



Montana's Treasures Frequently Asked Questions

What is Montana's Treasures? Montana's Treasures is Montana's Quality Recognition System. It recognizes child care providers through stages connected to licensing, professional growth, program improvement, and identified advanced achievements.

Is Montana's Treasures the same as a rating? No. MTT uses recognition stages rather than a single rating or ranking. Stages highlight progress, strengths, and ongoing work to improve quality.

How does licensing relate to Montana's Treasures? Licensing is the foundation of child care quality, ensuring programs meet basic health and safety requirements. MTT builds on licensing by recognizing additional efforts connected to continuous improvement.

What happened to my STARS level? Montana has transitioned away from STARS levels and will use recognition levels moving forward. Do not infer an MTT stage based on a previous STARS level without an approved transition document.

Is participation voluntary? Stage 1 is assigned automatically after successful initial licensing or a qualifying renewal. Providers may opt out; the exact opt-out process will be added once Montana finalizes it.

Can I remain at Stage 1? Stage 1 has no additional requirements beyond maintaining licensing or renewal standards. Staff should verify updated maintenance and opt-out guidance on the MTT website.

How do I move to Stage 2? Review Stage 2A, 2B, and 2C to identify the pathway that fits the program. Then confirm requirements and documentation through current MTT resources.

How do I qualify for Stage 3? The step-by-step guide outlines accepted criteria, including specified national accreditation or licensed Head Start/Early Head Start programs in good standing. Providers must submit required documentation through the approved process.

Where do I find current information? Use the Montana's Treasures website for up-to-date provider materials, requirements, announcements, and support links. [**ECFSD Childcare Quality Initiatives**](#)

Who can help me decide what to do next?

Contact the current DPHHS or contracted-partner support listed on the MTT website. Avoid using outdated contact lists. [**HHSECFSDQualityInitiatives@mt.gov**](mailto:HHSECFSDQualityInitiatives@mt.gov)