



**PROVIDER COMMUNICATION
OFFICE OF FAMILY ASSISTANCE**

DATE: May 6, 2016

TO: Licensed Child Care Centers and Family Child Care Homes

FROM: Kara B. Wentz, Deputy Director
Office of Family Assistance

SUBJECT: **Step Up To Quality 2-Star Transition Process**

Background:

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) has amended the Step Up To Quality (SUTQ) rules which will be effective June 26, 2016. These changes include rule 5101:2-17-03 of the Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) "Step Up To Quality (SUTQ): desk reviews, verification visits and star rating awards." These changes impact the length of a 2-star rating period as well as requirements for continuing to participate in SUTQ after receiving a 2-star rating.

Also effective June 26, 2016, 2-star rated programs will receive an increased Step Up To Quality payment enhancement which mirrors the 3-star payment enhancement in accordance with rule 5101:2-16-41 of the OAC. This is to support the program in its efforts to achieve a higher rating.

New Policy:

Current 2-star rated programs

If a 2-star rated program has its rating effective date before June 26, 2016, the program will be required to register for a rating change to 1-, 3-, 4- or 5-star or renew the 2-star rating between December 23, 2016 and March 22, 2017. Programs with a 2-star rating effective date before June 26, 2016 will not be held to the four year ban effective from the rating expiration date until the program registers again for a 2-star rating.

The following are additional details regarding this rule revision:

- If a program's annual report is due before June 26, 2016, the program is still required to submit an annual report.
- If a program's annual report is due on or after June 26, 2016, the program does not need to submit an annual report.
- If the program is at the end of its 2 year rating period and a renewal registration is due before March 2017, the program must submit a change at renewal registration by the

30 East Broad Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215
jfs.ohio.gov

required renewal due date. The 2-star programs with a rating effective date prior to June 26, 2016 may register to renew at a 2-star or may register for a change rating at renewal.

- If the program fails to register, the program's rating will be ended on March 22, 2017.

Effective June 26, 2016:

If a program is awarded a 2-star rating with an effective date after June 26, 2016, the program shall follow the requirements set forth in the amended rule.

A program may only be awarded a 2-star rating once every four years from the end of the 2-star rating period. Additionally, if a program cannot be awarded a star rating at the conclusion of the desk review or the verification visit, the program must wait six months from the notification of inability to be star rated before the program is able to begin and submit a new registration.

If you are interested in receiving notice when a new rule, Manual Procedure Letter and/or form is published and effective, please go to <http://www.odjfs.state.oh.us/subscribe/> to sign up for updates to the child care manual. Subscribe to the type of communication in which you are interested. Email notifications are sent as updates are posted to the eManuals site.

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If you have questions, please contact the child_care_technical_assistance@jfs.ohio.gov email box.