

STARS APPLICATION SITE GUIDANCE & PROCEDURES

This document contains written guidance for utilizing the STARS Application Site. Screenshots are included in places as examples showing what the tabs look like as you navigate through the site.

You must use the “Help” button located within the STARS site in the bottom right corner of each screen for all STARS related questions.

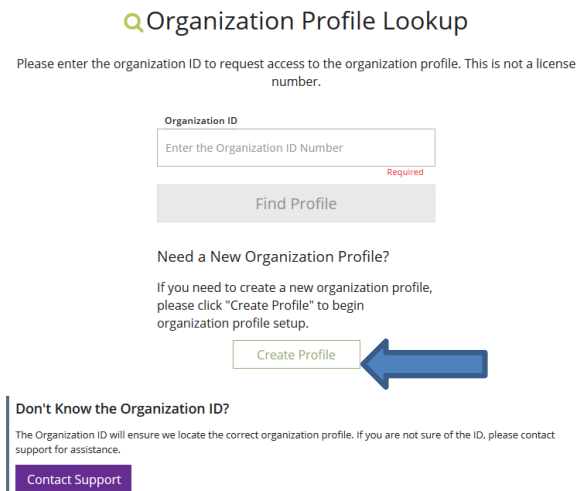


Accessing the STARS Application Site

- STARS Consultants must log in to the [STARS Application site](#) with their email address and password.
- Directors/Providers must log in to the [STARS Application site](#) with their email address and password.

How to create an Organization ID

- Go to the [Early Childhood Project](#) and click “log in” in the upper right-hand corner
- If you do not have an Organization account, Log into your individual account click on the drop down in the upper right-hand corner and click +Organization, then click Create Profile.



- Complete the information on the following screen and answer “Yes” to “Are you an Early Childhood/School-Age Program” and click “next”

Contact Info | ID Numbers | Organization Type | Address

Organization Registration


Please fill out the form below to register your organization. Fields marked with * are required. Use the [Contact Us](#) form if you have any questions or concerns about the organization registration process.

Primary Contact Information for Organization

First Name* [input] Last Name* [input]
Email Address* [input]
Phone [input] - [input] - [input] Ext. [input]

Are you an Early Childhood/School-Age Program?

Choose "Yes" if you are a state licensed/registered child care program that requires a facility PV number OR if you are a state licensed-exempt program providing direct care and education to children.

- Yes, this organization provides direct care and education to children. 
- No, this organization is not state/licensed registered and does not provide direct care and education to children.

- Complete the information on the pages that follow, clicking “next” on each page once completed. Click “Submit” when prompted. You will receive an email within 5 days that will contain your log-in information.

PV# change

If a program has an ownership change, which results in a new PV# being issued, they must create a new Organization ID with the new PV# and notify the STARS Program Specialist immediately. The Program Specialist will merge the old PV# with the new PV#. This will ensure all program submission history is retained. Please refer to [STARS to Quality Guidance & Procedures](#) for additional information regarding ownership change.

Status Tab

- This information is populated directly from licensing data.


Status | Org Details | Program Info | Classrooms | Assessments | STARS | Employees | Technical Assistance | Reports | Document Vault

Program Identification Numbers

[Add New](#)

Type	REGISTERED GROUP CHILD CARE HOME
Status	Active
PV#	[REDACTED]
Location	[REDACTED] Butte, MT 59701 Silver Bow County

Notes [0]
Filter by [Filter by Activity](#)

 No notes exist.

Organization Details Tab

- Displays basic information that is recorded when obtaining an Organization ID and Password.
- This is where information can be updated in the case of changes to the contact information. These changes must be reported by the child care program to Child Care Licensing as well.



Contact Information

Email Address* Send Message

First Name* Last Name*

Phone - - Ext.

Communication Preferences

The Early Childhood Project sends periodic communications.

Unsubscribe
You will continue to receive emails regarding your account.

Subscribe

Organization Details

Organization Name: Caterpillar Clubhouse Daycare

Profile Created: 10/13/2021

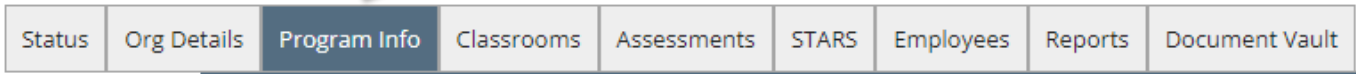
Organization Type: Early Care & Education Program

Training Sponsor Organization

Indicates this organization is a training sponsor, and can enter sponsored training events into the system.

Note: Changes to training sponsor status require administrative approval. Please use the [Contact Us](#) form to request changes to your training sponsor status.

Program Info Tab



A date for the most recent update of Program Profile information, specifically High Needs and classroom information, must be entered into the Evidence box for the required criterion. That date must be within 1 month of checklist submission. If it is more than 1 month, the criteria will be marked Incomplete and the program will be required to update the information, then resubmit the application.

Program Profile

- Click Edit on each individual section of the Program Profile
 - Developmental Screening Information
 - Please refer to “Steps to Enter Screening Data” for more information. This is required for programs submitting for a STAR 4 or higher, but we encourage all programs to enter data here if they have it.
 - Benefit Options
 - Business and Professional Practices

- Program Curriculum
- After you click edit select all the items that apply to your program in each section

Accreditation

- If the child care program is accredited, enter that information here. This is not required unless submitting for a STAR 5.

Philosophy Statement

- All programs must enter a philosophy statement. The purpose of the Philosophy Statement is to provide information to prospective families on your program’s unique qualities, including the learning activities and play spaces you provide to children enrolled in your program. Philosophy statements may be used at some point in marketing STARS programs, so it is important to enter a statement that truly reflects your program.

Classrooms Tab

Status	Org Details	Program Info	Classrooms	Assessments	STARS	Employees	Technical Assistance	Reports	Document Vault
--------	-------------	--------------	------------	-------------	-------	-----------	----------------------	---------	----------------

Enrollment Edit

Licensed Capacity 12

Number of Classrooms / Groups 2

Number of Children Enrolled 7

Infants (0 through 18 months)	3	High Needs	2	+
Toddlers (19 through 35 months)	2	High Needs	2	+
Preschoolers (36 months through entry to school)	2	High Needs	0	
Elementary (K through 5th grade)	0	High Needs	0	

Director of Record Edit

None

Classrooms / Groups New Classroom

: (List lead teacher/caregiver and other teachers/caregivers)

⚠ No exist

Enrollment

- Licensed Capacity is automatically entered from licensing data
 - You may not edit this number
- Click on Edit next to Licensed Capacity
 - Enter number of classrooms in your facility (*Family and Group programs must enter a minimum of 1 classroom*)
 - Enter number of children in all age groups
 - This number may be larger than your total capacity due to overlap and part time children
 - These numbers will reflect your total enrollment
 - Please note: the number of adults does not need to be filled in for staff people (this is for an adult care facility only).
 - Enter the number of High Needs children in those classrooms.
 - One child may be entered in more than one high needs category (i.e. if a child is an infant that is served through Best Beginnings Subsidy and has a special healthcare need, you would count them in each of those 3 categories).
 - Click the i next to a high needs box to read a definition or be directed to a link for more information.

The definition for High Needs in STARS to Quality is as follows:

- Children receiving services from the following:
 - Part B
 - Part C
 - Home Visiting programs
 - Children’s Mental Health Bureau
 - Children and Family Services Division
- Evidence that the child has special healthcare needs (such as food allergies, asthma, diabetes, special dietary restrictions, on extended prescribed medication, etc.)
- Infants age 0 through 18 months (program must be **servicing** this population, not just licensed for this population)
- Enrolled Tribal member
- Children of teenage parent(s)
- Children being served through Best Beginnings subsidy
- Children of migrant families
- Children who are homeless

Enrollment

Edit

Licensed Capacity	32		
Number of Classrooms / Groups	2		
Number of Children Enrolled	32		
Infants (0 through 18 months)	0	High Needs	0
Toddlers (19 through 35 months)	0	High Needs	0
Preschoolers (36 months through entry to school)	32	High Needs	7
Elementary (K through 5th grade)	0	High Needs	0

Part B	<input type="text"/>	
Part C	<input type="text"/>	
Home Visiting Programs	<input type="text"/>	
Children's Mental Health Bureau	<input type="text"/>	
Children and Family Services Division	<input type="text"/>	
Evidence that the child has special healthcare needs	<input type="text"/>	
Infants age 0-19 months	<input type="text"/>	
Enrolled Tribal member	<input type="text"/>	
Children of teenage parent(s)	<input type="text"/>	
Children being serviced through Best Beginnings subsidy:	<input type="text"/>	
Children of migrant families	<input type="text"/>	
Children who are homeless	<input type="text"/>	
Other children as identified by the Early Childhood Services Bureau	<input type="text"/>	

Director of Record



- Click on Edit next to Director of Record
- Click on Add Director

- To add a Director of Record the individual's Practitioner Registry Employment position title must be one of the following:
 - Director
 - Program Administrator
 - Registered Family Home
 - Registered Group Home
- If the system gives you a message stating that you may not be added as director of record, you must check your employment on your Practitioner Registry application.
 - If your employment does not have one of the four position titles listed above, you must update your employment record by filling out a new Employment Verification Form and sending it to the Early Childhood Project.
- Only one Director of Record may be added
- Directors of Record should provide past employment in this record that reflects early childhood business management experience. This can be done by sending an updated Employment Verification Form for each employment record so ECP can verify and business management experience will be counted for BAS and PAS assessments. The form is available at the [Early Childhood Project](#) under Quick links.

Classrooms/Groups

- Click on Add New Classroom next to Classrooms/Groups
 - Enter Classroom Name and Start Date
 - If you have a school age specific classroom, note that in the Classroom Name (ex. Hedgehog School Age classroom). This will help assessors and ECSB Program Specialists to know which classrooms/groups require assessments, as school age groups do not require an assessment.
 - Click Save
- Your classroom name will now show up under Classrooms/Groups
- You may not enter more classrooms than the number you have entered in your Program Capacity information.

To add Teachers and Assistant Teachers to your Classrooms

- Click on the name of the classroom
- Click on  to add a Lead Teacher/Primary Family Provider or Teacher (a Lead Teacher/Primary Family Provider must be assigned to each created classroom. The role type does not have to be ECLT, ECT).
 - Select the individual from the employee list
 - Enter the start date and how many hours per week employed
- Click Next
- Click Return after you have been shown the 'Save complete' message
- If you accidentally select the wrong individual or need to move an individual to a different classroom, click on  to the right of the individual's name and information.
- Return and repeat for each classroom added
- **Note:** You may not add an individual as a Lead Teacher in more than one classroom.

To add staff not on the Practitioner Registry (due to hire date)

Follow these directions if key staff are NOT on the Practitioner Registry (or an individual does NOT appear on the list.

- If there are staff that do not have an ECP Registry employment record, the director will need to help the individual go in and create an ID and Password (if not previously done) and enter their employment information under the Employment Tab. The individual will then show up on your employee list as necessary.

THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT AN INDIVIDUAL IS CURRENT ON THE PRACTITIONER REGISTRY OR HAS SUBMITTED AN APPLICATION! It simply allows the director to add the individual to a classroom, which is necessary prior to an assessor being scheduled.

- To get an ID and Password and create an employment record follow these directions:
 - Go to the home page at the [Early Childhood Project](#) and click on Log In

- Under “Don’t have a user account?” click on individual
 - Fill in the required information, click Continue
 - Fill in your email and security question, click Create Record
 - Go to your email and get your ID and Password
 - Log into your account
 - Click on the employment tab
 - If no tab appears you will need to click ‘Become a Participant’ and save and continue until you reach the employment section.
 - Click on Edit Employment
 - Click on Add Employment
 - Search using your program’s PV#
 - Click on the name of the program
 - Enter in all required information and **Save**
- After this has been done, they will now show up on the employee list and you will be able to select them for a specific classroom.

Tab Navigation

Status	Org Details	Program Info	Classrooms	Assessments	STARS	Employees	Technical Assistance	Reports	Document Vault
--------	-------------	--------------	------------	-------------	-------	-----------	----------------------	---------	----------------

Status Tab

- All administrative information; not editable by program
- This page will look different depending on what Status the program has
- STARS Notes may be added here by STARS Program Specialists, programs, and/or STARS Consultants.

Assessments Tab

- Once the summary report(s) is available, the STARS Program Specialist will notify the director and consultant via email that the report(s) is accessible on the site in the Assessments tab. This email will state whether the required scores were met for the assessment(s).
 - Note: Baseline assessment reports will not be automatically uploaded to this site; they will be sent directly to the consultant to review with the program. The assessment will be uploaded once the consultant notifies the STARS Program Specialist that the report has been reviewed with the program.
- Programs may request their consultant to go through the assessment report with them. The STARS Program Specialist is also available to discuss reports with programs if further clarification is needed.
- Confidentiality of assessment reports is crucial.

STARS Tab

- STARS Checklists can be edited by programs that are in “applied” status at any time.
 - You will find the following acronyms on the STARS Checklists. They stand for the following:
 - EQT – Education, Qualifications, and Education
 - FCP – Family and Community Partnerships
 - RGS – Staff/Caregiver-to-child ratio and group size
 - LPM – Leadership and Program Management
 - HQE – High Quality Supportive Environments
 - All STARS criteria are listed in order directly out of the STARS Standards so that you can easily follow the checklist from the Standards. The number behind the acronym (ex. EQT 1, simply keeps them in order). Each acronym/number will be followed by a short description of the criteria.

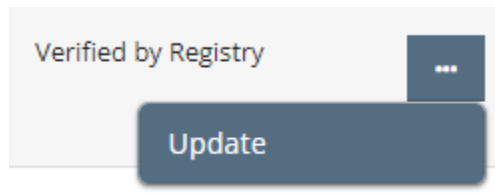
- As you are going through the checklist items, **be sure to click on the green question mark** (as shown below) in each evidence box. This will tell you exactly what is required for evidence. There are very few documents that must be uploaded. Much of the evidence required can be typed into the Evidence box without having to upload documentation



- Any documentation that requires a STARS required form will have an ***** next to the form in the STARS to Quality Standards. There is also an ***** next to any required document in the STAR Kits.

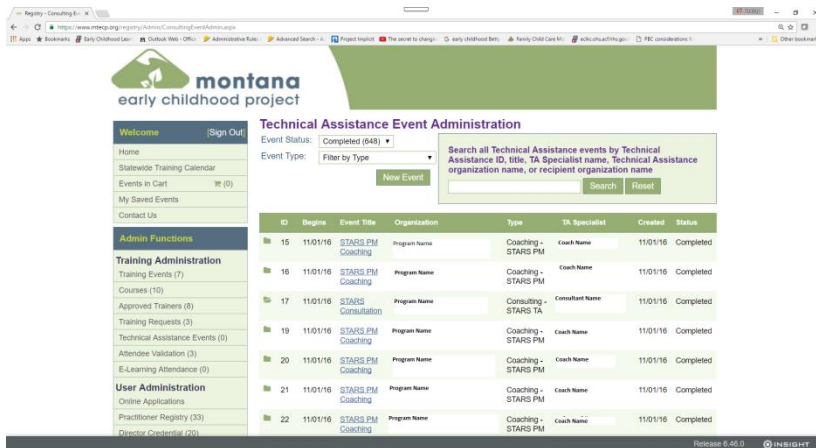
Employees Tab

- This tab is only Practitioner Registry data.*
 - It includes staff which has ever been on the Practitioner Registry, or are current on the Practitioner Registry, and attached to the program.
 - It is NOT linked to licensing information for individuals**
- Programs will be able to update this information and end date an employee that no longer works at that facility by clicking on the 3 dots in the blue box next to the individual’s name and clicking on “Update” where you will enter their end date.



Technical Assistance Tab

This tab is for use by the STARS Consultants to log their program visits and upload any documents (such as the Consultant Checklist) that may have been part of a visit. Programs will see a list of visits that have been entered for their program.



Reports Tab

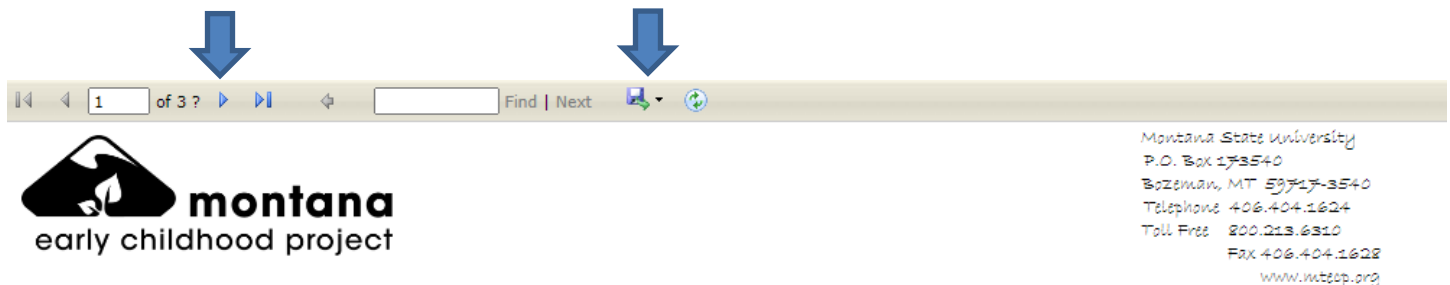
Facility Staff List

- The Facility Staff List specifically contains Practitioner Registry information. Click on an individuals name and you will be redirected to the individuals Professional Development Record (PDR)

- If a training does not show up on a Professional Development Record (PDR) it WILL NOT appear on the Training Grid.
 - The individual may need to send the ECP a certificate of completion for the training to be added to their PDR.
 - If a training taken via CCT and is not appearing on the PDR, it is possible the training has not been completed and the individual should check their email for any communication from the instructor of the course **OR** the individual's name does not match between ECP and CCT. The individual should contact CCT if they have completed the training to ensure this can be corrected.
- If an individual employed at the program does not show up, they may have a duplicate identity in ECP if the training shows on their PDR, **OR** the training may not be a STARS qualified training if it is showing on their PDR. This must be submitted through the Help button in order to be resolved.

STARS Training Grid

- Page 1 of the STARS Training Grid shows Practitioner Registry information, only.
- Click on the arrow to scroll through the pages of the report. You can also click on the save disk icon and export the report as a PDF for easier scrolling.
 - You are unable to click on an individual's name to be redirected to their Professional Development Record if viewing the report in PDF format.
- The Caregiver approval date used for STARS Training Plans can be found on page 2. An N/A indicates the individual has not been approved by Child Care Licensing.



Please note:

Trainings must be completed **PRIOR TO** the submission deadline unless there is a current training plan in place.

If required trainings are not completed, or training plans not current at the time of submission, the application will be denied, and the program will be unable to reapply until the following application period.

Applying to participate in STARS to Quality

If a program is applying to participate in STARS to Quality, they must do the following:

- Once logged in to the [STARS Application site](#), go to the STARS tab where you can click on Quality Overview, or you can use the navigation bar on the left hand side and click on Quality Overview.
 - Click “Apply” and review, complete and confirm all sections, clicking “Submit Application” when done
 - Note: Identify all open classrooms and assign a lead teacher to each. The system will not allow a program to move forward without at least 1 classroom and lead assignment. The lead teacher does not have to have the role type of ECLT or ECT. It is the person designated to lead the classroom regularly.
- ⇒ When asked for your CACFP number during the application process, enter your PV# if you do not know/have a CACFP number.
- Programs must be in the “Applied” status in order to Submit for a STAR rating.

Once a program has applied to participate in STARS, the following occurs:

- A formal agreement will be sent to the program along with a W-9 and Direct Deposit Form.
- The program will have a “Waiting List” case in the STARS site pending the following:
 - Return of the completed and signed STARS to Quality program agreement
 - Return of completed and signed W-9 and Direct Deposit Form
 - Completion of the Program Info and Classrooms tabs in the STARS Application site
- Next, the STARS Program Specialist will notify the program of their acceptance and copy the CCR&R. The program will be added to the Baseline assessment scheduler.
- The program’s application will be approved, and they will move to an “Applied” case in the STARS site.

Applying to participate in the next STARS to Quality application period (continue participation)

- You must designate a STARS level in the participation section. You will be unable to apply without completing this step, but you can change your desired STARS level at any time.
- Programs must have an “Applied” case to submit for a STARS rating. Programs must apply between June 1 and June 30, annually.

Submitting for a STAR level Rating

Once a program has verified **all** criteria for all STAR level(s) have been achieved, all required documentation is ready to upload, and the site has been updated; the program can submit for a STAR level within the checklist submission window of September 1 – October 31, annually.

- **STARS Trainings** - All required trainings for staff not on a current training plan, **MUST** be completed prior to submitting for a rating.


This means that the training must either be showing on the training grid, or a training certificate is uploaded at time of application.

This does not include training that a staff person can be “enrolled in” at time of application. Proof of enrollment in these courses (Certified Infant Toddler Course, Certified Preschool Teacher Course, Inclusion I, Inclusion II) must be included with required documentation.

If training is required and not completed on time, the application will be denied and the program will not be able to re-submit until the following application period, potentially resulting in a loss of incentives.

Programs can only submit once within an application period. STAR levels will be awarded July 1 annually. STARS incentives are paid quarterly, and the percent increase for Best Beginnings Subsidy will be made monthly.

📁 Active Cases ?



Case ID #2484
STARS to Quality
Case Status Applied


Case Details

The program will click on “Case Details” on the Active Case from the Quality Overview page to begin the submission process (must have an “Applied” case).

STARS to Quality
Submission Deadline 10/31/2022

Case Status (🔍)
Applied

My Case ▾
STARS Checklist
Review Application



Click on “STARS Checklist” to open the needed checklists. (A program can change the desired STAR level at any time.)

STAR 1	⚠ incomplete	Review
STAR 2	⚠ incomplete	Review

- Each checklist must be reviewed and completed. Checklists can be done in any order.


Desired Level: **STAR Five** ✎

📅 STAR Five Submission Deadline 10/31/2022


The Desired Level determines what you need to complete in order to submit for rating. Please be sure to check the correct level is selected before submitting.


Simply click on the blue pencil icon to change your desired STAR level. The desired STAR level will bring up only those checklists you must complete. (For example: STAR 3 will show 3 checklists, STAR 1-3)


Cost of Care
 Program must determine Cost of Care by completing the Cost of Care tab in the "STARS Budget and Cost of Care Calculator" template.
[STARS Budget and Cost Of Care](#)
[STARS Kit](#)

The program is submitting for a higher level. 

Monthly and annual cost of care, per child, has been determined utilizing the provided template.

Evidence 



 **No documents have been added.**
 Click the "+File" button to upload documents.

The following file types are accepted:
 .doc,.docx,.xls,.xlsx,.xism,.pdf,.rtf,.jpg,.png,.jpeg,.jppg

Text Evidence
 Enter Text Evidence

Some criteria have the option of checking “The program is submitting for a higher level...” This is true only if the program is submitting for a level which Budget/Cost of Care, Quality Improvement Action Plan and/or an assessment are needed.

To be scheduled for required assessment(s), STAR 3 and above programs must meet all other criteria. Programs will upload, Budgets, Cost of Care, and QIAP documents once assessments are completed.

Programs are encouraged to submit for rating early in the application period to allow time to correct any potential problems with an application.

Once the checklist is complete, the program will click “Submit for Rating”. This will allow a STARS Rater to review Checklist(s). Programs are allowed 3 submissions.

- If there are any checklist items marked “Incomplete”, an email is sent stating which items were marked as incomplete.
- The program can update those items, if possible, and resubmit within 7 calendar days.
- If **any** items are marked as “Not Met”, the STAR level is denied.
 - An example of items being marked “not met” would be incomplete trainings.

Required Documentation

All Programs will be required to upload the following documents for respective STAR levels:

- Budget/Budget Narrative/Cost of Care, and QIAP document **(STAR 2-5)**
- Copy of Accreditation Certificate **(STAR 5 only)**
- Click on the green question mark at each criteria evidence box to view what is required as evidence. The criteria may not require evidence.

For all STAR levels: Subs are exempt from training requirements

For STAR 3 and above, only staff which are working 1040 hours annually/minimum 20 hours per week are required to complete trainings. Documentation must be provided.

If any other training waivers have been approved by the ECSB, documentation of this approval must also be uploaded. **Waivers must be requested prior to an application being submitted.**

If any required documentation is missing at the time of submission, the STARS level is denied, and the program will be unable to resubmit until the following year.

The system **only** supports the following file types:

The following file types are accepted:
 .doc,.docx,.xls,.xlsx,.xslm,.pdf,.rtf,.jpg,.png,.jpeg

If you are not using one of these file types, you will either be unable to upload it to the site or Administrators will be unable to open the document. To tell what kind of file type you are using, look at the document in your file folder and see the extension at the end of the saved document after the period.

ANNUAL APPLICATION PERIOD CHART

Application Period	Enrollment Period Programs must apply for the upcoming annual application period no later than June 30.	Desired STAR level Rating	Date programs can begin submitting checklists	Deadline to Submit for Rating	Timeline for Days to Resubmit Incomplete Applications NO EXCEPTIONS <i>Programs have 3 submissions before an application will be denied.</i>	Rating Awarded
July 1-June 30	June 1-June 30	1-5	September 1	October 31	7 Calendar days	July 1
		NOTE: If a program submits earlier than the date allowed, the checklist will be marked Incomplete and sent back, using 1 of 3 submissions allowed. STAR 3-5 Budget/QIAP due by date given by STARS Program Specialist after assessment. STAR 2: Completed Budget and QIAP must be uploaded at time of initial submission.				