



# Iowa Department of Human Services

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Governor

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Director

June 28, 2013

## **CIRCULAR LETTER NO. 56Z-615-ACFS**

ISSUED BY: Bureau of Child Care Services  
Division of Adult, Children and Family Services

SUBJECT: Comm. 259, "Iowa's Quality Rating System for Child Care Providers,"  
revised.

### **Summary**

Comm. 259, "Iowa's Quality Rating System for Child Care Providers," is a brochure designed for providers who are interested in the Quality Rating System. Comm. 259 has been revised to:

- ◆ Update the list of benefits for provider participation.
- ◆ Add that providers who achieve Level 5 have also successfully completed an Environmental Rating Scale assessment.
- ◆ Update the regional Child Care Resource and Referral agency map.
- ◆ Update the Iowa Quality Rating System's web address.

### **Effective Date**

Upon receipt.

### **Material Superseded**

Remove Circular Letter No. 56Z-565-CFS, dated November 13, 2009, from the file and destroy it.

### **Additional Information**

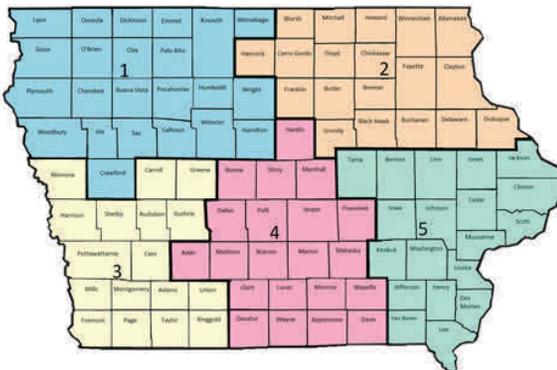
Use up any remaining supplies of Comm. 259, dated 5/09, before ordering supplies of Comm. 259, dated 7/13, from Anamosa in the usual manner.

Refer questions about this circular letter to central office program staff.

## How to Apply

There is no application fee to participate in the Quality Rating System. To receive an application packet, contact your regional Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agency.

- 1. Child Care Resource & Referral of NW Iowa**  
Mid-Sioux Opportunity, Inc.  
418 S. Marion Street, Remsen, IA 51050  
(712) 786-2001 or (800) 859-2025
- 2. Child Care Resource & Referral of NE Iowa**  
Exceptional Persons, Inc./CCR&R  
3675 University Avenue, Waterloo, IA 50704  
(319) 233-0804 or (800) 475-0804
- 3. Child Care Resource & Referral of Southwest and Southcentral Iowa**  
West Central Community Action  
701 10th Street, PO Box 709, Harlan, IA 51537  
(712) 755-7381 or (800) 945-9778
- 4. Child Care Resource & Referral of Central Iowa**  
Orchard Place Child Guidance Center  
805 5th Avenue, Des Moines, IA 50309  
(515) 246-3592
- 5. Child Care Resource & Referral of Southeast Iowa**  
Community Action of Eastern Iowa  
500 E. 59th Street, Davenport, IA 52807  
(866) 324-3236



## The Goals of Iowa QRS

- Raise the quality of child care in Iowa.
- Increase the number of children in high-quality child care settings in the state.
- Educate parents about quality in child care.
- Make providers aware of the many paths and steps they can take to improve the quality of child care provided to children.
- Offer parents another resource in evaluating and selecting a child care provider.
- Give local communities, businesses, organizations, and funders a “menu” of activities, training, and support they can offer to providers right in their own communities.



For more information on Iowa's QRS, contact your regional CCR&R office or visit the QRS website at:  
[www.dhs.iowa.gov/iqrs](http://www.dhs.iowa.gov/iqrs)

Comm. 259 (Rev. 7/13)

# Iowa QRS



## Iowa's Quality Rating System for Child Care Providers



“Every child, beginning at birth, will be healthy and successful.”

Iowa Department of Human Services  
Child Care Unit  
Hoover State Office Building  
1305 E. Walnut  
Des Moines, IA 50319-0114  
[www.dhs.iowa.gov/iqrs](http://www.dhs.iowa.gov/iqrs)

## What is Iowa's Quality Rating System?

The Quality Rating System (QRS) is a *voluntary* program that offers providers a guided way to improve the quality of child care they provide. As steps are completed, the provider moves up in levels and is awarded a "star" for each level. Eligible providers include:

- Registered child development homes.
- Licensed child care centers, including preschools, Head Start, Early Head Start, and after school programs.
- Child care programs that are operated by school districts.

## The Benefits of Participation

Participation shows that a provider is committed to providing quality child care—and is working toward improving the quality of care. Participation in the program can also mean achievement bonuses for providers earning two stars and above. See the chart below for details.

### In addition, providers may be eligible for:

- On-site technical assistance.
- Grants or support through Early Childhood Iowa Areas.

### Quality Rating System Achievement Bonus for Licensed Child Care Centers and Child Development Homes

QRS Level	Serving up to 25 children	Serving 26-50 children	Serving 51-100 children	Serving more than 100 children
2	\$400	\$800	\$1,200	\$1,600
3	\$600	\$1,200	\$1,800	\$2,400
4	\$800	\$1,600	\$2,400	\$3,200
5	\$1,000	\$2,000	\$3,000	\$4,000

## Earning the Stars

A provider who achieves Level 1 has met Iowa's registration or licensing standards. A Level 2 provider has received additional training and made the first steps toward improving quality. Levels 3-5 are achieved based upon the number of points earned by meeting key indicators of quality in areas of:

- Professional development (education, certification, and experience).
- Health and safety (checklists, records, and assessments with child care nurse consultant).
- Environment (training, self-assessment, improvement plans).
- Family and community partnerships (professional memberships, new parent orientations).
- Leadership and administration (staff evaluations and orientation, center improvement plans, professional development plans).
- Level 5 programs have also successfully completed an environmental rating scale assessment.

For specific program details and a list of QRS rated providers, visit [www.dhs.iowa.gov/iqrs](http://www.dhs.iowa.gov/iqrs).

## Determining a Rating

Once a provider has completed the steps to achieve a specific level, they complete an application that states they have met the specific criteria. They submit the application and any documentation to their regional Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) office. A certificate that indicates the QRS level achieved will be mailed to the provider to be displayed in the home or center. The rating is in effect for two years. Programs may apply for a higher level after one year.

## What if I Need Help Improving My Quality of Care?

Child care consultants at CCR&R can provide guidance and resources that are available in the community to assist in improving the quality of care.

