

## Ready to Rise!

There are exciting changes coming with the launch of *Rising Stars for ME*! The newly revised quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) for Maine celebrates the quality indicators your program meets, while supporting all programs to engage in continuous quality improvement efforts.

Your expertise as a child care professional lays the foundation for the young Mainers in your care, supports the economy, and allows communities to thrive.

*Rising Stars for ME* brings some changes to Maine's QRIS, but the skill and experience you bring to nurturing children are still at the core of what you do.



Programs that maintain a Star 3 rating and above are eligible for higher reimbursement with the Child Care Subsidy Program. *Rising Stars for ME* can help you increase your rating.



## Quality for ME is now *Rising Stars for ME*!

### What is staying the same?

While *Rising Stars for ME* is new, some things remain the same.

- ★ *Rising Stars for ME* is **still** a block system. That means you need to meet the Star requirements across all Standards to move to a higher overall Star level.
- ★ Enrollment with *Rising Stars for ME* is **still** required by Child Care Licensing Rules.
- ★ Full participation with *Rising Stars for ME* **still** requires a program to be in good standing with licensing.
- ★ The top rating in *Rising Stars for ME* **still** requires national accreditation or meeting performance standards as evaluated by Head Start.
- ★ The Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS) will still conduct random site visits to monitor compliance.

### What is changing?

These changes reflect input from the field and current evidence-based practices. *Rising Stars for ME* aims to support your program with creating and reaching quality improvement goals.

- ★ New name: *Rising Stars for ME*
- ★ The four Steps are replaced with five Stars.
- ★ There are two sets of standards: Facility and Family Child Care. This aligns with Child Care Licensing and the Child Care Subsidy Program (CCSP).
- ★ License-exempt, non-relative providers and license-exempt recreation programs participating with the CCSP will join *Rising Stars for ME* at Star 1.
- ★ Licensed programs in good standing will join *Rising Stars for ME* at Star 2.

## Why is Maine's system changing?

*Quality for ME* has been an important pathway for improving the quality of early care and education in Maine since 2008. Maine began the revision process in 2015 with the *Quality for ME* Revision Report, and we are addressing key changes that child care professionals and stakeholders recommended.

The shift to *Rising Stars for ME* will make our system more inclusive, create more supports for programs and families, and updates the Standards to reflect evidence-based practices.

## Rising Stars for ME is a partnership!

*Rising Stars for ME* is a partnership between:

The Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS)

Awards program ratings, sends certificates, and monitors compliance.



Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network (MRTQ PDN)

Processes applications, displays program ratings through Child Care Choices, administers trainings, and provides technical assistance and consultation.

## The application is open!

The application is online and will collect a combination of administrative and self-report data.

The E-Portfolio is the program's demonstration of the self-reported requirements listed in the Standards.



[RISINGSTARSFORME.ORG](https://risingstarsforme.org)

All programs have a grace period to complete the *Rising Stars for ME* application and E-Portfolio until at least September 29, 2023. Check your specific updated expiration date on the new *Rising Stars for ME* certificate sent to you by OCFS at the end of March 2023.

For more information about *Rising Stars for ME* and your application, visit [risingstarsforme.org](https://risingstarsforme.org).



**RISING STARS FOR ME**  
Maine's Quality Rating and Improvement System

## Rising Stars for ME

Recognizing and Supporting Quality Early Childhood and Out-of-School Time Programs in Maine

