

APRIL 1 DEADLINE

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PROVIDERS PARTICIPATING IN THE LOUISIANA QUALITY START PROGRAM

Effective January 1, 2013, DCFS began requiring Quality Start providers who are attempting to meet a School Readiness Tax Credit deadline to meet a twelve (12) week processing time deadline to enable Quality Start to timely process the applications. Therefore, deadlines to receive an application for higher stars are no later than September 1 (if it is the center's initial year), or no later than April 1 for any year thereafter. If the application is not received by the appropriate deadline, Quality Start makes no guarantee a decision will be made in order to meet the SRTC deadline. Even if the application is received timely; all required components must be completed and approved before a star can be awarded. In summary, if your center is seeking a star award for the SRTC July 1 deadline, we must receive your application no later than April 1.

More Information about the School Readiness Tax Credit can be found at [The Louisiana Department of Revenue](#).

INITIAL RATING:

The initial rating is the star rating achieved by the center in the first year of participation in Quality Start. A center may work toward higher stars during their first year of participation and have until November 30 to complete the process to attain a higher star, if eligible. The rating awarded by November 30 will be effective December 1. This initial rating is used for purposes of determining the SRTC for that year.

AFTER FIRST YEAR:

In all subsequent years, the star rating of the center on July 1 will be the rating for the SRTC even if the participating center achieves a higher or lower rating after July 1.

STARS AWARDED IN 2014 OR BEYOND:

Centers without a star rating will have until November 30 of the year they apply to complete the process and obtain their initial star rating – either one star or a 2-5 star. Therefore, if the first star award for a center is received in 2014, they have until November 30th to improve their rating for the 2013 tax credits since 2014 was the center's initial year.

EXAMPLES:

Center XYZ applied for the first time and received one star on September 1, 2013 and continued to be one star on December 1. The initial rating for Center XYZ is one star. Then, Center XYZ has until July 1, 2014 if they wish to increase their star rating for the 2014 tax credits; otherwise, the rating for 2013 tax credits will remain 1 star.

LMNO Day School applied for the first time and received one star on February 1, 2014. The center may apply for 2-5 stars immediately upon receiving one star if the center has been in operation for six months. LMNO Day School must complete the process for a higher star award by November 30, 2013 or their initial rating for the 2013 tax year will be one star.

WAITING PERIODS:

1. Centers may apply for one star as soon as they are licensed.
2. A center with one star may apply at any time for 2-5 stars, as long as the center has been licensed for six months.
3. Once a decision is made on a center's 2-5 star application (either award or denial), the center must wait six months from the effective date of their current star award to apply for a higher rating.
4. A center with a one star may qualify for higher stars and can apply at any time, as long as the center has been licensed for six months. Stars do not have to be awarded in order, and a center can apply for 4 stars after receiving a one star if they feel they may qualify for all 4 star requirements.