

Wake County Quality Supplement 2017-18 Program Overview

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OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE

The Wake County Quality Supplement program provides payments to support quality in facilities that serve children on subsidy.

The purpose of the Quality Supplement program is to:

1. Support the existing program quality of child care facilities serving children on subsidy;
2. Incentivize improvement in program quality by child care facilities serving children on subsidy; and
3. Increase the number of facilities at the highest levels of quality that serve children on subsidy.

Quality supplements are awarded as a flat monthly rate based on the level of program quality achieved by child care providers.

July 2017 marks the beginning of a new three year funding cycle with Wake County SmartStart, and as a result, there have been some changes to the Quality Supplement program from prior years. Changes to program eligibility, payments, or structure are in bold print, below.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

In order to qualify for a monthly Wake County Quality Supplement, child care facilities must meet the following *eligibility criteria*, which are reviewed monthly:

- Operate within Wake County
- Be licensed by the state of North Carolina's Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE)
- Have and maintain a 4- or 5-star rated license
- **Have and maintain at least 6 Program Standard points on their license**
- Serve at least 2 children (or 1 child for Family Child Care Homes) birth-5 years old (not Kindergarten eligible) receiving a WCHS Child Care Subsidy voucher
- Have no open Administrative Actions against the current license related to supervision or child maltreatment (also known as abuse or neglect); further details listed in the Compliance section below
- The child care facility must submit a comprehensive operating budget and documentation that subsidy-related parent co-payments/fees are being collected on an ongoing basis.

COMPLIANCE

If the Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) indicates that child maltreatment has been substantiated, the following actions will occur:

- If this is the only case of substantiated child maltreatment in a three year period, Quality Supplement payments will be suspended for 6 months from date of DCDEE notification of substantiation. Quality Supplement payments will only be reinstated after 6 months if all other eligibility requirements are met.
- If there has been at least one additional case of substantiated child maltreatment in the prior three years, Quality Supplement payments will be suspended for 18 months. Quality Supplement payments will only be reinstated after 18 months if all other eligibility requirements are met.

The above policy is in addition to all current eligibility requirements, including that there be no open Admin Action related to Supervision or Child Maltreatment. The Wake County Quality Supplement Program reserves the right to extend payment suspension or terminate contract based on severity of the substantiated report of child maltreatment.

PAYMENT OF SUPPLEMENTS

Supplement payment rates will be tiered, with payment amounts dependent on:

- the facility's level of quality (as determined by star-rating, Program Standard points, Accreditation, and **achievement of 7 Education Points**)
- number of enrolled children birth-5 on WCHS subsidy

Supplement and additional one-time payments will be paid by Wake County Smart Start (WCSS) via direct deposit. Supplement payments will be distributed by the last business day of the month and will typically be available by the 2nd business day of the following month. The supplement rates will be based on regular assessment of facility eligibility conducted by Child Care Services Association (CCSA).

Once a child care facility has enrolled in the Wake County Quality Supplement program, a supplement rate will be assigned. This rate will remain the same for a full quarter (three months) unless the facility drops below the minimum four-star rating, has an open Administrative Action related to supervision or child maltreatment by the Division of Child Development and Early Education, or drops below the minimum number of subsidy children being served (1 for Family Child Care Homes, 2 for Centers). Additionally, payments will be withheld for any child care facility on the NC Suspension of Funding List (SOFL). CCSA will monitor these criteria on a *monthly basis*. If any of the above conditions occurs, supplement payments will be suspended until eligibility criteria are met.

On a *quarterly basis*, CCSA will do a comprehensive review of each child care facility's supplement rate and re-set rates, as funding is available. This quarterly review will consist of verification of each facility's star-rating, Program Standard points, Teacher Education points, any accreditation, and number of subsidy children being served. The number of subsidy children being served will be established using an average number of children served in the previous three months. Increases or decreases to a facility's supplement rate will be implemented in the *subsequent quarter*.

For a chart of current supplement rates, please visit the Quality Supplement webpage at www.childcareservices.org (see *Programs to Improve Child Care Quality*).

An additional one-time payment will be awarded to facilities that have successfully completed eligible CLASS® activities. *More information on this opportunity will be provided at the June 2017 in-person and webinar information sessions as well as through e-mail.*

APPLICATION TO PARTICIPATE

To apply for the Wake County Quality Supplement program, facilities must submit application materials, which can be found online on the Quality Supplement webpage at www.childcareservices.org.

Please note that new applications may be accepted *only as funding permits*. In the event that the number of participants meets or exceeds the program budget, a waitlist will be maintained for new applicants. Completed applications must be received by the 3rd working day of the month for consideration for that month's supplement payments.