



Stakeholder Forum

Quality Rated and CAPS Rate Changes

September 25, 2024
Virtual Session





Purpose of Today's Meeting

Today's Agenda



General Overview & Context

**Bentley Ponder, Deputy Commissioner for
Quality Innovations and Partnerships**

CAPS Rate Increases

**Woody Dover, Enterprise Project Management
Director**

**Commitment to Quality Payments
Quality Rated Workforce Bonuses**

Denise Jenson, Quality Rated Director

Provider Rate Scenarios

Woody Dover

**Additional Rate Information and CAPS Provider
Supports**

**Ann Panzica, Provider Relations Education and
Outreach Manager**

Additional Supports and Q&A

Bentley Ponder

Quality Rated/CAPS Stakeholder Meeting – Virtual



<https://forms.office.com/r/3x4pNTVGDX>

- Use QR code to type questions during the presentation (your contact information is optional)
- Additional note cards are available at the reception desk
- We will also take questions from the audience at the end of the presentation

Overview and Context

Bentley Ponder, Deputy Commissioner for Quality Innovations and Partnerships

Overview of Changes

- For most types of care, DECAL is increasing the CAPS Rate to the 60th percentile
- Tiered reimbursement payments will transition to Commitment to Quality Payments for 2- and 3-star providers
 - 2- and 3-star providers will receive a quarterly payment of 5% and 10% respectively
 - Payments will be made quarterly as a lump sum
- DECAL will introduce annual \$500 Quality Rated Workforce Bonuses
- DECAL is expanding supports through CAPS Provider Relations and the Thriving Business Academy



Context of QR/CAPS Changes

New CCDF Plan for Georgia Created

- Every three years, states are required to create a new state plan that details how they will meet CCDF guidelines
- New plan goes into effect October 1, 2024

American Rescue Plan Funding Ends

- Federal ARP funds must be spent by September 30, 2024
- ARP funds were used to pay for ACCESS, increased tiered reimbursement, STABLE, and other critical initiatives
- Most importantly, ARP funds were used to increase the number of children and families CAPS serves
- CAPS has to attrition back to 50,000 children.

New CCDF Rules Issued

- In March 2024, the federal Office of Child Care in the Administration for Children and Families issued new rules that states must implement
- While Georgia has applied for a waiver for some of the new rules, CAPS must adjust policies to prepare for implementation



Georgia's New CCDF Plan

- Guided by the same priorities DECAL set for distributing the federal pandemic relief funds: ensuring that the needs of **families**, **providers**, and the **child care workforce** are considered
- Continues the CAPS program design of serving 50,000 children
- Continues to emphasize the federal priority of serving children in higher quality settings
- Includes new state and federal increases unrelated to pandemic relief funding
- Coincides with the end of pandemic relief funding
- New plan goes into effect October 1, 2024



Bottom Line



- The changes discussed today relate to the implementation of Georgia's new CCDF plan. These changes coincide with other distinct though related changes.
- The changes take place across the backdrop of needing to reduce CAPS scholarships back to 50,000 and adjusting provider rates.
- We recognize that there are many changes happening at once. We will continue to work hard to minimize the impact on your children, families, workforce, and programs.

CAPS Rate Increases

Woody Dover, Enterprise Project Management Director



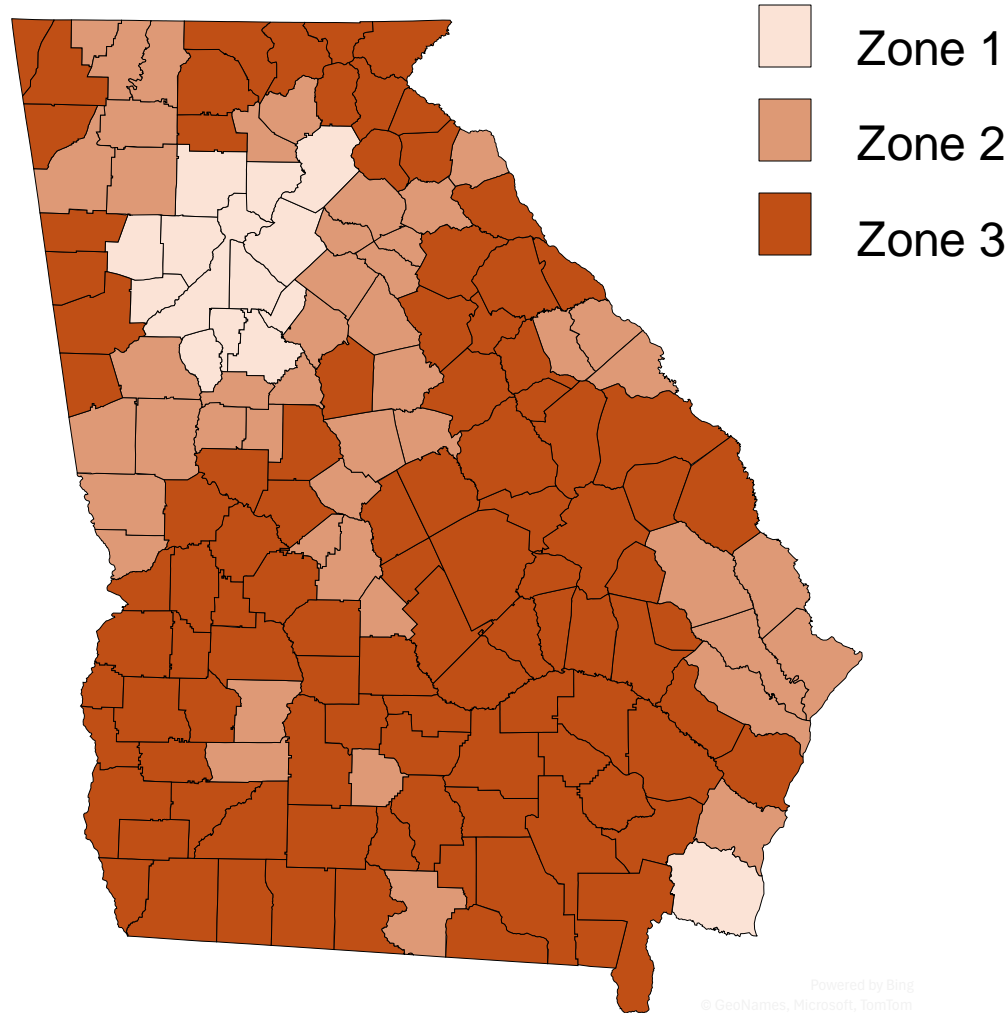
Georgia Dept
of Early Care
and Learning
BRIGHT FROM THE START

CAPS Rates 101

- There are three components to CAPS payments
 - CAPS Rate
 - Also referred to as the Base Rate or State Maximum Reimbursement Rate
 - Includes the amount that CAPS pays and the family fee
 - If a provider's rate is lower than the CAPS Rate, CAPS pays the lower rate.
 - Family Fee
 - Required amount that families are responsible for paying
 - Included as part of the CAPS Rate
 - “Differential”
 - Difference between the CAPS Rate and what the child care provider charges
- The Parent Weekly Responsibility listed on the scholarship includes both the family fee and the differential. Providers may choose to only collect the family fee.



CAPS Rates 101



- The CAPS Rate is updated based on federal regulations and funding availability
- DECAL conducted a market rate evaluation and cost study to understand the price and cost of child care before setting rates
- The market rate evaluation helps DECAL determine market prices for child care in each of the three payment zones for setting rates
- **New CAPS Rates go into effect the week of September 30, along with the new CCDF plan**



CAPS Rate Increase



DECAL is raising the CAPS Rate for full-day care from the 25th percentile to the 60th percentile, the largest non-pandemic-related increase in CAPS history

CAPS Rate Increase

The amount of the increase will vary by the type of care

- **Full-Time Care:** Increase in full-time care rates will be the largest non-pandemic release in CAPS history
 - Complies with federal guidelines
 - Reduces the financial impact on families
- **Before and After School Care:** Before and after school care rates will increase by 5%
 - All before and after school care rates are at or above the cost of care
 - Full-time care rates during holidays and summer



Comparison of 2019 and 2024 CAPS Rates

Overall, CAPS Rates are increasing significantly from pre-pandemic levels

Example: Rates for Toddler Care

Provider Type	Zone 1		Zone 2		Zone 3	
	Center	Family	Center	Family	Center	Family
2019	\$159	\$137	\$115	\$100	\$95	\$83
2024	\$248	\$188	\$160	\$140	\$125	\$110

Commitment to Quality Payments Quality Rated Workforce Bonuses

Denise Jenson, Quality Rated Director



Georgia Dept
of Early Care
and Learning
BRIGHT FROM THE START

Commitment to Quality Payments

**Quality Rated tiered reimbursement will be replaced with
Commitment to
Quality Payments**

- **Current Structure:** As part of their total CAPS payment amounts, QR CAPS providers receive reimbursements set at various percentage levels that are based on their star rating (percentages have varied over time based on available funding)
- **New Structure:** Commitment to Quality Payments will be paid separately from weekly CAPS payments and will be distributed as quarterly payments

Commitment to Quality Payments

Commitment to Quality Payments will differ in structure from the previous tiered reimbursement

- **Payment Timing**
 - Will be paid on a quarterly basis to promote reinvestment in maintaining and improving quality
- **Quality Rated Status**
 - Available for 2- and 3-star programs
 - 2-star programs will receive a 5% quarterly bonus; 3-star programs will receive a 10% quarterly bonus
 - While 1-star programs will not receive a quality payment, most will make up this difference in increased CAPS Rates
 - Opportunities will be offered in 2025 to assist 1-star CAPS programs in advancing to 2 or 3 stars

Commitment to Quality Payments

- Payments will be made through Care Solutions versus Maximus
- Payments will be based on a percentage of the amount paid for CAPS service weeks in the previous quarter
- Beginning in 2025, payments will occur at the end of February, May, August, and November
- An initial payment will be made in December 2024, which will be prorated for the full first quarter, so that providers receive a payment in each quarter

Quality Rated Workforce Bonuses

New

Quality Rated Workforce Bonuses

Quality Rated Workforce Bonuses: DECAL is introducing a new annual workforce award of \$500 for eligible employees of providers who are Quality Rated at the 1-, 2-, or 3-star level

Purpose of Payments: This award recognizes and acknowledges the hard work that program staff do every day to enhance the quality of care and education that children receive

Who Receives the Payments: Available to eligible staff of Quality Rated providers at all star levels, regardless of CAPS participation

Quality Rated Workforce Bonuses

Eligibility for Quality Rated Workforce Bonuses

Eligibility for Multiple Program Types: Eligible staff from any star-rated program will be entitled to the workforce support payment

- Family Child Care Learning Homes
- Child Care Centers
- Stand-Alone School Age Programs

Eligible Staff:

- Those who work an average of 20 hours or more a week
- Have been employed at their program for **more than 60 days**
- Includes education and support staff

Quality Rated Workforce Bonuses

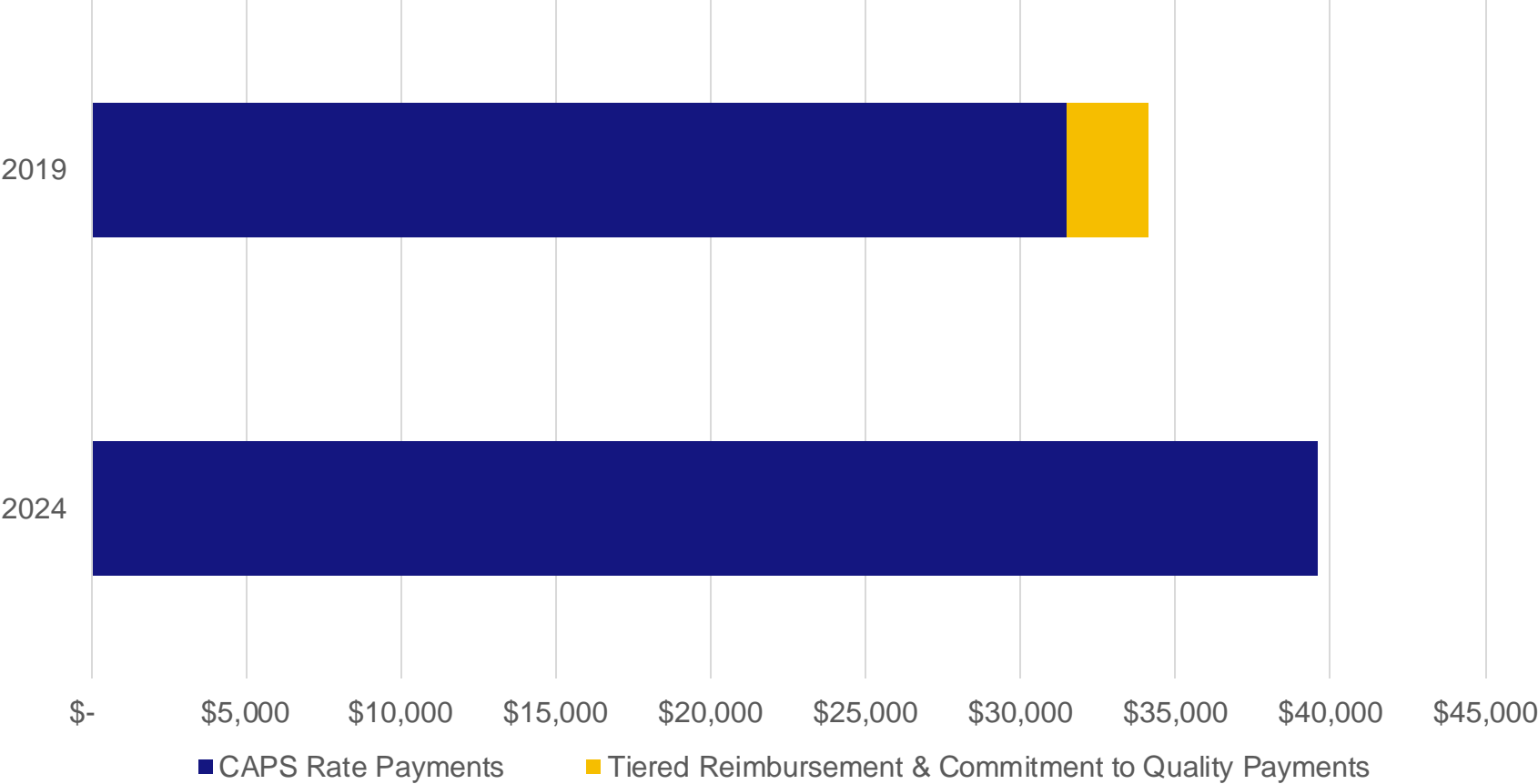
- Payments will be made through Care Solutions versus Maximus
- Payments begin in 2025
- Planning to develop the payment processing system is currently underway
- Considerations:
 - System will need to process tens of thousands of staff payments annually; this represents a \$17 million investment in the workforce
 - Cannot distribute all the payments at the same time
 - Create a system to distribute payments equitably across an entire year
 - Regional approach, rating anniversary approach, quarterly approach, other?

Provider Scenarios

Woody Dover, Enterprise Project Management Director

Scenario 1: Child Care Center

1-STAR, Zone 3



ENROLLMENT

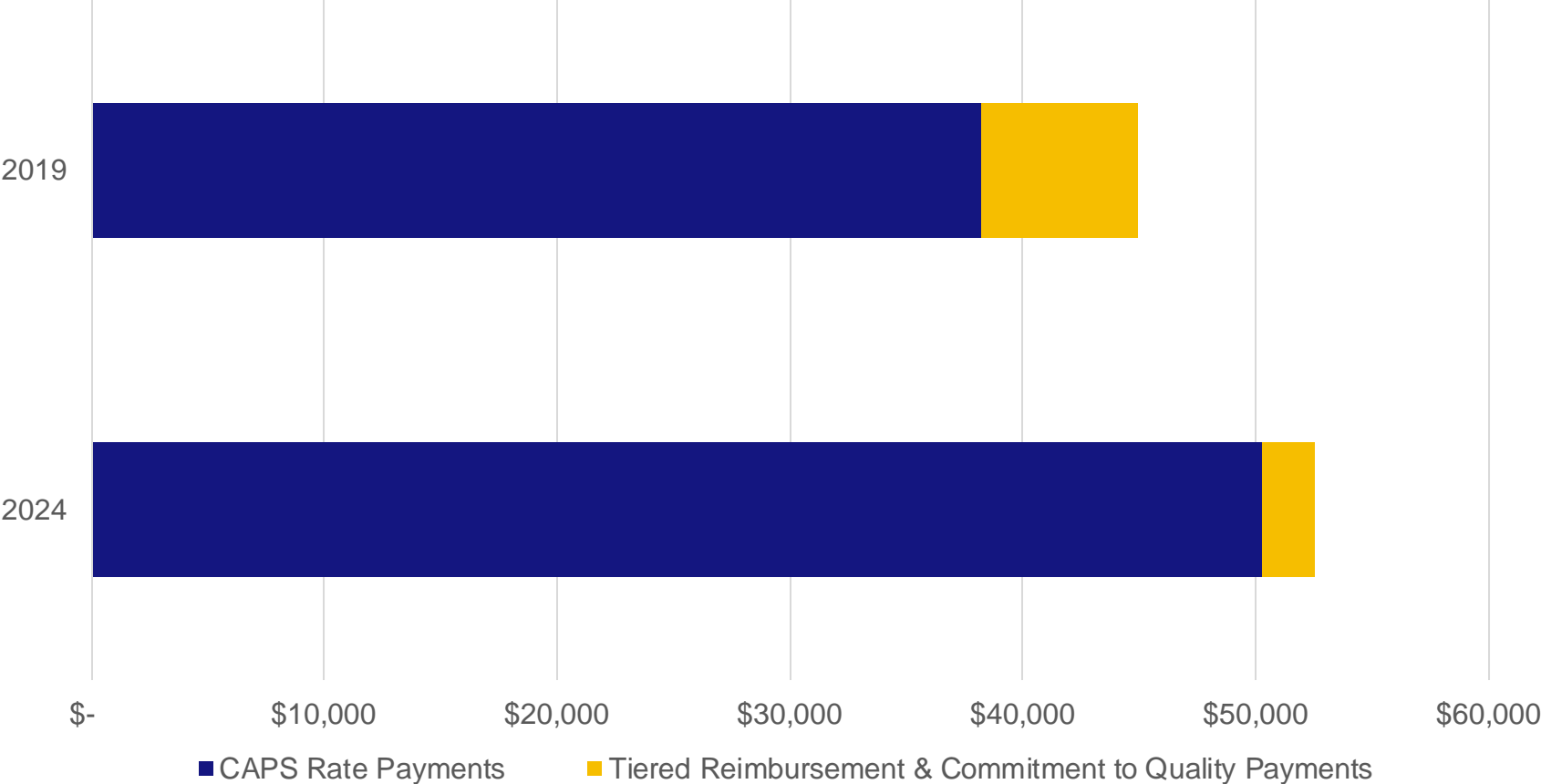
- Full-Time Care:
 - Infant: 3
 - Toddler: 9
 - Preschool: 7
- Before and After Care: 13

PAYMENTS PER QUARTER

2019: \$34,148
2024: \$39,572

Scenario 2: Child Care Center

2-STAR, Zone 2



ENROLLMENT

- Full-Time Care:
 - Infant: 3
 - Toddler: 9
 - Preschool: 7
- Before and After Care: 13

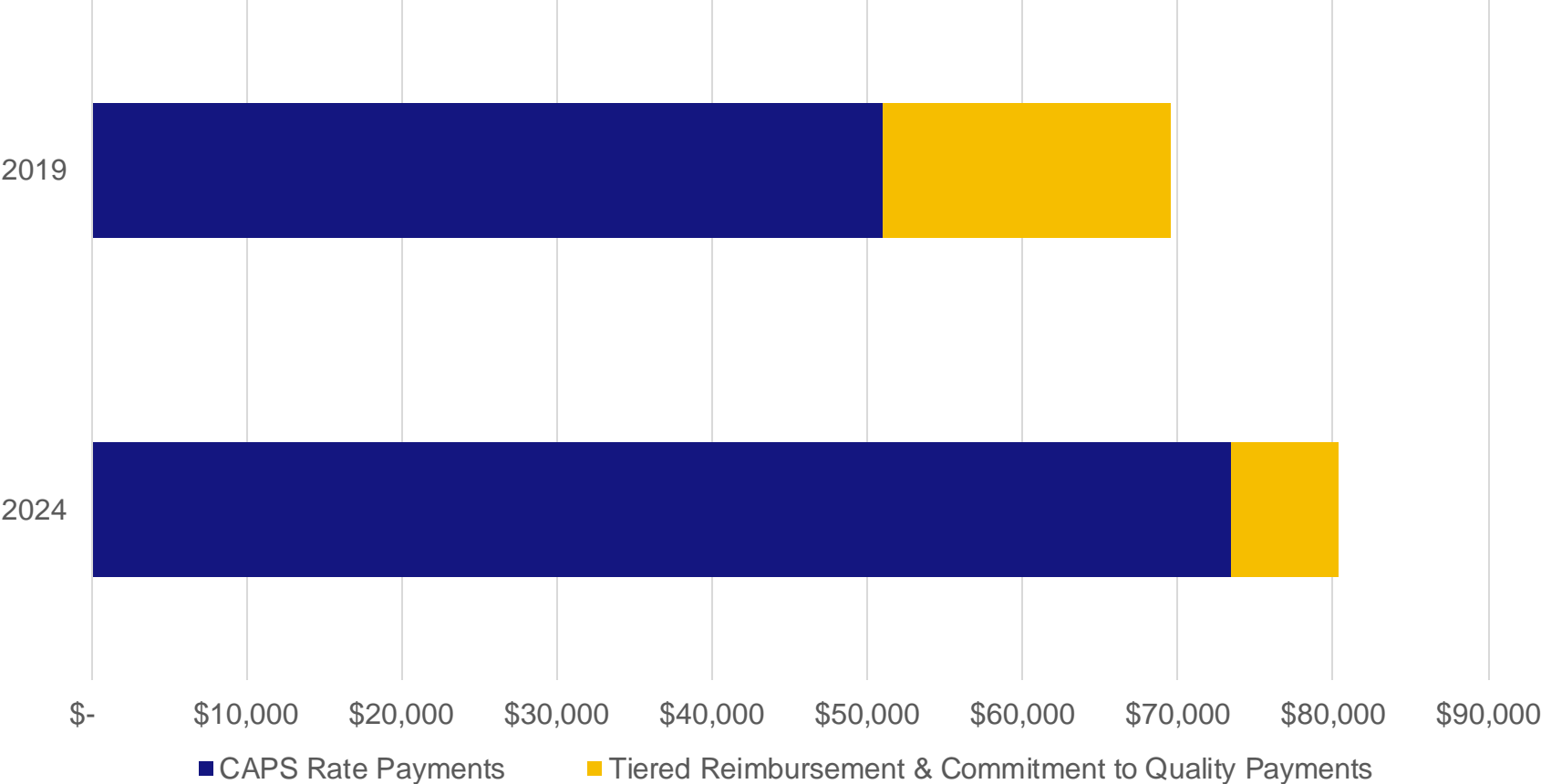
PAYMENTS PER QUARTER

2019: \$44,949

2024: \$52,583

Scenario 3: Child Care Center

3-STAR, Zone 1



ENROLLMENT

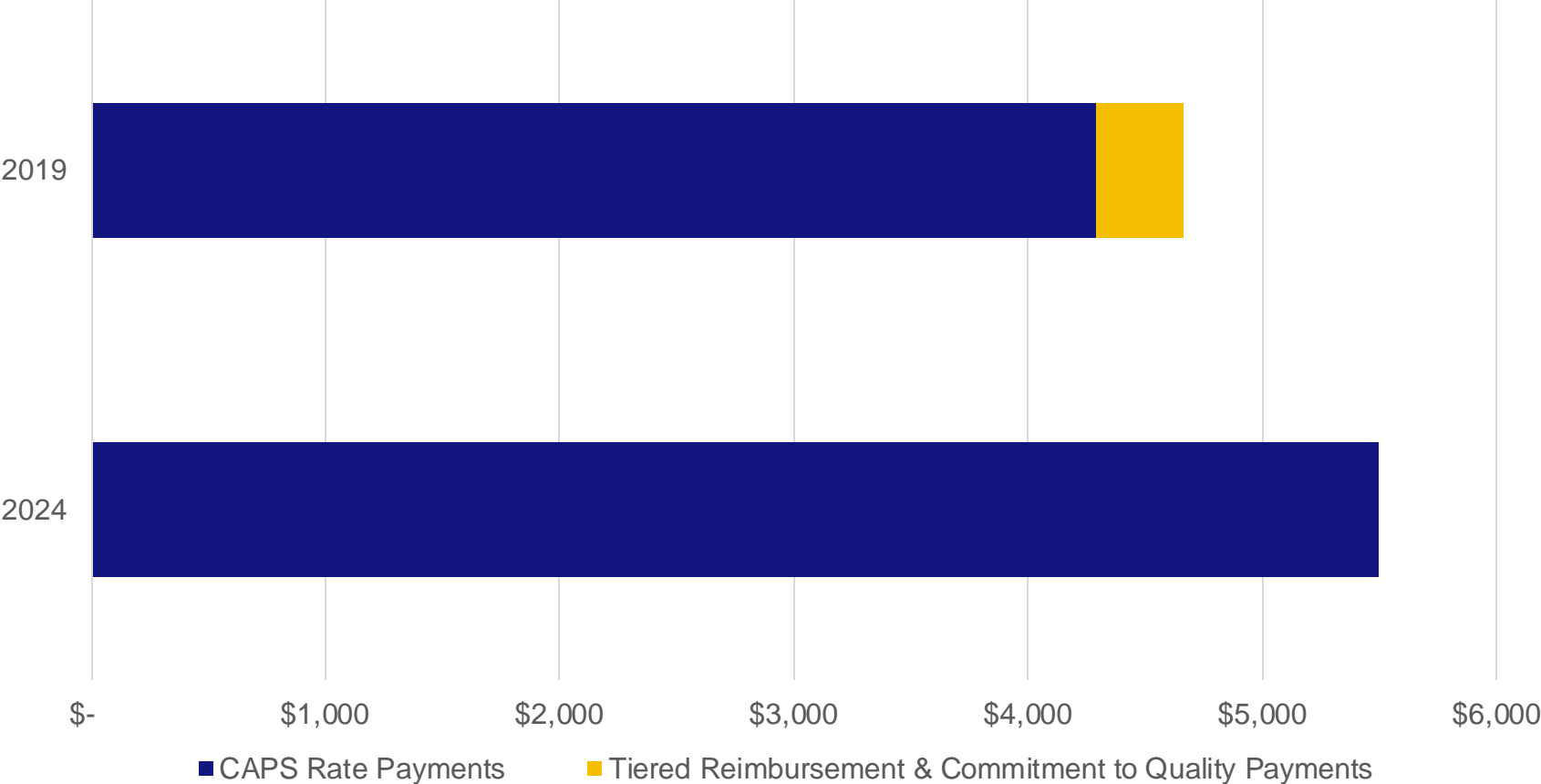
- Full-Time Care:
 - Infant: 3
 - Toddler: 9
 - Preschool: 7
- Before and After Care: 13

**PAYMENTS PER
QUARTER**

2019: \$69,605
2024: \$80,352

Scenario 4: Family Child Care

1-STAR, Zone 3



ENROLLMENT

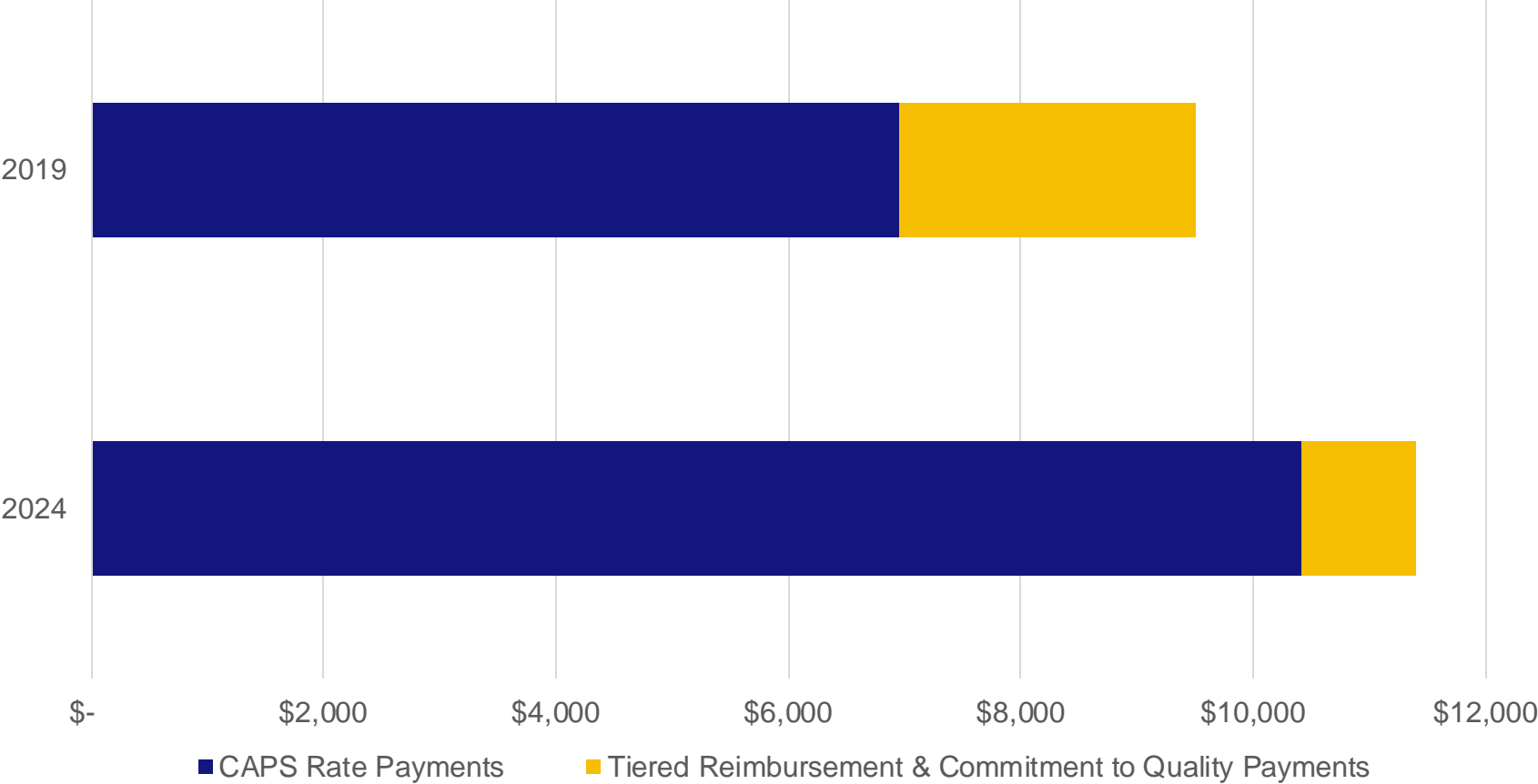
- Full-Time Care:
 - Infant: 0
 - Toddler: 2
 - Preschool: 1
- Before and After Care: 1

**PAYMENTS PER
QUARTER**

2019: \$4,662
2024: \$5,499

Scenario 5: Family Child Care

3-STAR, Zone 1



ENROLLMENT

- Full-Time Care:
 - Infant: 0
 - Toddler: 2
 - Preschool: 1
- Before and After Care: 1

PAYMENTS PER QUARTER

2019: \$9,508

2024: \$11,397

Key Takeaways

- Increase in CAPS Rates + Commitment to Quality Payments
 - most providers will see an **overall increase** in payments from pre- to post-pandemic
- 1-star providers will not receive quality payments
 - but most will still see an **increase** resulting from CAPS Rate changes
- QR will offer additional supports to 1-star CAPS providers to help them work toward earning a 2- or 3-star rating in 2025
- The \$98 million for raising CAPS Rates and Commitment to Quality Payments represents the largest single funding increase (34%) in CAPS history

Additional Rate Information and CAPS Provider Supports

Ann Panzica, Provider Relations Education and Outreach Manager

CAPS Rate Key Points

CAPS will pay either the provider's published rate or the CAPS Rate, whichever is less

The CAPS Rate is updated based on federal regulations and funding availability

Families are responsible for paying the assessed family fee.

Families may also be responsible for paying the "differential," if applicable.

CAPS Rates Effective Week of September 30, 2024

<https://caps.dec.state.ga.gov/Assets/downloads/ProposedCAPSReimbursementRates.pdf>

	Zone 1	
Type of Care	Center	Family/Informal
Full-Time (Per Week)		
Infant (Birth - 12 Months)	\$260	\$199
Toddler (1 - 2 Years)	\$248	\$188
Preschool (3-5 Years)	\$221	\$180
School Age (6 Years & Older)	\$185	\$156
Part-Time (Per Day)		
All Ages	\$65	\$53
Before & After School (Per Week)		
All Ages	\$84	\$68

CAPS Rates Effective Week of September 30, 2024

: <https://caps.decal.ga.gov/Assets/downloads/ProposedCAPSReimbursementRates.pdf>

	Zone 2	
Type of Care	Center	Family/Informal
Full-Time (Per Week)		
Infant (Birth - 12 Months)	\$165	\$145
Toddler (1 - 2 Years)	\$160	\$140
Preschool (3-5 Years)	\$150	\$135
School Age (6 Years & Older)	\$140	\$135
Part-Time (Per Day)		
All Ages	\$45	\$40
Before & After School (Per Week)		
All Ages	\$68	\$58

CAPS Rates Effective Week of September 30, 2024

<https://caps.dec.state.ga.us/Assets/downloads/ProposedCAPSReimbursementRates.pdf>

	Zone 3	
Type of Care	Center	Family/Informal
Full-Time (Per Week)		
Infant (Birth - 12 Months)	\$130	\$120
Toddler (1 - 2 Years)	\$125	\$110
Preschool (3-5 Years)	\$120	\$105
School Age (6 Years & Older)	\$115	\$94
Part-Time (Per Day)		
All Ages	\$38	\$35
Before & After School (Per Week)		
All Ages	\$53	\$47

Information about Changing Rates in GACAPS

- Providers are now able to update their rates in the GACAPS system
- Rates cannot have an effective date prior to 9/30/2024
- If the rates you submit contain a mistake, you won't be able to make corrections until after a CAPS consultant reviews them
- Rate change instructions can be found at:
<https://caps.decal.ga.gov/en/ProviderRelations/>

Where Do I Find Instructions on Changing Rates?

<https://caps.dec.al.ga.gov/en/ProviderRelations/>

[ABOUT CAPS](#) | [POLICIES AND PROCEDURES](#) | [ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS](#) | [APPLICATION PROCESS](#) | [CAPS IN THE COMMUNITY](#) | [ACCESS](#) | [PROVIDER RELATIONS](#)

Provider Relations

Welcome to DECAL's Child Care and Parent Services (CAPS) Provider Relations Informational Web Page!

Select a tile below to find helpful information, training videos, user guides and more about the CAPS Provider Relations Program.





Where Do I Find Instructions on Changing Rates?



Important Updates

We will be providing important updates here for our CAPS providers. Please refer to this page to find our Provider Update News videos and information about the CAPS program!

Informative Resources

Written Instructions	+
Informative Resources	+
Webinar Series	+
Training and News Videos	+
Rate Change Introduction Information	
How to change your rates in GACAPS	

How to View Rate Change Status

- Log into your dashboard in the GACAPS portal.
- Go to “Request Change”
- Go to “Submitted Requests”

The screenshot displays the GACAPS portal interface. On the left is a sidebar menu with the following items: Dashboard, Attendance Tracking, Scholarship, Remittance Statements, Request Payment Adjustment/Correction, Documents Library, My Applications, Request Change (highlighted in blue), Provider Rates, and Review Attendance. The main content area is titled 'Request Change' and includes a welcome message for 'Ann Panzica' along with her Provider Number (INF-35707) and CAPS Provider ID (53620). Below this, there are two tabs: 'REQUESTS' and 'SUBMITTED REQUESTS'. A large red arrow points from the 'REQUESTS' tab to the 'SUBMITTED REQUESTS' tab, which is highlighted in yellow. Under the 'SUBMITTED REQUESTS' tab, there are four request cards, each with a 'Request' button: 'Update Banking Information' (Request Update Banking Information), 'Update Contact Information' (Request Update Mailing Address, E-mail, and Phone Number), 'Temporarily Closing' (Request Temporarily Closing), and 'Child No Longer Attends The Facility'.

Select the “Request Number”

REQUESTS

SUBMITTED REQUESTS

Request Type

Status

Search ⓘ

Select ▼

Select ▼

🔍 Rqst. No./Submitted On

Request Number

Request Type

Submitted On

Submitted By

Status

[19152](#)

Published Rates for Provider for all
children attending

Approved

[02773](#)

Request for Update Provider Name

12/08/2023

DA_larner DA_thompson

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Viewing Submitted Rates

Published Rates for Provider for all children attending

INFORMAL

< Back

* indicates required field

CAPS has established a state maximum rate to reimburse providers based upon the location where care is provided, the type of child care provider selected, the age of the child, and the type of care being provided. The state's maximum reimbursement rates can be found by selecting this link:: [SMRR](#). Typically, differences between the amount that CAPS pays and the published rates charged by the provider must be obtained from the parent.

Enter the registration fee charged and the published rates for children in the following types of care and age groups.

* Effective Start Date

9/30/2024



M/d/yyyy

Care Type	Age	Current Rates	* Updated Rates
Full-time (per week)	Infant (birth – 12 months)	\$112.00	<input type="text" value="\$220.00"/>
Full-time (per week)	Toddler (1 – 2 years)	\$100.00	<input type="text" value="\$250.00"/>

Determining the Differential

- To find out the family's differential, go to <https://caps.decal.ga.gov/Assets/downloads/ProposedCAPSReimbursementRates.pdf> view your zone and the type of care that you are receiving
- (**Center**=Child Care Learning Center, **Family**=Family Child Care Learning Home, **Informal**=Informal Provider)
- The zones are listed on page 2 of the Proposed SMRR document

Viewing the Differential in the Scholarship

In your GACAPS dashboard, select “Scholarship” and select the name of the child you would like to view the details for.

The screenshot shows the GACAPS dashboard with a sidebar on the left and a main content area on the right. A large blue arrow points to the 'Scholarship' button in the sidebar. The main content area displays a summary of scholarship counts and a table of active scholarships.

Sidebar Navigation:

- Tracking
- Scholarship**
- Remittance Statements
- Request Payment Adjustment/Correction
- Document Library
- My Applications
- Request Change
- Provider Rates
- Recoupments
- Review Attendance

Scholarship Summary:

- Active Scholarships: 37
- Expiring Scholarships: 2
- Recently Expired Scholarships: 1
- Hidden Scholarships: 3

Active Scholarships Table:

Child Name	Scholarship ID	Care Type	End Care Date
Tylon /	12434567	Part-Time	5/27/23
John Doe	12434567	Part-Time	3/12/23
Simon Jordan	12434567	Part-Time	8/21/23

A blue arrow points to the 'Child Name' column header in the table. A 'Download Excel Report' button and a 'Print' button are located above the table.

This is the amount the provider charges. It will be updated if there was a rate change request submitted.

This is the State Maximum Reimbursement Rate. To find the SMRR, go to <https://caps.decal.ga.gov/Assets/downloads/ProposedCAPSReimbursementRates.pdf>

This is the family fee. This amount will not change unless determined to change at annual redetermination.

Provider Details

Actual Provider Weekly Charge

\$232

CAPS Weekly Rate

\$221

Family Fee

\$0

CAPS Weekly Amount to Provider

\$137

Parent Weekly Responsibility

\$95

This will change because the SMRR is increasing.

This will reflect the weekly responsibility of the parent on 9/30/2024.

Need Help or Have Questions?

- Register for the weekly GACAPS 101 Sessions on the web page (now focusing on rates and changes):
<https://caps.dec.ga.gov/en/ProviderRelations/>
- Call CAPS Provider Support at 1-833-4GACAPS (1-833-442-2277) or email:
CAPSProviderSupport@dec.al.ga.gov

Provider Relations



- GACAPS 101- Tuesday, October 1, 2024: [**Register Here**](#)
- Ticket Mastery- Thursday, October 10, 2024: [**Register Here**](#)
- GACAPS 101- Tuesday, October 15, 2024: [**Register Here**](#)
- Scholarship Success- Thursday, October 17, 2024: [**Register Here**](#)
- GACAPS 101- Monday, October 28, 2024: [**Register Here**](#)

Additional Helpful Supports

In-person technical assistance opportunity:

Catoosa County Library
Ringgold, GA

- October 10, 2024
- 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Additional Provider Relations Resources

Provider Relations



- Informational Resources: FAQs, webinars, podcasts, updates etc
- Provider Relations Newsletters
- Thriving Business Academy: handbook, FAQs, guides, information
- Archived FAQs



Training Videos

Provider Relations



- Introduction to GACAPS
- CAPS Pro Series Workshops: billing & payments, recordkeeping
- GACAPS Tutorial Videos: multiple topics
- Navigating your GACAPS Dashboard
- And More. . . .

Important Updates

Provider Relations



Written Instructions



Informative Resources



Webinar Series



Training and News Videos



How to Stay Informed



CAPS Provider Relations Web page
<https://caps.dec.al.ga.gov/en/ProviderRelations/>



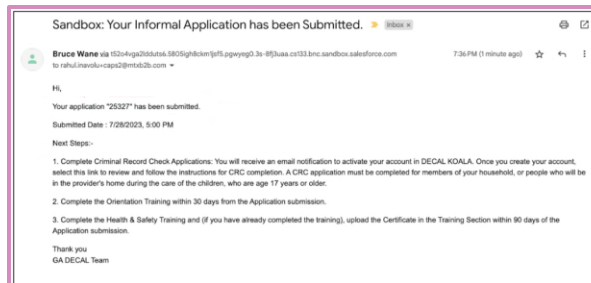
Contact QR Support
QualityRated@dec.al.ga.gov
1-855-800-7747



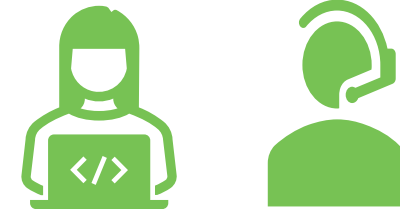
GACAPS 101



CAPS Quarterly Newsletters



GACAPS Provider Portal Messages



Contact CAPS Provider Support
CAPSProviderSupport@dec.al.ga.gov
1-833-4GACAPS (1-833-442-2277)

Thriving Child Care Business Academy

Bentley Ponder, Deputy Commissioner for Quality Innovations and Partnerships



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Thriving Child Care Business Academy



Live Virtual Trainings



Small Study Groups



One-on-One Coaching

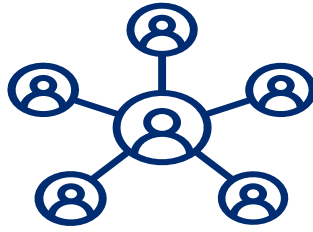


Self-Study Guide Library

New Academy Resources Coming Soon



Payment
Estimator
Tool



New CAPS
Small
Study
Group



Additional
One-on-
One
Coaching



Quality Rated/CAPS Stakeholder Meeting – Virtual



<https://forms.office.com/r/3x4pNTVGDX>

Q & A



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Thank You!!

