

Step Up To Quality (SUTQ) Incentive Payments Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) April 2019

In an effort to help publicly funded child care (PFCC) programs become rated, increase their rating, or maintain their rating, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) created a one-time Step Up To Quality (SUTQ) incentive payment. Please see Child Care Manual Procedure Letter (CCMPL) No. 125 for details <http://emanuals.jfs.ohio.gov/ChildCare/ChildCareManual/>. Below please find answers to frequently asked questions on the topic.

1. ***If a program was rated after April 15, 2019 and received an incentive payment, can the program register again and get two payments?***

No. This is a one-time payment.

2. ***Can a program that is currently rated withdraw their SUTQ rating and register again to get an incentive payment?***

No. Currently rated programs are only eligible for an incentive payment if they register for a 3-, 4- or 5-star rating or if they are already highly rated.

3. ***Can a currently rated 1- or 2-star program register and receive an incentive payment for a 3-, 4- or 5-star rating, even if it is not awarded a 3-, 4- or 5-star rating?***

The program would receive a 50% incentive payment at the time of registration for a 3-, 4- or 5-star rating. If the program does not meet the standards to be highly rated, then the second payment of 50% would not be issued.

4. ***Can a 1- or 2-star program rated before April 15, 2019 get an incentive payment?***

No. However, the program is encouraged to review and determine if it should register for a 3-, 4- or 5-star rating which would qualify the program for an incentive payment.

5. ***If a program had its rating removed or reduced but they become eligible to register for SUTQ before July 31, 2019, will they receive an incentive payment if they register?***

Yes.

6. ***If a program is inactive on April 15, 2019 due to temporary closure, would the program be eligible for the incentive payment if its license is re-opened and the program registers for SUTQ prior to July 31, 2019?***

Yes, the program would be eligible for a 50% incentive payment at registration and the remaining 50% once rated. The program must comply with an inspection, as outlined in Ohio Administrative Code, prior to the end of their temporary closure status. Once the program is no longer in temporary closure status and they meet the SUTQ standards, a SUTQ registration can be submitted.

7. ***If a program registers for SUTQ and receives the incentive payment but then does not become rated, do they have to pay it back?***
No.
8. ***A SUTQ visit was completed on March 27, 2019 and the 1-star rating was approved on April 11, 2019 with an effective date of April 28, 2019. Is the program eligible for the 100% payment?***
Yes. The effective date of the rating is the date used to determine eligibility for the incentive payment.
9. ***Do programs have to have a provider agreement in place on April 15, 2019 to be eligible for a SUTQ incentive payment?***
Yes. If the program did not have a provider agreement as of April 15, 2019 then it is not eligible for a SUTQ incentive payment.
10. ***If a program's provider agreement ended, is the program able to sign a new provider agreement and register to receive a payment?***
No. The program must have a signed provider agreement as of April 15, 2019 to be eligible for the incentive payment.
11. ***When will the incentive payment be issued and how will I know when it is received?***
Incentive payments will be issued at the end of the third week of each month, throughout the duration of this project, for those eligible for an incentive payment during the previous month.
12. ***How will I know when my incentive payment has been deposited in my bank account?***
For programs rated at a 3-, 4- or 5-star as of April 15, 2019, the deposit will be reflected in the program's bank account and the issuance information will be visible through the CCIDS Provider Portal. All other SUTQ incentive payments will be reflected in the Time, Attendance and Payment system, Kinderconnect.

If you have any questions, please contact the Child Care Policy Helpdesk at 1-877-302-2347, option 4 or CHILDCAREPOLICY@jfs.ohio.gov.