# Texas Rising Star Entry Level Overview Webinar FAQ

The recording of the webinar may be accessed at [Entry Level Overview Webinar](https://youtu.be/5f7NgXAPenI). It is also posted on the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) [Child Care & Early Learning web page](https://www.twc.texas.gov/programs/childcare#childCareQualityImprovement).

## Child Care Services

1. **What is Child Care Services (CCS)? Is this the same as Child Care Management Service (CCMS)?**
   1. CCS is the subsidized child care program. CCS provides financial aid (also known as subsidy) for child care to families that meet income requirements, thereby promoting long-term self-sufficiency by enabling parents to work or attend education activities. Some Local Workforce Development Boards (Boards) and Workforce Solutions Offices may also refer to CCS as CCMS.

## Program Changes and Requirements

1. **Why is TWC requiring child care programs that provide CCS to participate in the Texas Rising Star program?**
2. TWC implemented this requirement because of [legislation](https://capitol.texas.gov/tlodocs/87R/billtext/pdf/HB02607F.pdf#navpanes=0) passed during the 87th Texas Legislature, Regular Session (2021). [House Bill (HB) 2607](https://capitol.texas.gov/tlodocs/87R/billtext/pdf/HB02607F.pdf#navpanes=0) requires the following:
   * All CCS child care programs must participate in the Texas Rising Star program and meet the requirements for the new Entry Level designation.
   * TWC must establish a maximum length of time that a child care program may participate at Entry Level designation.

TWC updated its rules to define what it means to be designated as Entry Level and adopted the maximum length of time that a child care program may participate at Entry Level designation. Child care programs must attain at least a Two-Star Texas Rising Star certification by the end of the 24-month Entry Level period, as established by TWC. By becoming certified as Texas Rising Star, your program will be recognized for providing high-quality child care.

1. **Does this rule change mean that child care programs must be Texas Rising Star–certified to continue serving CCS children?**
2. Yes. As noted above, [HB 2607](https://capitol.texas.gov/tlodocs/87R/billtext/pdf/HB02607F.pdf#navpanes=0) requires that all child care programs providing CCS participate in the Texas Rising Star program. However, the requirement is not effective immediately, according to the following rules:

* Child care programs that were participating in CCS when the rules became effective, on October 3, 2022, have until September 30, 2024, to attain a Two-Star Level or higher certification.
* New CCS child care programs have two years from the date of their signed agreement to become Texas Rising Star–certified.

Additionally, TWC and Boards dedicated resources to support child care programs participating in CCS to attain Texas Rising Star certification.

1. **What happens if a child care program is not Entry Level–designated?**
2. If a child care program was currently contracted to participate in CCS as of October 3, 2022, and did not meet the requirements for Entry Level designation, they had six months (until March 31, 2023) to meet the requirements for Entry Level designation.  
     
   If a child care program was **not** currently contracted to participate in CCS as of October 3, 2022, and did not meet the requirements for Entry Level designation, it may not sign a CCS agreement until it complies with Entry Level requirements.
3. **Does a child care program have to be currently serving CCS families in order to participate?**
4. No, the child care program does not have to be currently serving CCS families to participate. However, it must be willing to serve at least one CCS child if enrollment allows.
5. **Has TWC considered the impact of these changes if a significant number of child care programs choose not to continue their CCS agreements?**
   1. TWC has considered that some CCS child care programs may decide to terminate their CCS agreements because of these changes. However, as explained above, the Entry Level requirement is based on a change in state law. TWC does not have authority to modify the requirements outlined in state statute. Therefore, to identify barriers and additional supports that may be needed, TWC requests that child care programs that voluntarily withdraw from CCS provide feedback on their reasons for ending the CCS agreement via an online survey.

TWC encourages Boards to ensure that child care programs learn about the additional benefits, incentives, and resources that are available for child care programs working toward Texas Rising Star certification, as follows:

* Per new eligibility parameters, active CCS child care programs with approved 2022 Child Care Relief Funds (CCRF) applications may be eligible for a fifth CCRF payment that will be disbursed in summer of 2023. TWC’s three-member Commission (Commission) approved the eligibility parameters for these payments at the [September 27, 2022, Commission meeting](https://www.twc.texas.gov/files/twc/commission_meeting_materials_09.27.22_item10_dp_9th_tranche_crrsa_arpa_projects.pdf), in which an additional $50 million in funds was approved to support these payments. The average child care program payment is $68,750.
* The Commission also approved an increase in Board quality funding, from 2 percent to 4 percent of each Board’s allocation, thus allowing Boards to provide additional support and resources to the child care programs in their local workforce development area (workforce area), resulting in $23.5 million in additional funds available for local quality expenditures.
* Additionally, the Commission approved an increase in funding to Boards in order to hire additional mentors to support the CCS child care programs in their workforce area.
* Enhanced Reimbursement Rates–TWC provided a [Texas Rising Star revenue calculator](https://twc.texas.gov/files/partners/statewide-revenue-calculator-for-trs-2-13-2023-twc.xlsx) that allows child care programs to calculate how much in additional CCS reimbursement rates they will qualify to receive.
* Business coaching funding will continue through the summer of 2023. This coaching helps child care programs improve their business practices, which may impact their likelihood to be compliant with Child Care Regulation (CCR).

1. **If a child care program wants to participate in the CCS program, is it required to participate in Texas Rising Star?**
2. Yes, the child care program must participate in Texas Rising Star as mandated by the legislature. Texas Rising Star mentors are available to support child care programs in attaining at least a Two-Star certification within 24 months.
3. **Will scholarship amounts (provider payment rates) change?**
4. Each summer, TWC evaluates provider payment rates based on the annual Child Care Market Rate Survey (MRS) and on a narrow cost analysis of child care provided at varying quality levels. Any rate changes typically become effective on October 1 of that year. TWC’s most recent rate actions were [approved](https://www.twc.texas.gov/files/twc/commission_meeting_materials_09.13.22_item16_bcy23_cc_targets.pdf) on September 13, 2022, and became [effective](https://twc.texas.gov/files/policy_letters/attachments/22-22-att1-twc.pdf) on October 1, 2022.

## Licensing and Screening for Entry Level Designation

1. **What are the definitions of “medium-high–weighted” and “high-weighted” deficiencies?**
   1. CCR assigns a weight to each of the minimum standards for which a child care program may be cited. Only deficiencies that are given the weight of high or medium-high within the child care program’s most recent 12 months are counted for the Entry Level points threshold.
2. **Are the outcomes of the cited deficiencies considered or are only the citations considered?**
   1. The only deficiencies allotted points are high- or medium-high–weighted deficiencies that are cited within the child care program’s most recent 12 months, even if the citations were corrected.
3. **What if the child care program is on probation or a plan of action with CCR or a Board or was on probation or a plan of action with CCR or a Board in the previous year?**
   1. If the child care program is on probation or a plan of action with CCR or a Board, this may cause the program to be ineligible for Entry Level designation and Texas Rising Star certification. Previous history of probation or plan of action is not considered when determining eligibility; however, if the child care program received citations of deficiencies from CCR while on probation or a plan of action and CCR cited deficiencies in the most recent 12 months, the deficiencies may impact the program when it is screened for Entry Level designation or Texas Rising Star certification.
4. **Are appealed citations counted when determining Entry Level designation?**
   1. The only deficiencies allotted points are high- or medium-high–weighted deficiencies that are cited within the child care program’s most recent 12 months. Appealed citations overturned by CCR are removed from the child care program’s history.
5. **Will all licensed and registered child care programs be required to be Texas Rising Star–certified by 2025?**
   1. No, not all of Texas’ licensed or registered child care programs are required to obtain Texas Rising Star certification. This mandate applies only to child care programs that agree to provide CCS for eligible families. Of the more than 14,000 registered or licensed child care programs currently in Texas, approximately 6,000 are CCS child care programs.
6. **Is there a process to become designated as Entry Level?**
   1. There is no process to attain Entry Level designation. To determine whether a child care program may be designated as Entry Level, TWC will automatically review the program’s licensing history and assign a score based on the number of high- and medium-high–weighted deficiencies. TWC will only review the child care program’s most recent 12 months of licensing history.
7. **With the new designation and certification requirements, will child care programs require any additional CCR visits?** 
   1. Child care programs will not receive any additional CCR visits. Once a child care program is ready to be assessed for Texas Rising Star certification, an assessor will visit to observe all classrooms and review other quality indicators.

## Entry Level Designation

1. **What is the definition of “Entry Level designation”?**
   1. Entry Level designation is a component of the Texas Rising Star program and denotes that a child care program agrees to provide CCS and work toward Texas Rising Star certification. It is the first step to providing quality child care.
2. **Starting October 3, are Entry Level designation and participation in Texas Rising Star mandatory for all child care programs currently providing CCS?**
   1. Yes, to continue to provide CCS, a child care program with a current CCS agreement on October 3, 2022, must participate in Texas Rising Star by meeting the requirements for Entry Level designation and ultimately achieve at least a Two-Star certification by September 30, 2024.
3. **At what point may a new child care program be designated as Entry Level?**
   1. Once the child care program meets the eligibility requirements, a newly licensed or registered child care program may be designated as Entry Level.
4. **Can a child care program that has been open and operating for numerous years advance beyond Entry Level designation?**
   1. Yes. If the child care program meets the initial eligibility requirements for Texas Rising Star, it may request that an assessment be conducted for Two-Star certification or higher.
5. **What if a child care program is not interested in participating in Texas Rising Star?** 
   1. If a child care program has a CCS agreement and is not certified as Texas Rising Star within the 24 months of the Entry Level designation timeline, its CCS agreement will be terminated, and any CCS children will be transferred out of that program. However, if a child care program decides to end its CCS agreement, it may reenter CCS as Entry Level–designated as long as it still meets eligibility requirements and has the remaining length of time of the 24 months to become Texas Rising Star–certified.

Example: A program is designated as Entry Level from January 2023 through October 2023, which is 10 months out of the 24 months allowed; when it returns to CCS, it will have 14 months to achieve certification.

1. **Will Entry Level–designated child care programs be assigned a mentor? Where are the mentors located?**
   1. Mentors are Board staff members who are assigned to a child care program once that program is designated as Entry Level. Additionally, they are responsible for supporting and advising child care programs on how to attain Texas Rising Star certification.
2. **Does a child care program have to wait 12 months after being registered or licensed by CCR before it may attain Entry Level designation?**
   1. No. A child care program that is newly registered or licensed by CCR may be Entry Level–designated if it meets Entry Level eligibility requirements and the points threshold.
3. **If a child care program is already in the process of obtaining Texas Rising Star certification, does Entry Level designation apply?**
   1. Not necessarily, as it depends on when the child care program’s assessment is conducted. Effective October 3, 2022, child care programs are screened for Entry Level designation to ensure compliance and are required to obtain Texas Rising Star certification within a 24-month time frame.
4. **Which children will be transferred if a child care program does not comply with Entry Level designation or does not achieve Texas Rising Star certification by the specified deadlines?**
   1. If a child care program does not comply with Texas Rising Star requirements, children participating in the CCS program will be transferred. The child care program may continue to accept private-pay families.
5. **What is the difference between Entry Level licensing screening, initial Texas Rising Star certification screening, and quarterly screening?**
   1. During Entry Level screening, a child care program’s licensing history is reviewed (up to the most recent 12 months) for any high- or medium-high–weighted deficiencies. The program is assessed five points for each high-weighted deficiency and three points for each medium-high–weighted deficiency. To be eligible for Entry Level designation, a program may not exceed 75 total points.

During its initial Texas Rising Star certification screening, a child care program’s licensing history is reviewed (up to the most recent 12 months) for the specific deficiencies listed on the [Initial Screening Form—Centers](https://cliengage.org/clirep/TRS-Website/English/FINAL-Initial-TRS-Screening-Form_Centers-Accessible.pdf). Once a program is certified, its licensing history will continue to be reviewed (up to the most recent 12 months) for specific deficiencies listed on the [Current Screening Form—Centers](https://cliengage.org/clirep/TRS-Website/English/Current-TRS-Screening-Form-Centers.pdf).

1. **How often is a child care program reviewed for continued Entry Level points threshold compliance?**
   1. The child care program is reviewed every April and October, beginning October 1, 2023, for continued points threshold compliance. If a program exceeds the 75-point threshold, it will be notified of noncompliance and given up to 30 calendar days before its CCS Provider Agreement is ended to allow CCS families time to transfer to another eligible program.
2. **What happens when an Entry Level–designated child care program is placed on CCR corrective action?**
   1. If an Entry Level–designated child care program is placed on CCR corrective action, it may continue to provide CCS, as long as it meets the 75-point threshold. According to the [Child Care Services Guide](https://twc.texas.gov/files/partners/child-care-services-guide-twc.pdf), the program may not receive new CCS referrals while on corrective action, and all CCS families must be notified of the corrective action probationary status.

## Texas Rising Star Questions

1. **Where can child care programs review the qualifications for Texas Rising Star certification?**
   1. Please visit the [Texas Rising Star website](http://www.texasrisingstar.org/) for more information. Additionally, the [program brochure](https://cliengage.org/clirep/TRS-Website/English/TRS-Brochure-Provider_ENG.pdf) provides a quick overview, and the [Texas Rising Star Certification Guidelines](https://texasrisingstar.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/FINAL_TRS-Guidelines-rev-Mar2022.pdf) provide more in-depth information.
2. **How does a child care program access the Texas Rising Star online orientation?**
   1. The child care program’s director must create a [CLI Engage account](https://public.cliengage.org/) to access the Texas Rising Star online orientation. Many Workforce Solutions Offices offer in-person and virtual Texas Rising Star orientations.
3. **If a child care program wants to participate in Texas Rising Star, is it required to participate in the CCS program?**
   1. Yes. According to the initial eligibility requirements for Texas Rising Star, the child care program must participate in the CCS program. Entering into a CCS agreement means that a program is willing to serve at least one CCS child if enrollment allows.
4. **How does a child care program request an initial assessment?**
   1. Once a child care program meets the Texas Rising Star initial eligibility requirements, the program may work with its assigned mentor to request an assessment or upload the required documents for initial assessment into the online assessment tool. When a child care program uploads the necessary documents (possibly with the assistance of its assigned mentor), the program is ready for initial assessment.
5. **What happens if a child care program loses a star level?**
6. Certified Texas Rising Star child care programs at the Three- or Four-Star level may lose a star level and remain certified. If a Two-Star–certified child care program loses a star level, it will be placed on suspension for a minimum of six months and will have up to 15 months to reattain certification. If a Two-Star program’s certification has been suspended and the program is unable to be recertified by the end of the suspension, the program’s CCS agreement will be terminated, and any CCS children receiving care will be transferred to an eligible child care program.
7. **How does the change in rule affect school-age (before-and after-school) programs? Does Texas Rising Star apply to these types of programs?**
   1. Programs providing only before-and/or after-school care are eligible to participate in Texas Rising Star if they are licensed by CCR and meet the initial eligibility requirements. For more information about the Texas Rising Star measures specific for school–age-only programs, refer to the [Facility Assessment Record Form](https://cliengage.org/clirep/TRS-Website/English/FINAL-FARF-SchoolAge.pdf).
8. **What are the next steps for a child care program that is already Four-Star–certified?**
   1. The child care program may continue to receive mentoring services to help it maintain its Four-Star certification. Additionally, some Boards provide financial support and specific mentoring for programs working toward national accreditation.
9. **In addition to increased provider payment funds, what are the benefits of participating in the Texas Rising Star program?**
   1. Texas Rising Star benefits include a higher child care provider payment rate, professional development opportunities, and one-on-one mentoring. Additionally, participating programs may be eligible for other benefits, such as grants, stipends, materials and equipment, and free advertisement to parents and the community.
10. **Will child care programs be reimbursed at a higher rate if caregivers have more requirements?**
    1. Child care provider payment rates are increased based on the certification level that the child care program achieves. Programs may see what their provider payments would be at each level by using the [Texas Rising Star revenue calculator](https://twc.texas.gov/files/partners/statewide-revenue-calculator-for-trs-2-13-2023-twc.xlsx).
11. **What requirements are there for child care programs after becoming Texas Rising Star–certified, and where can a child care program find them?**
    1. Once a child care program is certified as Texas Rising Star, it must comply with the [Texas Rising Star Guidelines](https://texasrisingstar.org/about-trs/guidelines). The program’s mentor helps the child care program understand the guidelines, which include quarterly licensing screening reviews, annual monitoring visits, and a commitment to continuous quality improvement.
12. **If a child care program director retires, does the program have to start the Texas Rising Star certification process again or will the program stay at the same level under the new director?**
    1. If a program has a new director, at the program’s next annual monitoring or reassessment visit an assessor will review the new director’s education and experience and determine whether a new score is assigned.
13. **Does Texas Rising Star conduct home visits?**
    1. Texas Rising Star assessors are required to visit child care programs in person regardless of facility type (center, home, or school–age-only). Therefore, yes, assessors will visit a home child care program. Texas Rising Star mentors are also available to provide support to child care programs, including in-home visits.
14. **How does becoming Texas Rising Star–certified change a child care program’s daily operation and workflow?**
    1. Most child care programs will find that they already meet and implement many of the quality standards that Texas Rising Star reviews, so there is minimal impact to daily operations. A program’s assigned mentor may support the child care program in creating systems and processes to help administration and staff improve areas in need of quality improvement. Goal setting and assistance are individualized for each program in order to provide sustainability and compliance.
15. **Can you provide an overview of some of the operational changes that may occur for a child care program that is Texas Rising Star–certified?**
    1. Most child care programs will find that they already meet and implement many of the quality standards that Texas Rising Star reviews, so it is likely that changes would be minimal. For example, a program may have to require additional training hours each year (such as 30 hours for center staff and 36 hours for a director) and may need to update its parent and staff handbook to include new criteria. The child care program is not required to serve any additional children or change its philosophy. By working on its own or with its assigned mentor, the child care program may set goals and identify the support it needs to remain in compliance.

## Texas Rising Star Eligibility Requirements

1. **Which child care programs are eligible for Texas Rising Star certification?**
   1. The following types of child care programs are eligible to become Texas Rising Star–certified:

* Licensed centers
* Licensed homes
* Registered homes
* Licensed before-and/or after-school programs
* Child care programs operated by the US military

1. **Does a child care program have to be open for a certain amount of time in order to start the Texas Rising Star certification process?**
   1. There is no minimum time frame in which the program must be open and operating in order to participate in Texas Rising Star. However, to be assessed for certification the program must be in operation for a minimum of 12 months.
2. **Is a child care program required to have a licensing permit for a year before it may become a Texas Rising Star facility?**
   1. Yes, a child care program is required to have at least 12 months of licensing history to meet the initial eligibility requirements for Texas Rising Star certification.
3. **Are sack lunch programs eligible to participate in Texas Rising Star?**
   1. Any child care program that is licensed or registered by CCR or governed by the US military is eligible to participate in Texas Rising Star as long as it meets the eligibility requirements.
4. **Are Entry Level designation and Texas Rising Star certification available for child care programs that serve all age groups, or does Texas Rising Star only apply to preschoolers?** 
   1. Child care programs licensed or registered with CCR and serving any age groups are eligible to participate, including school-age-only programs. The quality measures evaluated under Texas Rising Star certification differ slightly across age groups, as they have different needs. To view the measures for each age group, access the Classroom Assessment Forms at [Texas Rising Star Tools](https://texasrisingstar.org/trs-tools/).
5. **What happens if a child care program plans on opening a second location after its first location is Texas Rising Star–certified? Does the first location’s Texas Rising Star certification transfer to the second location?**
   1. If a child care program splits or expands to a second location within the same city, ZIP code, or county, and the second location is granted a full permit upon opening, the second location will retain the star level of the first location during the move or change. Per the Facility Change Rubric, the second child care program will undergo a Texas Rising Star reassessment within the initial three-month period from the date that the new CCR permit associated with the change is issued. For more information, refer to the Facility Changes section at [Texas Rising Star Program Assessments](https://texasrisingstar.org/providers/program-assessments/).

### Categories and Assessments

1. **What are the four categories that Texas Rising Star quality indicators fall under?**
   1. The Texas Rising Star program organizes measures into the following categories:

* Category 1: Director and Staff Qualifications and Training (20 percent of a program’s total score)
* Category 2: Teacher-Child Interactions (40 percent of a program’s total score)
* Category 3: Program Administration (20 percent of a program’s total score)
* Category 4: Indoor/Outdoor Learning Environments (20 percent of a program’s total score)

Learn more about each of these categories at [Texas Rising Star Categories](https://texasrisingstar.org/providers/categories/).

1. **How often are child care programs observed to ensure that they are following Texas Rising Star guidelines?**
   1. Upon initial certification, a child care program will receive an on-site assessment visit. On-site annual monitoring visits will then occur. Texas Rising Star certification is valid for three years. At the end of a program’s third year of certification, the program will receive an on-site reassessment visit, and the cycle of yearly visits repeats. For more information about assessments and monitoring visits, refer to the [Texas Rising Star Program Assessments](https://texasrisingstar.org/providers/program-assessments/).
2. **Do child care programs receive points for employing staff members that have earned at least a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential?**
   1. Yes, a child care program may receive points for staff qualifications (Category 1) if a certain percentage of its staff has met one of the education criteria, which include the following:

* Working toward a degree or Child Development Associate (CDA)
* Having obtained a CDA, associate’s degree, or bachelor’s degree
* Having earned more than 150 total professional development hours within the most recent five years

For more information about the measure regarding staff education, refer to the Facility Assessment Record Form in the [Texas Rising Star Tools](https://texasrisingstar.org/trs-tools/).

1. **Does Texas Rising Star take into account the current teacher shortage in the child care industry?**
   1. An Entry Level–designated program has up to 24 months to achieve Texas Rising Star certification, thereby allowing time for the program to employ adequate staffing. Board staff and free business coaches are available to offer support and help child care programs with hiring and retaining child care staff. To access free business coaching, visit [TWC Business Coaching](https://www.childcare.texas.gov/free-business-coaching).
2. **Is it possible for a child care program to be certified as Three-Star or Four-Star initially or does it have to attain Two-Star level first and build up to the higher levels?**
   1. Yes, it is possible to be initially assessed at a higher star level. At its first assessment, a child care program is observed and evaluated according to the applicable facility and classroom age group measures in the assessment record forms. These include structural measures that must be met as well as points-based measures that are calculated in order to determine the child care program’s overall star level. After the initial evaluation, programs may be certified at any of the three levels—Two-, Three-, or Four-Star.

## Mentoring and Supports

1. **How can a child care program contact local Texas Rising Star staff to request an orientation?**
   1. Child care programs may contact their local Workforce Solutions Office staff directly or use the [Texas Rising Star Contact Us](https://texasrisingstar.org/contact-us/) web page to inquire about available trainings and orientation overviews.
2. **What support services are available to Entry Level–designated child care programs and/or other child care programs that participate in Texas Rising Star?**
   1. In addition to having an assigned mentor, child care programs have access to numerous free resources and services, including professional development support, business coaching, grants for materials and equipment, and scholarships. Access to these and other quality initiatives is available statewide as well as locally through Boards.
3. **How does a child care program get assigned a mentor?**
   1. Once a child care program completes the Texas Rising Star Interest Form, a notification is sent to the local Board, which will assign a mentor to the program.
4. **Will there be enough mentors and assessors to implement these changes?** 
   1. TWC is increasing child care funding for local Boards to hire additional mentors and support quality initiatives.
5. **Is there support available to child care employees wishing to obtain CDA credentials?**
   1. Many Boards offer financial support or CDA classes for eligible child care staff members. Additionally, TWC funds the Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (T.E.A.C.H.) program, which helps child care employees with achieving their CDA. For more information, visit [T.E.A.C.H Texas](https://www.texasaeyc.org/programs/teach).
6. **If a child care program chooses not to participate in Texas Rising Star and CCS, does the program lose the ability to access additional support services such as funding and training?**
   1. Many of the local and statewide quality initiatives offered to child care programs are prioritized for programs that are working toward or have obtained Texas Rising Star certification. Therefore, if a child care program is not participating in Texas Rising Star, it is not eligible to receive such support.
7. **What is the phone number for Texas Rising Star?**
   1. TWC recommends that child care programs contact their local Workforce Solutions Office staff via email or phone. To find contact information, refer to the [Directory of Workforce Solutions Offices & Services](https://www.twc.texas.gov/directory-workforce-solutions-offices-services).
8. **How does a child care program work with a business coach?** 
   1. TWC is currently funding business coaching, and child care programs may request a business coach by visiting [TWC Business Coaching](https://www.childcare.texas.gov/free-business-coaching).
9. **May a child care program work toward Texas Rising Star certification or maintain certification without working with a mentor?**
   1. Yes, a child care program is not required to work with a mentor in order to achieve or maintain certification. However, the program must meet the specified requirements of Texas Rising Star, such as creation and implementation of a Continuous Quality Improvement Plan (CQIP), specified trainings and account creations, updating the CQIP based on screening impacts and assessment results, and uploading documentation into the online assessment platform.

## Suspension Status

1. **If a child care program is on suspension, may it continue to provide services to children currently in CCS?** 
   1. Yes, if a child care program is on suspension status—a minimum of six months and not to exceed 15 months—it may continue to provide services to currently enrolled CCS children. If the child care program remains on suspension after nine months, it may not receive any new CCS referrals during the remaining six months of the 15-month period, unless the program is located in a child care desert or serves an underserved population and is approved by TWC to accept new family referrals.
2. **How will Texas Rising Star suspension status affect CCS provider payments?**
   1. If a child care program is placed on suspension status—for a minimum of six months and no longer than 15 months—it is no longer eligible to receive enhanced provider payments for the CCS children it serves. Once the child care program has achieved Two-, Three-, or Four-Star certification, its provider payments will be granted commensurate with its certification level. To find out more about revenues earned at the various star levels, use the [Texas Rising Star Revenue Calculator](https://twc.texas.gov/files/partners/statewide-revenue-calculator-for-trs-2-13-2023-twc.xlsx).
3. **If a child care program on suspension remains noncompliant, how long must it wait to reapply for Texas Rising Star certification?**
   1. Child care programs that fail to become certified by the end of the 15-month suspension period do not qualify for Entry Level designation. Once it meets Texas Rising Star initial eligibility requirements, a program may request an assessment as a new (initial) child care program. For more information about initial eligibility, refer to the [Texas Rising Star Eligibility](https://texasrisingstar.org/providers/eligibility/).

## Other Questions

1. **Are Texas Rising Star, TWC, and CCR the same entity?** 
   1. No. TWC is a state agency, and Texas Rising Star is a TWC program, which is administered locally through the Boards. CCR operates under the Texas Health and Human Services Commission.
2. **Are child care programs governed by CCR minimum standards or Texas Rising Star guidelines?** 
   1. All child care programs in Texas must comply with CCR minimum standards. If a child care program wants to serve children through the state’s CCS program, it is required to participate in Texas Rising Star. To be Texas Rising Star–certified, a program must adhere to [Texas Rising Star Certification Guidelines](https://texasrisingstar.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/FINAL_TRS-Guidelines-rev-Mar2022.pdf).
3. **Will support be offered in Spanish?**
   1. Yes, TWC has provided the webinar in Spanish and will provide additional materials in Spanish. The Texas Rising Star website and numerous forms are also available in [Spanish](https://texasrisingstar.org/es/home-espanol/) and [Vietnamese](https://texasrisingstar.org/vi/home-tieng-viet/).
4. **Whom may child care programs contact to email questions to or provide feedback about CCS or other quality initiatives?**
   1. Child care programs may send questions to their local Workforce Solutions Office staff by using [Texas Rising Star Contact Us](https://texasrisingstar.org/contact-us/) or [Texas Child Care Solutions Contact Us](https://texaschildcaresolutions.org/contact-us/). To provide feedback to TWC regarding CCS or other quality initiatives, such as Texas Rising Star, email [CCEL@twc.texas.gov](mailto:CCEL@twc.texas.gov).
5. **Will there be a new TWC Child Care Relief grant in 2023–2024?**
   1. At this time, TWC does not have any child care relief funds scheduled for 2023–2024.
6. **Why did TWC recently inform child care programs of this upcoming change?**
   1. TWC has been working on this change since the passing of [House Bill (HB) 2607](https://capitol.texas.gov/tlodocs/87R/billtext/pdf/HB02607F.pdf#navpanes=0) and has provided two separate opportunities for the public to comment on these changes while moving through the process. To receive updates and information regarding TWC Child Care & Early Learning, subscribe to [TWC Email Updates](https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/txwc/subscriber/new).
7. **Can you provide a summary of the child care market analysis?**
   1. The 2022 Child Care MRS may be accessed at [2022 Texas Child Care MRS](https://txicfw.socialwork.utexas.edu/2022-texas-child-care-market-rate-survey/).