



## QRIS State Profile: Illinois

Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) Component	State Details
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	
<p>The <b>Illinois Quality Counts Quality Rating System (QRS)</b> was implemented in State Fiscal Year 2008. It helps Illinois child care programs provide quality care for children and their families. This voluntary system is available to license-exempt family child care providers and licensed family child care providers. The Quality Counts QRS offers levels that providers can achieve, depending on the type of care they provide. The Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies administers the QRS, and local resource and referral agencies offer technical assistance, training, consultation and support to all types of providers. As of July 1, 2013, licensed child care centers are transitioning to a new QRIS—<b>ExceleRate Illinois</b>. The new System is cross-sector and includes: licensed child care centers, HeadStart/Early Head Start, and State-funded prekindergarten programs. All licensed centers are recognized at the first level, the Licensed Circle of Quality. Bronze, Silver and Gold Circles of Quality are voluntary for licensed child care centers. Head Start and State-funded prekindergarten programs will participate at the Silver and Gold Circles of Quality. Awards of Excellence are being developed for programs achieving Gold and will recognize quality in specific areas, for example, instructional quality. ExceleRate Illinois for licensed family child care providers will be implemented in 2015.</p>	
<b>CONTACTS</b>	
<b>QRIS Name</b>	Quality Counts for license-exempt and licensed family child care providers  ExceleRate Illinois for cross-sector center-based programs
<b>Organization</b>	Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, under the joint direction of the Governor’s Office of Early Childhood Development, the Illinois Department of Human Services, and the Illinois State Board of Education.
<b>Web Site</b>	Illinois Quality Counts <a href="http://www.ilqualitycounts.com/quality-rating-system/overview">http://www.ilqualitycounts.com/quality-rating-system/overview</a>  ExceleRate Illinois <a href="http://exceleRateillinois.com/">http://exceleRateillinois.com/</a>

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<b>RATING LEVELS AND ASSESSMENT METHODS</b>	
<b>Levels</b>	<p>For licensed child care centers, Head Start/Early Head Start, Preschool For All and center based prevention initiative programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Licensed Circle of Quality</li> <li>■ Bronze Circle of Quality- focuses on a program’s efforts around training and education</li> <li>■ Silver Circle of Quality- signals that the program has completed a rigorous self assessment process and made the improvements indicated</li> <li>■ Gold Circle of Quality- acknowledges the providers improvement efforts as verified by an independent assessor</li> </ul> <p>Awards of Excellence can also be achieved in 5 areas after the Gold Circle of Quality is achieved.</p> <p>For licensed family child care homes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Star Level 1</li> <li>■ Star Level 2</li> <li>■ Star Level 3</li> <li>■ Star Level 4</li> </ul> <p>For license-exempt homes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Training Tier 1</li> <li>■ Training Tier 2</li> <li>■ Training Tier 3</li> </ul>
<b>Rating Assignment Method</b>	<p><b>Building blocks:</b></p> <p>For Quality Counts QRS, family child care providers must be currently licensed to apply at any Star Level, unless they are legally exempt. Licensed providers apply for a particular Star Level when they have met requirements. License-exempt providers must meet the requirements for the previous training tier before moving on to the next.</p> <p>For ExceleRate Illinois, all licensed center based providers are recognized at the Licensed Circle of Quality. Programs must prepare for and apply to a Circle of Quality above this level.</p>

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<p><b>Use of Environment Rating Scales (ERS) and Other Assessments</b></p>	<p>For licensed family homes in Quality Counts QRS:</p> <p>Environment Rating Scale (ERS) scores are required for the “Learning Environment” standards to achieve one and two stars. For three stars, licensed homes can be nationally accredited or have a specific rating score. For four stars a child care home must meet a specific rating score and be nationally accredited.</p> <p>Business Administration Scale scores for family child care homes are required to achieve the “Program Administration” standards to achieve three stars when the option of an ERS specific rating score is chosen, and is required for four stars.</p> <p>ExceleRate Illinois for licensed child care centers requires use of the ERS or CLASS and the PAS at the Silver and Gold Circles if a program is not accredited by a state approved national accreditation entity.</p>
<p><b>Program Assessments Included in QRIS</b></p>	<p>For Quality Counts QRS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale-Revised (FCCERS-R)</li> <li>■ Business Administration Scale (BAS)</li> </ul> <p>For ExceleRate Illinois:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ECERS-R)</li> <li>■ Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ITERS-R)</li> <li>■ Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)</li> <li>■ Program Administration Scale (PAS)</li> </ul>

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<b>QRIS QUALITY STANDARDS</b>	
<p><b>QRIS Quality Standards: Categories and Web Site</b></p>	<p>There are separate sets of standards for programs in QRIS. The categories of standards for licensed family child care are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Learning environment</li> <li>■ Program administration</li> <li>■ Staff/provider qualifications and training</li> </ul> <p>License-exempt FCC home provider standards consist of three training tiers.</p> <p>For ExceleRate Illinois center-based programs there are 15 common standards to be met for the Bronze, Silver and Gold Circles of Quality. This can be achieved through various paths of evidence.</p> <p><i>Licensed Family/Group Home Star Level Chart</i>  <a href="http://www.ilqualitycounts.com/component/joomdoc/doc_download/34-lic-fcc-chart">http://www.ilqualitycounts.com/component/joomdoc/doc_download/34-lic-fcc-chart</a></p> <p><i>QRS Training Tiers – License-exempt Family Child Care Homes</i>  <a href="http://www.ilqualitycounts.com/component/joomdoc/doc_download/30-l-e-training-tier-chart">http://www.ilqualitycounts.com/component/joomdoc/doc_download/30-l-e-training-tier-chart</a></p> <p><i>Standards and Evidence Requirements: Circles of Quality (ExceleRate Illinois)</i>  <a href="http://excelerateillinois.com/resources">http://excelerateillinois.com/resources</a></p>
<p><b>Programs Eligible to Participate in QRIS</b></p>	<p>Quality Counts QRS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Licensed group child care homes</li> <li>■ Licensed family child care homes</li> <li>■ License exempt home providers</li> </ul> <p>ExceleRate Illinois</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Child care centers</li> <li>■ Early Head Start/Head Start programs</li> <li>■ Preschool For All and center based prevention initiative programs</li> </ul>

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<b>Use of Accreditation</b>	<p>Illinois Quality Counts Accreditation is an option to achieve 3 stars and required to achieve 4 stars (the highest level). To achieve 2 stars, programs must receive information about accreditation.</p> <p>ExceleRate Illinois NAEYC and NAC accreditation are accepted at the Silver or Gold Circle of Quality. Additional standards must be met for either accreditation.</p>
<b>Accreditation Organizations Accepted for QRIS</b>	<p>Illinois Quality Counts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ National Association for Family Child Care</li> </ul> <p>ExceleRate Illinois QRIS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ National Accreditation Commission for Early Care and Education Programs</li> <li>■ National Association for the Education of Young Children, Academy for Early Childhood Program Accreditation</li> </ul>
<b>FINANCIAL INCENTIVES AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION</b>	
<b>Financial Incentives</b>	<p>Quality Counts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Tiered subsidy reimbursement</li> <li>■ Child Care Grants for equipment and professional resources</li> <li>■ Program Improvement/Accreditation Funds</li> <li>■ Illinois Gateways to Opportunity Scholarship program</li> <li>■ Professional Development Fund</li> <li>■ Great START wage supplement program</li> </ul> <p>ExceleRate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Tiered subsidy reimbursement</li> <li>■ Child Care Grants for equipment and professional resources</li> <li>■ Program Improvement/Accreditation Funds</li> <li>■ Illinois Gateways to Opportunity Scholarship program</li> <li>■ Professional Development Fund</li> <li>■ Great START wage supplement program</li> </ul>
<b>Additional Information</b>	<p>Illinois is currently the only State with QRIS standards for license-exempt family child care providers. The standards consist of three training tiers. Providers are eligible for increases in subsidy reimbursement for completing the training tiers.</p>