



Request for Keystone STAR Designation

MPI#: _____

Instructions: By completing and signing this form, the facility representative is attesting that this facility is ready for a STAR Designation and that all evidence to meet Performance Standards have been submitted.

Facility Information

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

☐ Yes ☐ No

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

☐ Yes ☐ No

This facility holds a current accreditation from a recognized accrediting body: ☐ Yes ☐ No
If yes, please indicate the type of accreditation: _____

Name of Facility: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip Code: _____ County: _____

Facility Phone Number: _____

Contact Person: _____ Title: _____

Email: _____

Facility Type (if applicable, check one below):

☐ Center ☐ Family Child Care Home ☐ Group Child Care Home ☐ School Age Only Site

Legal Entity Information

Legal Entity Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip Code: _____ County: _____

Request for STAR Designation

This facility is requesting a STAR Designation. The facility representatives believe that this facility meets the criteria for the following STAR Designation and we have our documentation prepared to demonstrate fulfillment. Check the STAR that this facility is requesting.

☐ STAR 2 ☐ STAR 3 or 4 ☐ Alternative Pathway Designation

Attestation for Department Human Services Regulated Provider

Instructions: In order to receive your STAR Designation Certificate, please 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 agree with and understand the terms of the STAR Designation. **To confirm agreement, place initials next to each statement.** If you do not initial all statements, the Regional Key, agent of the Department of Human Services, cannot designate a STAR to your child care provider.

_____ 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 Regional Key reserves the right to review my Program's STARS status and share information with the DHS Regional Certification Office.

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

_____ 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 Child Care Information Services (CCIS), DHS's COMPASS website and the PA Keys' website. The STAR Designation may be reinstated upon my Program's correction of the noncompliance with DHS regulations 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 Regional Key, Keystone STARS Evaluators, and other DHS 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.

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 participating in Keystone STARS. However, the Department of Human Services (DHS), the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) and/or the Regional Key reserve the right to take action for other types of program non-compliance not specifically listed henceforth. **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 GRANTEE/Sub Grantee will be informed by the Regional Key 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 Regional Key to make a determination regarding the appropriate action to take upon a program's Keystone STARS designation status. The Regional Key will verify area(s) of a program's noncompliance and will work with 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.

STARS Status Review may also be used in response to complaints from families and/or other community stakeholders.

During this time the Regional Key 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 STARS Performance Standards, but **can** meet STARS Performance Standards within a 90-day timeframe.
- For DHS Regulated providers, 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 4 Program that met the alternative pathway via Accreditation 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 Regional Key reissues a STAR Certificate with the original expiration date.

If the program **does not** meet the requirements of the STARS action plan, the Regional Key proceeds with one of the following:

- 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 STAR Reduction will occur if any of the following conditions are verified during the STARS Status Review:

- The program is not meeting STARS Performance Standards and the area(s) of noncompliance cannot be corrected within a 90-day timeframe.
- A STAR 4–Accredited program loses its accreditation status.

A program will receive a STAR Reduction to the appropriate STAR level in which the program meets all of the 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 henceforth:

For DHS regulated programs in Keystone STARS

- DHS Certification initiates an Injunction, Negative Sanction or issues a Provisional Certificate of Compliance for areas of regulatory noncompliance.
- 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 Certification for egregious circumstances. Issues falling under this condition will be handled on a case-by-case basis with OCDEL's oversight.
- DHS Subsidy Bureau takes action related to the provider's subsidy agreements.

For all programs including DHS Regulated Providers in Keystone STARS

- The GRANTEE/Sub Grantee cannot be determined a Responsible Contractor as outlined in the commonwealth's Management Directive 215.9 which could include but not limited to the following:
 - 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 and/or federal government, including tax liabilities.
 - Notifying the Regional Key of liens/liabilities is a requirement of receiving Keystone STARS funds. If GRANTEE/Sub Grantee does not inform the Regional Key of such liens/liabilities, OCDEL will extend the suspension, past the date a clearance certificate is received by the Regional Key from the GRANTEE/Sub Grantee, for the period of time the program did not notify the Regional Key of the liability. The extension will affect the quality add on/tiered reimbursement given to DHS regulated providers. Dependent upon the availability of grant/award funds, the GRANTEE/Sub Grantee could be eligible for grants/awards upon reinstatement back into STARS.
 - Unsatisfactory or deficient performance in past or current Commonwealth contracts as determined by the Commonwealth in its sole discretion.
 - Capacity and ability to perform within the established time schedule and in accordance with the plans and specifications of the contract.
 - False, misleading, or incomplete information submitted to the Commonwealth.
- Default on a Commonwealth contract as determined by the Commonwealth in its sole discretion.
- The commission of any state or federal offense or criminal charges.
- Investigation pending 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 Regional Key, 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 Inspector General.

During this phase, the program must work with the Regional Key on the development, implementation and completion of a STARS Suspension Action Plan.

The STAR Suspension Action Plan, will not to exceed 90 days, to correct the area(s) of noncompliance. For DHS regulated providers, where the case of noncompliance is with DHS Regulations, the Regional Key consults as needed with Certification regarding the corrective action plan submitted by the provider. The provider's DHS 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 Regional Key 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 Regional Key will move the program to 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 Regional Key will remove the program from Keystone STARS based on the STAR Removal procedures.

STAR Removal

STAR Removal will occur if any of the following conditions:

- The program closes.
- For DHS regulated providers, Certification initiates an Emergency Removal or action to Refuse to Renew or Revoke the provider's Certificate of Compliance.
- The program fails to submit a "Request for Designation Renewal" to renew its current STAR designation.
- The program does not meet the requirements of the STAR Suspension action plan.

Notifications and Appeals

The program will be informed by the Regional Key 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 Regional Key.

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 Regional Key's final decision to OCDEL by submitting in writing a letter to:

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

Attention: Bureau of Early Learning Services

If further action is necessary, the appeal will move to the Commonwealth's 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	Removal
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 1 – STAR 4)	✓		
Program's STAR listed with CCIS and/or COMPASS	✓		
Program access to STARS Representative for help with Performance Standards	✓	✓	
Program access to STARS Technical Assistance	✓	✓	
Program's Staff Prioritized for Vouchers/tuition assistance	✓	✓	
Program access to other special opportunities such as Mind in the Making, Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation, etc.	✓	✓	
Program eligible to attend professional development opportunities	✓	✓	✓