium	
Quarter	Quarter One (July 1st – December 31st)	Quarter Two (January 1st – June 30th)	Quarter Three (July 1st – December 31st)	Quarter Four (January 1 st – June 30th)
Required Hours	20 hours	15 hours	10 hours	5 hours
	Staff employed within quarter one are required to complete the full 20 credit hours by the completion of year two.	Staff employed within quarter two are required to complete 15 of 20 credit hours by the completion of year two.	Staff employed within quarter three are required to complete 10 of 20 credit hours by the completion of year two.	Staff employed within quarter four are required to complete 5 of 20 credit hours by the completion of year two. *
<i>*Exceptions: Staff employed within the month of June, quarter four, are not required to begin their certificate hours (except for the required classes) and will begin the full 20 certificate hours July 1, quarter one of the next biennium.</i>				

Ohio Professional Registry (OPR): A centralized information system for professionals in Ohio who are employed in the field of child care and early or middle childhood development. It can be found at ocerra.org. All employees, child care staff members of licensed programs and residents of family child care homes must maintain a profile in the OPR. All professionals in a SUTQ program must have education and training verified in the OPR.

State Fiscal Year (SFY): The SFY in Ohio is a 12-month period beginning July 1 of the first year and ending on June 30 of the second year.

Step Up To Quality Professional Development Certificate (SUTQ PDC): This designation demonstrates a professional's knowledge and commitment to their profession. Tiers defined within the certificate allow professionals to earn higher levels of certification based on the number of professional development (PD) hours that are completed within each biennium. A running total of PD hours completed are available throughout the year in the professional's OPR profile. Completion of certificate levels will be displayed in the professional's profile as the hours are completed.

Policy Prior to July 1, 2016

Ohio recognizes that professional development is a vital part of being a successful early childhood professional and is a critical link to being able to provide quality educational experiences for children of all ages. Professionals in Step Up To Quality (SUTQ) rated programs need 20 hours of professional development (PD) every two years. Prior to July 1, 2016, a program licensed by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) based the two-year period on an individual's date of hire into the program. Additionally, any PD acquired by a professional was tracked by each program, not the individual.

Policy After July 1, 2016

As of July 1, 2016, professionals in an ODJFS SUTQ licensed program have their PD tracked on the biennium. The two-year PD certification period does not change or reset when a professional moves from one program to another. All completed PD hours travel with the professional and remain in the professional's profile, which is maintained through the OPR. Once a professional works at a SUTQ rated program, they must meet the PD requirements for that biennium, regardless of whether they stay at that program or move to another SUTQ rated program.

When a professional meets the tier one PD hour requirements defined in rule, their OPR profile will display their SUTQ PDC including the tier level which has been earned thus far for the current certification period. Their profile will also display the tier level which was earned during the previous certification period. A summary, which details the professional's progress in obtaining Ohio Approved training, is available to be printed.

Hour Requirements

The PD requirement remains 20 hours over the two-year period; however, beginning July 1, 2016, professionals are no longer able to take an Ohio Approved class for PD credit more than once in a 6-year period. Trainings repeated within the six-year timeframe can be used to meet the child care licensing training requirements, but will not be applied to the 20 hours of PD required for SUTQ. (Professionals who have not worked at a SUTQ program during the current biennium

and who begin employment partway through the two-year period may be eligible to follow the prorated training schedule outlined on page one of this document.)

Required Courses for the SUTQ PDC

There are two courses that all administrators, lead teachers and assistant teachers working in star rated programs or programs which are seeking to be rated are required to complete. These two courses are available online, free of charge, through the OPR. The online format allows the professional to complete the training on their own schedule, when it is convenient for them. Both classes must be completed before the professional's OPR profile will begin to reflect the progress the professional has made toward their training hours required for their SUTQ PDC.

The required courses are:

- 1) **Ohio's Approach to Quality:** This two-hour course delves into the basics of the SUTQ system and what it means for classroom staff and administrators. It allows participants to better understand the purpose behind Ohio's quality rating improvement system and how each of their roles affect the quality outcome.
- 2) **Ohio's Overview of Child Development:** This three-hour course briefly explores basic concepts in child development and how that knowledge is linked to providing quality care for children.
 - Professionals who have completed a post-secondary level course in child development in the past six years, with a grade of C or higher, will be exempt from completing this course.
 - An official transcript is required to be verified through the OPR before the professional's deadline to complete the trainings as outlined in the appendices of OAC rule 5101:2-17-01.

These courses are required to be taken one time only. There are no requirements for annual updates or for professionals to repeat the course if there is a change in employment or position. However, if licensing non-compliances demonstrate that the program or employee is in need of additional training in the topic areas, the courses may be required to be completed again as part of a licensing corrective action plan.

At the completion of each course, the professional's OPR profile summary and PD Certificate will be updated to indicate the course was completed. Administrators can also verify completion of the course through the Organization Dashboard (formerly the Director's Information Portal) which is available through the OPR.

Frequently Asked Questions

The attached Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) document may also be referenced to learn more about the PD requirements. If you have questions regarding this letter, please contact the Child Care Policy Help Desk at childcarepolicy@jfs.ohio.gov or 1-877-302-2347, option 4. If you have questions regarding the OPR or the calculation of PD hours in the OPR, please contact support@occrra.org or 614-396-5959 or toll free at 877-547-6978.

Frequently Asked Questions: Professional Development

REQUIRED COURSES	
Once I have completed the two classes, Ohio's Approach to Quality and Ohio's Overview of Child Development, will I need to take them again if I move to another program?	No, once you have completed the two required courses you will not need to re-take the courses unless specifically required as part of a corrective action plan for licensing.
I have a Bachelor of Science degree in Child Development, am I exempt from taking these classes?	If you have completed a post-secondary level child development class in the past six years receiving a grade of C or higher, and have submitted an official transcript to the Ohio Professional Registry (OPR) to verify this, you are exempt from taking Ohio's Overview of Child Development class. However, if it has been more than six years or the coursework has not been verified through the OPR, you will need to take the class. <i>Please note: professionals with previously submitted transcripts will need to request that their Child Development class be verified to be exempt.</i>
What happens if I am exempt from taking the Ohio's Overview of Child Development class right now, but after six years or more, want to move to another program?	If you are found to be exempt from this requirement, your profile in the OPR will indicate that you do not need to take this class. It will continue to reflect that status no matter where or when you move to another program. You will not be required to complete the class in the future once you are verified as exempt.
What if I have an Administrator Credential am I exempt from any classes?	No, an Administrator Credential does not exempt you from any of the required professional development.
NOT COMPLETING COURSES	
What happens if I don't take the courses?	If a professional does not complete the required courses by the specified deadline, the program's rating may be reduced to 0.
What happens if one of my staff doesn't complete their required classes or hours because they were on maternity or sick leave?	There will be no exceptions given for professionals who are on leave. They must have the required classes or training hours completed by the end of the biennium. Professionals and administrators must plan appropriately so classes and training hours are completed by the established deadline.
LAPSES IN EMPLOYMENT	
What happens if I hire a lead teacher at my SUTQ program who has worked as a lead teacher at another SUTQ program? She has been off work for a couple months. What training hours is she required to have?	Professionals who work during a biennium, are required to meet the PD hour requirements for that biennium, whether there is a lapse in employment at a SUTQ program or not. If this professional was employed at the beginning of the biennium, left that employment and did not work in child care for several months, and then came back to work as a professional in another SUTQ program, they must meet the full PD hour requirements for that biennium.
What happens if one of my lead teachers needs to go on extended leave and does not return to work until the start of the next biennium?	If the biennium ended before the professional returned to work, the professional would need to have met the PD certificate requirements for either that previous biennium or the new current biennium. The specialist will review the PD training requirements for both biennium and use the higher of the two when assessing the program standards.
PROFESSIONALS HIRED AFTER THE START OF THE BIENNIUM	
I understand that my current staff must complete 20 hours of training in the biennium, but what about staff that start part way through the two-year period?	The two-year period has been divided into four quarters. Professionals who are new to SUTQ and begin employment during the quarter must meet the training requirements for that quarter as listed in the chart below.

Professional Development Training Schedule

Professional Development Training Schedule				
PD CERTIFICATION PERIOD	Year One		Year Two	
	Quarter One	Quarter Two	Quarter Three	Quarter Four
	<i>July 1st through December 31st of the first year</i>	<i>January 1st through June 30th of the first year</i>	<i>July 1st through December 31st of the second year</i>	<i>January 1st through June 30th of the second year</i>
Required for All	Staff employed within quarter one are required to complete the full 20 credit hours at the completion of year two	Staff employed within quarter two are required to complete 15 of 20 credit hours at the completion of year two	Staff employed within quarter three are required to complete 10 of 20 credit hours at the completion of year two	Staff employed within quarter four are required to complete 5 of 20 credit hours at the completion of year two*
Staff Counting Toward 25 Plus Hours	Staff employed within quarter one are required to complete the full 25 credit hours at the completion of year two	Staff employed within quarter two are required to complete 20 of 25 credit hours at the completion of year two	Staff employed within quarter two are required to complete 15 of 25 credit hours at the completion of year two	Staff employed within quarter two are required to complete 10 of 25 credit hours at the completion of year two
Staff Counting Toward 30 Plus Hours	Staff employed within quarter two are required to complete the full 30 credit hours at the completion of year two	Staff employed within quarter two are required to complete 25 of 30 credit hours at the completion of year two	Staff employed within quarter two are required to complete 20 of 30 credit hours at the completion of year two	Staff employed within quarter two are required to complete 15 of 30 credit hours at the completion of year two
<i>*Exceptions: Professionals employed within the month of June- Quarter Four, are only required to complete their required classes within 30 days. They will begin the 20 certificate hours as of July 1, Quarter One of the next biennium.</i>				