Quick Guide to FY25 Changes to the QIS Program and Policy Guide

Quality Indicators, Key Practices and Pathways

What is staying the same	What is changing
Programs will continue to use **Quality Indicators** and the associated **Key Practices** to consider areas for continuous quality improvement. The Office of Early Learning (OEL) will continue to fund activities aligned with **five state prioritized Key Practices**. The state prioritized Key Practices will remain the same from FY24: 1. Implements practices to recruit and retain high-quality educators, consultants, and contractors 2. Provides effective and meaningful supervision on teaching practices 3. Incorporates a whole child approach, intentionally supporting children through positive interactions 4. Uses culturally responsive and identity affirming practices to build meaningful connections and foster a sense of community in the classroom 5. Implements inclusive practices and provides environments that are responsive to the developmental needs of all children enrolled in the program	*Pathways* will be used as a continuum to reflect how program practices are evolving from licensing regulations to fully meeting specific Key Practices.

QIA Application

What is staying the same
There are seven sections to the QIA application. The program leader will add information to 6 of the 7 sections to complete the application.

What is changing	
The "Program" section of the application has expanded to include additional data fields: • Program Name • License Number • Street Address • City • Zip Code	• Enrolled Part-Time Children (less than 4 hours per day) • Enrolled Full-time Children (4 or more hours per day) • Date of this enrollment count? • Number of enrolled children receiving POC only? • Number of children in a state-funded seat only? • Number of children in a state funded seat who also receive POC?

- Hours of Operation

- Days of Operation

- Administrator information (first and last name, email address and phone number)

- Number of interns

- Number of assistant teachers

- Number of teachers

- Number of administrators

- Number of other staff

- Total number of classrooms

- How many open classrooms are in your facility?

- How many closed classrooms are in your facility?

- How many more staff would you need to hire to open classrooms?

- Licensed capacity?

- Number of children in a Head Start seat?

- Number of children in a Head Start seat who also receive POC?

- Number of children in an Early Head Start Child Care Partnership seat?

- Number of children in an Early Head Start Child Care Partnership seat who also receive POC?

- Total number of children receiving POC, in a state funded seat, or in an Early/Head Start seat?

- Current staff list on the Delaware ECE Portal. Each staff person is required to create a profile to ensure the program list is accurate.

QIA Eligibility Requirements

What is staying the same	What is changing
Eligibility Requirements – programs must be: - Licensed by the Delaware Office of Child Care Licensing - Have designed a QIP that was co-created with a Quality Improvement Specialist - Working towards using a formative assessment tool with fidelity	- Programs will be required to upload pre and post data to their QIP on the Delaware ECE Portal - Programs must be open _and providing services to children and families_ - Programs will be expected to implement a formative assessment tool (such as TSG) with fidelity - Program staff must engage in the training for the formative assessment tool used - If funds are spent on items not included in an approved budget narrative, reimbursement of funds will be required to DOE - All staff members must be paid at least minimum wage.

Budget Guidelines

What is staying the same	What is changing
QIP and Budget narrative must be aligned and will be reviewed prior to QIA approval	- A rubric will be used to determine the amount programs will receive - The rubric will include a review of POC eligible families and enrollment at the time of application
- Support for increased salaries and recruitment/retention bonuses are still an allowable use of funds. The Office of Early Learning will fund the differential above minimum wage for an employee's hourly wage. - One time funding toward salary and bonuses may be provided to staff who work directly with children and families.	- The percentage difference between the lowest and highest payments for a salary increase or a bonus must be 50% or higher. Calculation: Take the lowest payment and divide it by the highest payment. Multiply by 100 for the percentage. That percentage must be 50% or higher. - Example 1. Lowest payment to a staff member is $1,000, highest payment to a staff member is $5,000: 20% - **NOT APPROVED** - Example 2. Lowest payment to a staff member is $2,500, highest payment to a staff member is $5,000: 50% - **APPROVED** - Example 3. Lowest payment to a staff member is $3,000, highest payment to a staff member is $4,000: 75% - **APPROVED** - Center owners are only eligible if working onsite with children and families - Bonuses for support staff who do not work directly with children (owners, administrators, secretary, bookkeeper, cook, custodial staff, groundskeeper) may not exceed the bonus given to any classroom staff member - Large Family Child Care providers must include staff in plans for improvement in this area. Large Family Providers and Center Owners owning more than one site are only eligible for a bonus/salary increase at one site. - Justifications for how bonuses and increases to pay scales will need to accompany the QIP and include staff members names, positions, and bonus and/or salary increase.
Programs will provide evidence/proof of spending showing that previously awarded QIA funding was spent on approved items/activities by due date.	- Date change from 5/15th to 5/30th - Programs that fail to submit evidence on time may not be eligible for a QIA during the next fiscal year - Delaware Quality Improvement Award (QIA) Funds Policy - An updated attestation statement that includes policies regarding: Authorized Use of Funds, Financial

	Oversight, Prohibited Activities, Reporting Procedures, and Investigation and Enforcement signed during application process
Unallowable Costs: - Building, home repair or maintenance - Utility Bills - Mulch for playgrounds and general grounds upkeep - Pest Control - Fencing - Kitchen Supplies - Refrigerators - Transportation - Vehicle Rental - Food	- Only staff fingerprinted for the facility and determined eligible for employment may receive bonuses/salary increases. - NO bonuses or salary increases for family members or friends who are not fingerprinted for the program and eligible for employment and who are not working with children and families at the program - NO bonuses for fingerprinted family members or friends

Important Dates and Deadlines

What is staying the same	What is changing
QIA funds are retroactive to July 1, 2024 and can be used on allowable expenses up to due date.	- Date change from 5/15th to 5/30th

QIA Application Deadlines

What is staying the same	What is changing
Application Deadlines	- Application dates are 9/15, 11/15, 1/15, and 3/15 - School districts must apply by 11/15