

Request for Keystone STARS Designation and Program Information Form

Instructions: All programs requesting to move up in Keystone STARS or completing their annual review must complete this form. Programs completing their annual renewal should complete and submit this document 14 days prior to their STAR expiration. During the annual review process, programs should also ensure all information in PELICAN related to their program is accurate and current including age of children accepted, accreditations, contact information, etc. Programs requesting to move up in Keystone STARS can submit this form at any point in their Keystone STARS activity cycle.

Location Information:

MPI#: _____ Certificate of Compliance #: _____

Name of Facility: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip Code: _____ County: _____

Facility Main Phone Number: _____

Primary Contact Person: _____ Title: _____

Primary Contact Email: _____

Request to Move Up in STAR level Annual Designation Renewal

Current STAR Level: STAR 1 STAR 2 STAR 3 STAR 4

Requested STAR Level: STAR 1 STAR 2 STAR 3 STAR 4

This facility holds a Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS) Certificate of Compliance:

Yes No

This facility holds a Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) Private Academic School License:

Yes No

Provider Type:

Center Family Child Care Home Group Child Care Home

Is your program's STAR level designation based on an OCDEL Approved Alternate Pathway? Yes No

If yes, please indicate the Alternate Pathway Accreditation:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ACSI – Association of Christian Schools International (STAR 3)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AMI/AMS – American Montessori Internationale Recognition or American Montessori Society Accreditation (STAR 4)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COA – Council of Accreditation School Age Child Care Accreditation (STAR 4)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NAEYC - National Association for Education of Young Children (STAR 4)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NAFCC – National Association for Family Child Care (STAR 4)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NECPA – National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (STAR 4)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> HS/EHS - Head Start/Early Head Start Grantees (STAR 4)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 21st Century Community Learning Center (STAR 4)	

Please attach/upload a copy of your program's current accreditation certificate and/or documentation.

Number of children program site is certified/licensed for: _____ Current number of children enrolled: _____

How many years has site been in operation? _____ Ages of Children Accepted at this Site: _____ to _____

Answer the following questions regarding this site:

- Is the Director/Owner Operator on-site a minimum of 30 hours per week? Yes No
- Is the site school age only? Yes No
- If site is School age only, is director on site a minimum of 5 hours per week? Yes No N/A
- Does the Director/Owner Operator have regular teaching duties? Yes No
- Is there internet access on site? Yes No
- Is there access to a scanner/fax on site? Yes No
- Has this site used the Keystone STARS Document Uploader to upload evidence? Yes No
- Do you currently use coaches or mentors **other than** Keystone STARS Quality Coaches? Yes No

If yes, provide details: _____

Is your program involved in any quality improvement projects **other than** those for Keystone STARS? Yes No

If yes, provide details: _____

Classroom Session Information:

Classroom Name	Classroom Age Range	Capacity of Room	# of Children Enrolled	# of Teachers	Affiliation Information (*see menu below) Indicate all that apply

*PreK Counts = PKC, Head Start = HS, Early Head Start = EHS, Faith Based = FB, 21st Century = 21, PA Department of Education = PDE

The following information is based on current enrollment:

Number of children who receive Child Care Works (CCW): _____

Number of children who have documented special needs (e.g. IFSP, IEP, etc.): _____

Number of children who are dual language learners: _____

This site is involved in the following activities and initiatives: (check all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care (NAP SACC)	<input type="checkbox"/> Child Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Participant	<input type="checkbox"/> Multi-Site (Chain or Franchise)
<input type="checkbox"/> Mind in the Making	<input type="checkbox"/> Use of Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS)	<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (TEACH) and Tuition Assistance Program (TAP)
<input type="checkbox"/> Use of After School Quality (ASQ)	<input type="checkbox"/> Keystone Kids Go	<input type="checkbox"/> PA Eco Healthy Child Care

In the past year, has your program experienced any of the following? (Check all that apply)

		Comments
Have you experienced 50% or more staff change?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Have you had a change in Director?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Has there been a significant fluctuation in enrollment /FTE compared to last FY?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Has there been a change in funding for slots (Head START, Pre K Counts)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

Attestation for All Keystone STARS Providers:

Instructions: In order to receive your STAR Designation Certificate, please read and complete the following attestation. The person who signs this document is the individual legally authorized to represent the child care provider. By completing and signing this form, you attest that you have reviewed and accept the terms of the Keystone STARS Status, Review, Suspension and Removal Process. **To confirm agreement, place initials next to each statement.** If you do not initial all statements, the Early Learning Resource Center (ELRC) agent of the Department of Human Services, cannot designate a STAR to your child care program.

_____ I agree to abide by the Keystone STARS Performance Standards for the current STAR Designation and I understand the status of my Program's STAR Designation may be reviewed, reduced, suspended, or removed if I am not meeting the Keystone STARS Performance Standards and/or other conditions listed in the attached STAR Status Review, Reduction, Suspension and Removal Process.

_____ I understand that the ELRC reserves the right to review my Program's STARS status and share information with the DHS Regional Certification Office or Department of Education.

_____ I understand that my Program's STAR Designation may be suspended or removed if DHS initiates an Injunction, Emergency Removal, or issues a Provisional Certificate of Compliance. (for programs with DHS Certificate of Compliance)

_____ I understand that my Program's STAR Designation may be suspended or removed if the Department of Education revokes my private academic license. (for programs with private academic license)

_____ I agree that, as applicable if the DHS Regional Certification Office initiates an action to revoke or refuse to renew my Program's DHS Certificate of Compliance, that my STAR Designation will be suspended or removed. I understand that the STAR Designation will be suspended whether or not my Program appeals the DHS Regional Certification Office's action.

_____ I agree that, if my Program's STAR Designation is suspended or removed, my Program may not advertise as a STARS child care provider, I will not receive grant/award funds, and my Program's STAR Designation will be removed from DHS's COMPASS website. The STAR Designation may be reinstated upon my Program's correction of the noncompliance with DHS regulations, regaining private academic license or upon meeting the Keystone STARS Performance Standards.

_____ I understand that false statements made herein are subject to the penalties of 18 Pa.C.S. § 4904 (relating to unsworn falsification to authorities).

_____ I will provide assurance that I will participate in evaluation activities, if selected to participate.

_____ I will provide researchers with access, consistent with the requirements of all applicable Federal, state, and local privacy laws, to data so that they can analyze the State's quality improvement efforts and answer key policy and practice questions.

_____ I agree to cooperate with the ELRC, Keystone STARS Evaluators, and other DHS and PDE agents in providing access to examine the child care provider, records, and documents that pertain to the STAR Designation. I further consent to review and release information for the STAR Designation to DHS and its agents.

_____ I understand that DHS has contracted with several established entities to be their agents in administering and implementing the Keystone STARS program. The information I provide to DHS and its agents as a participant in the Keystone STARS program is shared among these agents for research and evaluation purposes, monitoring compliance, and development of the Keystone STARS program. My Program information is entered into a database that is accessible only to DHS and its agents. I affirm that I will cooperate with DHS and its agents.

_____ I attest that all classrooms where children are enrolled meet DHS regulations at all times, regardless of affiliation with other organizations, such as PA Department of Education and Head Start.

_____ I understand that if my program loses accreditation status as an approved Alternate Pathway Designation, my program's STAR level will be reduced to the corresponding STAR level to which my program meets the Keystone STARS Performance Standards.

Signature of the Individual Legally Authorized to Represent the Child Care Provider

Date

Print Name

Title

Keystone STARS Status Review, Reduction, Suspension, & Removal Process

By signing this agreement, the GRANTEE (and affiliated Sub Grantees) understands and accepts the provisions of the Keystone STARS Status Review, Reduction, Suspension, & Removal Process as outlined below. The intent of this process is to provide a consistent mechanism for addressing noncompliance issues in early learning programs (“programs”) participating in Keystone STARS. Please note: The Department of Human Services (DHS), the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) and/or the Early Learning Resource Center (ELRC) may take action for other types of program non-compliance not specifically listed in this addendum. **A change in a program’s STAR level designation status will impact quality subsidy add-on rates (for DHS regulated programs) and/or Keystone STARS Grants and Awards for programs that are eligible for these funding opportunities.** The Resource and Restrictions chart at the end of this section details the impacts to a program’s access to various Keystone STARS resources as a result of the process. The ELRC will inform the GRANTEE/Sub Grantee in writing of any action taken to a program’s STAR level designation.

STARS STATUS REVIEW

The intent of the STARS Status Review is to provide a maximum of 30 days for the ELRC to make a determination regarding the appropriate action to take upon a program’s Keystone STARS designation status. The ELRC will verify area(s) of a program’s noncompliance and will work with DHS Certification (Bureau or Regional Office for DHS Regulated programs) or other program governing bodies (such as the federal Office of Head Start) as needed to help the program correct the noncompliance.

The ELRC may also conduct a STARS Status Review in response to complaints from parents and/or other community stakeholders.

The ELRC will work with the program in the development of a STARS action plan (not to exceed 90 days) if any of the following conditions are verified during the STARS Status Review:

- The program is not meeting Keystone STARS Performance Standards, other than the Program Quality Assessment Score quality indicator, but **can** meet STARS Performance Standards within a 90-day timeframe.
- For DHS Regulated programs, the program has area(s) of noncompliance with DHS Regulations that **do not** lead to a Provisional Certificate of Compliance (i.e. areas of noncompliance on a Licensing Inspection Summary).
- A STAR 3 or 4 Accredited program designated via an Alternate Pathway, per the Keystone STARS Performance Standards, loses its accreditation status, but **can** meet STARS Performance Standards within a 90-day timeframe.

After the program meets the requirements of the STARS action plan, the ELRC reissues a STAR Certificate with the original expiration date.

If the program does *not* meet the requirements of the STARS action plan, the ELRC or OCDEL proceeds with one of the following, based upon the circumstances explained below:

- STAR Reduction – The program agrees to a reduced STAR level for which the

- program meets all STARS Performance Standards.
- STAR Suspension – The program refuses a STAR Reduction but does not meet the STARS Performance Standards for its current STAR designation.

STAR REDUCTION

The ELRC will complete a STAR Reduction if any of the following conditions are verified during the STARS Status Review:

- A STAR 2, STAR 3 or STAR 4 program fails to submit a “Request for STAR Designation” to renew its current STAR designation. (program drops to STAR 1)
- The program does not meet the requirements of the STAR Suspension action plan. (program drops to STAR level at which they meet the appropriate STARS Standards)
- The program is not meeting STARS Performance Standards, other than the Program Quality Assessment (PQA), and the area(s) of noncompliance **cannot** be corrected within a 90-day timeframe. (program drops to STAR level at which they meet the appropriate STAR Standards).
- A STAR 3 or 4 Accredited program designated via an Alternate Pathway, per the Keystone STARS Performance Standards, loses its accreditation status. (program drops to STAR level at which they meet the appropriate STAR standards)
- The program is not meeting the required monitoring PQA threshold scores and are not eligible for a targeted reassessment. (program drops to STAR level at which they meet the appropriate STAR standards)
- If the GRANTEE/Sub Grantee refuses a STAR Reduction, the program will receive a STAR Suspension.

STAR SUSPENSION

The STAR Suspension will occur as a result of any of the following conditions or for other types of program non-compliance not specifically listed in this addendum:

For DHS regulated programs in Keystone STARS

- DHS initiates an Injunction or Negative Sanction or issues a Provisional Certificate of Compliance for areas of regulatory noncompliance.

SPECIAL NOTE:

- A Provisional Certificate of Compliance, issued for a period not to exceed six months, when there is a change in the physical location by a currently designated STAR 3 or STAR 4 program are not considered due to “regulatory noncompliance.” These programs may maintain their existing STAR level designation at their new location. This includes programs at an emergency, temporary physical location on a short-term basis (up to 60 days) returning to their permanent facility.
 - After six months, programs must demonstrate receipt of a Certificate of Compliance. In the event that they are not fully compliant, an individual review of their STAR status will be conducted.
- Not following Child Protective Services Laws (CPSL)
 - The program consistently has multiple incidents of noncompliance with DHS Regulations.
 - The program fails to implement, complete, and/or maintain a STARS action plan.

- The program is under investigation by DHS for egregious circumstances. Issues falling under this condition will be handled on a case-by-case basis with OCDEL's oversight.
- DHS OCDEL terminates the program's subsidy agreement.

For Non-DHS regulated programs in Keystone STARS

- Not following Child Protective Services Laws (CPSL)
- Deficiencies found in the Head Start Key Indicator-Compliance (HSKI-C) Protocol
- The discovery of state/federal performance, integrity issues, disparities, and/or improprieties of the educational institution which includes, but not limited to, the School District, the Local Educational Agency (LEA), 21st Century Community Learning Centers and/or the educator (s) of such institutions.

For ALL programs in Keystone STARS

- The GRANTEE/Sub Grantee/program cannot be determined a Responsible Contractor as outlined in the commonwealth's Management Directive 215.9 including but not limited to the following circumstances:
 - Suspension or debarment by the Commonwealth within the past 5 years.
 - Suspension or debarment by the federal government or any other state or governmental entity within the past 5 years.
 - Liabilities owed to the Commonwealth (including recoupments for Child Care Works payments) and/or federal government, including but not limited to tax liabilities.
 - Notifying the ELRC of liens/liabilities is a requirement of receiving Keystone STARS funds.
 - Unsatisfactory or deficient performance in past or current Commonwealth contracts or agreements as determined by the Commonwealth in its sole discretion.
 - Lack of capacity or ability to perform within the established time schedule and in accordance with the plans and specifications of the contract or agreement.
 - False, misleading, or incomplete information submitted to the Commonwealth.
 - Default on a Commonwealth contract or agreement as determined by the Commonwealth in its sole discretion.
 - The commission of any state or federal offense or criminal charges.
 - Pending investigation by a federal or state agency or under investigation by a federal or state agency within the past 5 years.
 - Facility health and safety related issues.
 - General business integrity.
 - The GRANTEE/Sub Grantee is under investigation for egregious circumstances by the program's specific governing body/authority. Issues falling under this condition will be handled on a case-by-case basis with OCDEL's oversight.
 - The GRANTEE/Sub Grantee fails to submit to the ELRC, OCDEL, or other requesting state/federal agency an approvable final expense report and/or corresponding original receipts/documentations validating compliance with state and federal requirements for the use of state and federal funds. Failure to account for or appropriately use all funds received through Keystone STARS financial grants and awards may also result in a referral to the commonwealth's Office of State Inspector General.

During the Keystone STARS Suspension, the program must work with the ELRC on the development, implementation, and completion of a STARS Suspension Action Plan.

The STAR Suspension Action Plan to correct the area(s) of noncompliance, will not exceed 90 days' duration. For DHS regulated programs, where the noncompliance is with DHS Regulations, the ELRC consults as needed with DHS regarding the corrective action plan submitted by the program. The program's DHS Certification corrective action plan, including applicable timeframes, may substitute for the STAR Suspension action plan. After the timeframe of the STAR Suspension action plan has ended, one of the following will occur:

- STAR Reinstatement - If the program meets the requirements of the STAR Suspension action plan, the ELRC reinstates the program's STAR by issuing a STAR Certificate with the original expiration date, if applicable. If the original expiration date expired while the program was suspended, the ELRC will move the program to an active, No STAR Level and re-designate the program to the appropriate STAR Level.
- STAR Removal - If the program fails to implement, complete, and/or maintain a STAR Suspension action plan, the ELRC will remove the program from Keystone STARS based on the STAR Removal procedures.

STAR REMOVAL

The ELRC will complete a STAR Removal (of all STARS) if any of the following conditions exist:

For DHS regulated programs in Keystone STARS:

- The program closes
- DHS takes one of the following actions against the program's Certificate of Compliance:
 - Emergency Removal
 - Refusal to Renew
 - Revocation

For non-DHS regulated programs:

- The program closes
- Head Start programs lose Federal Head Start funding
- Private academic programs lose their license from the Pennsylvania Department of Education
- 21st Century Community Learning Center loses its federal funding

During the STAR Removal phase, all correspondence with the program should be in the form of a certified letter with return receipt. The following steps apply to STAR Removal:

1) Notification of STAR Removal

Immediately after the program's STAR Removal is recorded in PELICAN-Keys to Quality, OCDEL will notify the ELRC to send to the program the "Notification of STAR Removal" letter. The ELRC will send this letter to the program within 3 business days of notification. In the letter, the ELRC will manually enter the effective STAR Removal date as it appears in PELICAN-Keys to Quality. If the program disputes the removal, it has 10 days from the mailing date of the removal notification letter to respond with a letter of disagreement to the ELRC. Because the removal is effective before the mailing of the letter, the program's STAR Removal will continue to be in affect during the 10 day dispute time period.

2) Further Notification

If the program responds to the ELRC with a letter of disagreement regarding the removal, the ELRC will respond with one of the following letters as appropriate:

- “Notification of STAR Removal - Continuation” Letter - This letter is sent to the program if the ELRC finds cause for continuation with the STAR Removal after review of the program’s letter of disagreement.
- OR-**
- “Notification of STAR Reinstatement” Letter - This letter is sent to the program if the ELRC finds cause to restore the STAR designation after review of the program’s letter of disagreement.

If the program files an appeal with Certification in regard to a Provisional Certificate, Emergency Removal, Refuse to Renew, or Revocation action, and continues to operate, the ELRC will proceed with STAR Removal pending the results of the appeal.

3) No STAR Level Designation Action

The ELRC or OCDEL records the STAR Removal into PELICAN–Keys to Quality the day of being notified of the non-compliance. The program is designated as “No STAR Level.” If the ELRC cannot record the STAR Removal the day of being notified, the ELRC must inform OCDEL. The ELRC records the date the removal notification letter was sent to the program in the Location Contact Log section of PELICAN-Keys to Quality.

EXCEPTIONS:

The intent of STARS Status Review, Suspension, & Removal is to provide a consistent process for addressing noncompliance issues in Keystone STARS participating programs. In the event of circumstances not addressed in this document, please contact OCDEL for guidance.

NOTIFICATIONS AND APPEALS

The ELRC will inform the program in writing of any action taken to the program’s STAR level designation. If the program disputes the action outlined in the notification letter, it has 10 days from the mailing date of the letter to respond with a letter of disagreement to the ELRC.

Appeals will be handled in accordance to 1 Pa. Code (§ 35.9, § 35.10, § 35.20, § 35.35, § 35.111, and § 35.112).

The program may appeal the ELRC’s final decision to OCDEL by submitting in writing a letter to:

Office of Child Development and Early Learning
Pennsylvania Departments of Education and Human Services
333 Market Street, 6th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17126

Attention: Bureau of ELRC Operations

If further action is necessary, the appeal will move to Bureau of Hearings and Appeals.

RESOURCES AND RESTRICTIONS

During STARS Status Review, Suspension, & Removal the following restrictions and resources apply. A check mark (✓) indicates the resource is available to the program:

Resources/Restrictions	Under Review	Suspension
For Programs eligible for STARS Financial Awards	Eligibility resumes upon satisfactory completion of STARS Status Review	
Program posts STAR Certificate and advertises as a STARS program	✓	
For DHS Regulated programs eligible for tiered subsidy reimbursement (STAR 2 – STAR 4)	✓	
Program’s STAR listed with COMPASS	✓	
Program has access to STARS Representative for help with Performance Standards	✓	✓
Program has access to STARS Quality Coaching	✓	✓
Program’s Staff Prioritized for Vouchers/ Rising STARS Tuition Assistance & T.E.A.C.H.	✓	✓
Program has access to other special opportunities such as Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation, etc.	✓	✓
Program eligible to attend professional development opportunities	✓	✓