

CAPS and Quality Rated Updates

October 2021



**Georgia Dept
of Early Care
and Learning**
BRIGHT FROM THE START

CAPS

October 2021 Policy Revisions



**Georgia Dept
of Early Care
and Learning**
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The deadline for the
CAPS/QR goal is
December 31, 2021.



Two New CAPS/QR Statuses

- ✓ CAPS/Quality Rated Provisional Status
- ✓ CAPS/Quality Rated Probationary Status




**Extra help for
those just
starting out
and for those
who need it
along the way**



CAPS/QR Milestones

August 1, 2021: Families may only select a **new/different** provider that is **Quality Rated** or signed up for a cohort.



January 1, 2022: If existing provider is not **Quality Rated**, families must move to a QR provider at redetermination.



October 1, 2021, CAPS Policy Revisions

What changed?

- ☐ Provider contact information
- ☐ CAPS/QR guidelines and requirements



CAPS Policy Manual

<https://caps.decal.ga.gov/en/Policy/>

The Childcare and Parent Services Program (CAPS)
Georgia's Subsidy Program
POLICY MANUAL



This policy manual does not include all applicable state and federal laws. All parties who wish to participate in CAPS are responsible for ensuring that they are compliant with all state and federal laws and regulations that govern this program.

Bright from the Start:
Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL)
2 Martin Luther King Jr. Dr.
Suite 754, East Tower
Atlanta, Georgia 30334
DECAL: 1-888-442-7735
CAPS: 1-833-4GACAPS (1-833-442-2277)



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Childcare Provider Agreement (Appendix Y)



Georgia Dept
of Early Care
and Learning



Child Care Provider Agreement
Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL)
Childcare and Parent Services Program (CAPS)
Effective October 1, 2021

WHEREAS the Department of Early Care and Learning (hereinafter called DECAL) operates the Childcare and Parent Services Program (CAPS) Program which provides child care subsidies for eligible children in the State of Georgia;

WHEREAS Child Care Scholarships for each child enrolled in the CAPS Program are issued to the Child Care Provider (hereinafter called Provider) to whom child care subsidies are to be paid for the child; and

WHEREAS the undersigned Provider desires to provide child care services to children who are enrolled in the CAPS Program and to receive child care subsidy payments from the CAPS Program.

As a requirement to receive or continue to receive child care subsidies from DECAL and its CAPS Program, the Provider understands and agrees to the following:

Eligible Providers

At DECAL's sole discretion, licensed child care programs, two categories of license-exempt programs (government owned and operated child care programs and day camps), and informal providers who meet requirements detailed in this policy manual are eligible to participate in CAPS.

CAPS shall only use Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) or other applicable funds to pay eligible providers for services. Such payment cannot be assigned or delegated to a third party for any reason except by an order of a court of proper jurisdiction.

State and Federal Laws and Regulations

The provider shall comply with all applicable local, state, and federal statutes, ordinances, regulations and policies.

The provider is responsible for reviewing CAPS policies on a regular basis, as policies are subject to change. The provider must be knowledgeable of CAPS policies and any revisions to CAPS policy.

Licensed providers must comply with reporting requirements as prescribed in Child Care Services rules. License-exempt providers must comply with reporting requirements as prescribed in the [Health and Safety Standards for License-exempt Providers Receiving Subsidy manual](#). Informal providers must comply with reporting requirements as prescribed in the [Health and Safety Standards for Informal Providers Receiving Subsidy manual](#).

Providers shall comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights of Act of 1964 (exception: Family Day Care Learning Homes and Informal providers); Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; and, if the provider is center-based or a family child care learning home, the provider shall comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 2010.

Provider Contact Information

- Submit complete and accurate contact information, including email
- Must report changes in contact information within 5 calendar days
 - Enter change in DECAL KOALA at www.decalkoala.com
 - Contact CCS at 404-657-5562
- Provider's email address will be used as the primary contact
 - Information may be mailed in limited circumstances



Provider Notifications

Name of Letter/Notice	Generated to Email or Postal Mail	Description
CAPS Provider Enrollment Notification	Email	Providers will receive a weekly list of families with new enrollment at their location. Included will be a list of family's names and the scholarship enrollment date.
CAPS Provider Disenrollment Notification	Email	Providers will receive a weekly list of families who have disenrolled and scholarships have been expired at their location.
CAPS Provider Enrollment Expiration Warning	Email	Providers will receive a weekly list of families who have scholarships approaching expiration. This notice will be generated and sent to providers 14 days prior to the enrollment expiration.
CAPS Provider Backpack Notice Cover Letter and CAPS Renewal Backpack Notice	Postal Mail Only	Providers will receive a cover letter and a letter to give to each family with an upcoming Renewal period. These letters will be sent to providers 28 days prior to the enrollment expiration.




Quality Rated Cohort Groups

Quality Rated requires providers to be enrolled in one of four annual cohort groups to be able to complete the rating process.

CAPS policy update reflects how this impacts CAPS providers.

Cohort group enrollment
established by QR staff



Provisional Status
Probationary Status



Non- participating providers

Licensed child care programs must be a Quality Rated Provider as defined by CAPS by December 31, 2021. Programs that **choose not to participate** in Quality Rated as required by CAPS will be **dismissed** from the CAPS program.

CAPS/QR Guidelines and Requirements (Appendix II)

- QR Goal
- QR Milestones
- QR Statuses
- How to become a QR Provider



CAPS/Quality Rated Guidelines and Requirements



**Georgia Dept
of Early Care
and Learning**
BRIGHT FROM THE START

Quality Rated

October 2021 Updates



**Georgia Dept
of Early Care
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Meeting the CAPS/QR Goal

CAPS / **QUALITY[™]
RATED
CHILD CARE** **Goal**
Progress Update

Look How Far We've Come!

Eligible Providers That Are Quality Rated



42%

1,085 Providers

9/30/2018



54%

1,447 Providers

9/30/2019



69%

1,852 Providers

9/30/2020



83%

2,123 Providers

9/30/2021

Because All GA Kids Deserve Quality Care and Education



New CAPS/QR Provisional and Probationary Statuses



- **Provisional Status:**

- Allows newly licensed and new to CAPS programs to accept CAPS Scholarships for a limited time while achieving a star rating

- **Probationary Status:**

- CAPS providers who not earn enough points to rate can continue participating in the CAPS program for a limited time while improving their quality rating outcomes
- CAPS providers who allow their rating to expire in a given year, can continue participating in the CAPS program for a limited time while improving their quality rating outcomes



Eligibility for Provisional Status

- **Who is Eligible?**

- Programs that are newly licensed
- Programs that are new to CAPS (no CAPS payments received in the preceding 12 months)

- **How Does the Process To Obtain My Provisional Designation Work?**

Newly Licensed Child Care Program



- Receive permission to operate (PTO) from licensing
- Enroll in CAPS as a newly licensed program by calling 1-877-755-6522 or emailing: CRM@maximus.com
- Complete a Quality Rated application at: <https://qualityrated.decal.ga.gov/>
- Request enrollment in the CAPS/QR Provisional Status by emailing program name, license number, CAPS PID, and your contact information to: capsqrgoal@decal.ga.gov

Existing Licensed Child Care Program New to CAPS



- Check <https://max.gacaps.com> to ensure you have not received CAPS payments, or call 1-877-755-6522, or email: CRM@maximus.com
- Apply as a new to CAPS provider, or renew a previous enrollment in CAPS by emailing: CRM@maximus.com
- Complete a Quality Rated application at: <https://qualityrated.decal.ga.gov/>
- Request enrollment in the CAPS/QR Provisional Status, email program name, license number, CAPS PID, and your contact information to: capsqrgoal@decal.ga.gov

Eligibility for Probationary Status

- **Who is Eligible?**

- CAPS programs who complete the rating process and do not earn enough points to rate, but wish to retain their ability to accept CAPS Scholarships
- Current CAPS programs who allow their ratings to expire, but wish to retain their ability to accept CAPS Scholarships

- **How Does the Process to Obtain the Probationary Designation Work?**

Program Does Not Earn Enough Points to Rate



- Program receives outcome of rating process and is notified that they did not earn enough points to rate
- Provider is invited to participate in the Probationary Status and is emailed the Probationary MOU to determine their interest in remaining a CAPS provider
- Providers that wish to remain a CAPS provider are automatically eligible for Probationary Status – must agree to benchmarks and sign MOU returning it to: capsqrgoal@decal.ga.gov

CAPS Provider Allows Current Rating to Expire



- Upon rating expiration, provider receives an email to notify them of the consequences to their CAPS Scholarships of allowing their rating to expire.
- Provider is invited to participate in the Probationary Status and is emailed the Probationary MOU to determine their interest in remaining a CAPS provider
- Providers that wish to remain a CAPS provider are automatically eligible for Probationary Status – must agree to benchmarks and sign MOU returning it to: capsqrgoal@decal.ga.gov

Provisional and Probationary Status Requirements

3 STEPS:



1. Sign Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)



2. Meet Benchmarks of Progress



3. Earn Star Rating & Maintain CAPS scholarships





1. Sign Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Contact:

capsqrgoal@decals.ga.gov

If you have questions about completing a Provisional or Probationary MOU

or

Email the QR Helpdesk at:

QualityRated@decals.ga.gov

or

Phone the QR Helpdesk at:
1.855.800.7747



CAPS/QR Provisional Status Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)



This Memorandum of Understanding is between [Program Name] _____
[License #] _____ [PID#] _____, the Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) division, and the
Quality Rated unit to ensure that the program is aware of the process required that enables them to receive CAPS
Scholarships while working to become Quality Rated.

Purpose: Child care programs wanting to serve families eligible for CAPS Scholarships must be Quality Rated by
December 31, 2021. The CAPS/QR Provisional Status will be applied to newly licensed programs, or programs newly
enrolled in the CAPS program while they work through the steps to become Quality Rated. The Provisional Status will
allow such programs to offer CAPS scholarships for up to twelve (12) consecutive months while working through the
provisional process to earn a Quality Rated star rating.

Date Enrolled in CAPS Program:

Date QR Application Approved:

CAPS Policy 11.4.2.4

*Newly licensed providers may be eligible to be placed on CAPS/Quality Rated Provisional Status. Providers in
CAPS/Quality Rated Provisional Status will enroll in a Quality Rated Cohort Group as directed by Quality Rated. Providers
with a provisional status can accept new CAPS scholarships and retain any existing CAPS scholarships if they maintain
adequate progress to obtain a star rating as reported to CAPS by Quality Rated.*

[Complete CAPS Policy: 11-CAPS_Policy-Participating Providers.pdf (ga.gov)]

Please read the following carefully. Your signature indicates your understanding of the Provisional Status.

By initialing each statement, I indicate that I understand the following:

- ☐ The Provisional Status will allow a newly licensed program, or a program newly enrolled with CAPS, to begin
offering CAPS scholarships to families for up to twelve (12) consecutive months before transitioning to the
standard Quality Rated process.
- ☐ If my program has previously completed the CAPS enrollment process but has not had active scholarships in
the last 12 months from the submission of this form, my program is considered new to CAPS, and can
therefore be designated as Provisional.
- ☐ My program has twelve (12) consecutive months to maintain adequate progress towards earning a star rating
as reported to CAPS by Quality Rated. Failure to do so may result in not being able to receive
new CAPS scholarships.
- ☐ If I choose not to participate in Quality Rated after the provisional period, all CAPS scholarships for my



2. Meet Benchmarks of Progress

- Virtual consultation session to develop a plan that includes benchmarks of progress
- Benchmarks with timelines are tailored to the needs of the individual program and could include:
 - Portfolio standards
 - Virtual learning topics
 - Training webinars
 - Improvement assignments
 - On-site observation and/or monitoring
- Rating goal date determined
- Review of cohort availability to meet rating goal
- Monitoring progression through benchmarks to maintain CAPS eligibility





3. Earn Star Rating & Maintain CAPS scholarships

- Completion of all agreed upon benchmarks
- Enrollment in Published Rating Cohort to complete the rating process chosen by program, pathway to rating may include either:
 - Temporary Alternate Rating Options (TARO)
 - Traditional Rating – live Environment Rating Scale (ERS) observation
- Potential to rate outside of a published rating cohort
- Complete rating process, earn 1, 2, or 3 Stars
- Provisional or Probationary status removed from QR account
- Rating valid for 1-3 years depending on rating process used to complete rating



Tier Reimbursement Increases to Support Quality Improvement Efforts

- DECAL knows that achieving and maintaining high quality care and early education requires commitment and cost
- COVID-19 Federal Relief Funds will be used to help offset program costs with a 3-year temporary increase to tier reimbursement for all programs who commit to quality care.

QR Status	Current Tier	New Tier
Provisional/Probationary	0%	15%
1 Star Rating	10%	25%
2 Star Rating	20%	35%
3 Star Rating	40%	55%



Quality Rated 2022 Cohort Update

- **Four (4) Rating Cohorts in 2022**

- Cohort 1 – Jan-Mar
- Cohort 2 – Apr-Jun
- Cohort 3 – Jul-Sep
- Cohort 4 – Oct-Dec

- **Cohorts 1 and 2 - TARO Rating Cohorts with 3 rating tracks available**

- Option A – Portfolio Only, 1-Star rating possible, valid for 1 year only
- Option B – Portfolio + Quality Rated Virtual Process (QRVP), up to 2-Star rating possible, valid for up to 2 years
- Option C – Portfolio + QRVP + LO-VE (Live Observation-Virtual Experience), up to 3-Stars possible, valid for up to 2 years **(only applicable to those previously rated with an observation)**

- **Cohorts 3 and 4 - Traditional Rating Cohorts**

- Portfolio + Live onsite ERS Observations, up to 3-Stars possible, valid for 3 years

- **Provider priority for selecting cohort slots once published**

- All providers rated in 2018 and required to rerate in 2022
- All providers rated with TARO 1-year rating in Cohorts 1 and 2 2021 and required to rerate in 2022



TARO at a Glance

Option A: Portfolio Only



Provider submits portfolio to
earn structural quality points



Portfolio scores a minimum of
15 points



1-star rating awarded for 1 year

Eligible Programs	
Initial ratings	Reratings previously rated with an observation or with a TARO option

TARO at a Glance

Option B: Portfolio + QRVP

Provider submits
portfolio **and** completes
the Quality Rated
Virtual Process (QRVP)

QRVP is 12 weeks of
collaborative and
guided continuous
quality improvement
activities that earn
process quality points

Can achieve a 1- or 2-
star rating through a
combination of
points from the portfolio
and QRVP

Eligible Programs

Initial ratings

Reratings previously rated with an observation or TARO option



TARO at a Glance

Option C: Portfolio + QRVP + LO-VE

Eligible Programs

Reratings previously rated with an observation only

Provider submits portfolio to earn structural quality points

Provider completes the Quality Rated Virtual Process (QRVP) to earn QRVP process quality points

Participation in the Live Observation – Virtual Experience (LO-VE) virtual visit, culmination of QRVP practices in action to earn LO-VE process quality points

Programs can achieve a 1, 2, or 3-star rating through a combination of points from the portfolio, QRVP, and LO-VE – valid for 2 years



Proposed 2022 Cohort Dates

2022 Cohort	Portfolio Submission Window	Rating Process Window	Rating Announcement Window
Cohort 1 TARO	December 17, 2021 – January 14, 2022	QRVP and LO-VE (Options A, B, and C) January 18 – March 31, 2022	May-June 2022
Cohort 2 TARO	March 17 – April 14, 2022	QRVP only (Options A and B) April 18 – June 27, 2022	July-August 2022
Cohort 3 Traditional	May 20 – June 17, 2022	TRAD (On-site Observation) July 11 – September 30, 2021	August – October 2022
Cohort 4 Traditional	August 15 – September 9, 2022	TRAD (On-site Observation) October 3 – December 31, 2022	November 2022 – January 2023

Targeted Cohort Release Early November 2021



Sample Cohort Group Selection Grid

Program slots are based on availability and will fill up quickly. Certain cohort groups and/or TARO Options may be more popular, be among the first to register for your preferred cohort group!

Select Cohort in Your QR Account

Select One	Cohort Group	Program Slots Available	Portfolio Submission Window	2022 Rating Process Window	2022 Rating Announcement Window
<input type="checkbox"/>	1 TARO Options A, B, or C	180	From: 12/17/21 To: 01/14/22	Jan 18 - March 31, 2022	May - June 2022
<input type="checkbox"/>	2 TARO Options A or B	180	From: 03/17/22 To: 04/14/22	April 18 - June 27, 2022	July - Aug 2022
<input type="checkbox"/>	3 TRAD	360	From: 05/20/22 To: 06/17/22	July 11 - Sept 30, 2020	Aug - Oct 2022
<input type="checkbox"/>	4 TRAD	340	From: 08/15/22 To: 09/9/22	Oct 3 - Dec 31 2022	Nov 2020 - Jan 2023

Technology Help for Providers Utilizing the TARO Rating Pathway



If you need help with technology as you complete the TARO rating process, we have help on hand with our new friendly Quality Rated IT Technology Support staff



QRTechHelp@dec.al.ga.gov



866-374-2770



Do You Have
Any Questions
For Us About
Anything in
This Webinar?



- Please go to the Survey Monkey link below to ask away!
- We will create FAQs from your questions and post on the QR and CAPS websites

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/QJTC75Z>

Link available until November 15, 2021





Thanks
for
listening!

CAPS Contact:

CAPSQRgoal@dec.al.ga.gov

QR Help Desk: 1-855-800-7747

QualityRated@dec.al.ga.gov