

Wake County Quality Supplement Program Overview

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OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE

The Wake County Quality Supplement program provides a financial “bonus” payment 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 bonus** based on the level of program quality achieved by child care providers as well as the commitment of child care providers to engage in ongoing quality-improvement.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

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

- Operate within **Wake County**
- Have and maintain a **4 or 5-star** rated license
- Have **at least 4 Program Standard points** on their license
 - Note that programs with 4-5 **program Standard Points** will no longer be eligible in **July 2017**
- Serve **at least 2 children birth-5 years old (not Kindergarten eligible)** receiving a WCHS child care subsidy voucher or 1 child for Family Child Care Homes
- Have **no active Administrative Actions** against them related to supervision, abuse or neglect.
 - If an Administrative Action resulting from substantiated cases of abuse or neglect are assessed while receiving Quality Supplement Payments, one of the following will occur:
 - Suspension of payments for 6 months if it is the only case of substantiated abuse or neglect (child maltreatment) within the past 3 years.
 - Suspension of payments for 18 months if there has been at least one additional case of case of substantiated abuse or neglect (child maltreatment) within the past 3 years.

In addition to these initial eligibility criteria, *ongoing eligibility* to receive supplements will require the following within the first three months of participation:

- Submission of a comprehensive **operating budget**
- Documentation that subsidy-related **parent co-payments/fees** are being collected on an ongoing basis and not being supplanted by quality supplement funds, and
- **Engagement in meaningful quality-improvement activities** for facilities with less than 6 Program Standard points, which will include:
 - Quality Improvement Goal setting
 - Consultation Visit from Quality Supplement Staff
 - Technical Assistance Application (only if relicensing will occur in the 2016-2017 program year)
 - **(See the Quality- Improvement Resource sheet on the Quality Supplement webpage for more information)**

PAYMENT OF SUPPLEMENTS

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

- the facility's level of quality (as determined by star-rating and Program Standard points) and
- # of children on subsidy served (as determined by birth-5 enrollment categories)

Supplements will be paid by direct deposit on a monthly basis by Wake County SmartStart (WCSS). The supplement amount will be based on regular assessment of program eligibility conducted by Child Care Services Association (CCSA).

Once a child care facility has enrolled in the 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 been issued an administrative action 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). 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 eligibility and **re-set supplement rates**, as funding is available. This quarterly review will consist of verification of each facility's star-rating and Program Standard points, any accreditation, number of subsidy children being served, and active participation in approved quality-improvement activities, if applicable. 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*).

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 allows*. 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.