



FAQ's

Why does Maine have a child care quality rating system?

- ★ Provides a simple tool for parents to recognize and choose quality care for their children.
- ★ Promotes quality improvements in early care and education programs throughout Maine.
- ★ Strategy to measure outcomes of financial resources invested in quality.
- ★ Consistent with efforts of other states across the nation to measure and support quality in early care and education.

Who is eligible to join Quality for ME?

- ★ In order to join Quality for ME at a Step 1 rating, programs must have:
 - Been licensed for at least 12 months
 - Been without any serious licensing violations in the past 12 months
 - 100% of staff enrolled in the Maine Roads to Quality (MRTQ) Provider Registry

Who is required to join?

- ★ Licensed child care providers that accept CCDF subsidy vouchers are required to join Quality for ME. All Head Start programs in Maine are also required to join.

How do providers enroll?

- Make sure all program staff enroll in MRTQ Provider Registry. For more info call Priscilla Armstrong at 207-780-5846 or Eric Norgarrd at 207-780-4367 or visit <https://mrtq.musk.usm.maine.edu>
- Once enrolled in the MRTQ Provider Registry, apply for Quality for ME at <http://www.qualityforme.org/qcare/login.aspx>. Paper based applications may be requested by calling 624-7909.

What's required of a program once it enrolls?

- All programs may be visited by an observer from the University of Southern Maine, who will utilize an Environmental Rating Scale tool for research purposes. This observation is **not** linked with a program's rating.
- Programs receiving a Step 2, 3 or 4 rating are asked to keep a notebook or folder of documentation to support their answers on the application. Programs are randomly selected for documentation reviews. Please see the application manual for documentation required at each Step.

What's the difference between Maine Roads to Quality and Quality for ME?

- ★ The MRTQ Provider Registry is a way to track individual professional development and assign a rating based on a career lattice. The "level" assigned to an individual would stay with that person regardless of his or her place of employment.
- ★ Quality for ME is a rating system designed to indicate the level of program quality. The "Step" rating is unique each program's structure, policies and practices, including the professional development level of its staff.

What about programs not eligible for Quality for ME who would like to accept vouchers?

- ★ New programs are typically granted a waiver during their first 12 months of operation.
- ★ Programs with licensing violations can submit an application to waive the Quality for ME requirement for vouchers.
- ★ In both cases, providers should contact Barbara Sousa at 624-7909 or Barbara.d.sousa@maine.gov for more information.

How do Quality Certificates fit in?

- ★ Programs reaching a Step 4 rating in the Quality for ME system will be awarded a Certificate of Quality.
- ★ Programs with a current Quality Certificate will continue to receive the 10% quality bump for children with vouchers until its expiration, regardless of Quality for ME Step rating.
- ★ All programs accepting subsidy vouchers must join Quality for ME even if they have a current Quality Certificate.

Who is available to support programs during the application process and to improve quality?

- ★ Education Specialists located at the local Resource Development Centers (RDCs) are available to support providers in a variety of ways. The Ed Specialists are listed below and can be reached by calling 1-888-917-1100.

Aroostook	York	Cumberland	Hancock and Washington
Tiffany Karnes	Michael Sandberg	Ruth Burke	Faith Perkins
Kennebec and Somerset	Androscoggin, Franklin, Oxford	Waldo, Knox, Lincoln, Sagadahoc	Penobscot and Piscataquis
Jill Moody	Pam Prevost	Jeannie Sullivan	Sally Healey

Who is available to answer questions about Quality for ME?

- ★ Many answers are available at the Quality for ME webpage: <http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/ec/occhs/qualityforme.htm>
- ★ Your local Education Specialist (see above)
- ★ Barbara Sousa at the Early Childhood Division, 624-7909 or Barbara.d.sousa@maine.gov.