

CHAPTER 118
CHILD CARE QUALITY RATING SYSTEM

DIVISION I
QUALITY RATING SYSTEM (QRS)

PREAMBLE

Division I of this chapter establishes rules for the child care quality rating system, which is designed for child care programs that primarily serve children between birth and the age of 12. Participation in the quality rating system is voluntary. Division I includes application procedures and standards for the quality rating. Rules 441—118.1(237A) through 441—118.8(237A) are in effect until Division I sunsets, when all providers approved for this program are no longer eligible under Division I. As of June 1, 2022, child care programs applying for a new rating will apply to the Iowa quality for kids (IQ4K) quality rating improvement system outlined in Division II.

[ARC 9257B, IAB 12/1/10, effective 2/1/11; ARC 6277C, IAB 4/6/22, effective 6/1/22]

441—118.1(237A) Definitions.

“Aim4Excellence credential” means the national director credential for early childhood administrators that is administered by the McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership.

“Apprenticeship certificate” means a nationally recognized Child Care Development Specialist Registered Apprenticeship Certificate awarded by the U.S. Department of Labor. The certificate requires two years of full-time employment with on-the-job training and 288 hours (at least 19 credits) of approved, related college education or training.

“Child care facility” means a licensed child care center, a preschool, or a registered child development home.

“Child care nurse consultant” means a registered nurse licensed in the state of Iowa who has completed training using a nationally approved curriculum for health and safety in child care and early education. The child care nurse consultant provides on-site consultation, technical assistance, and training to child care and early education providers regarding health and safety. The child care nurse consultant is employed by or has a written agreement with the local Title V maternal and child health agency or contracts for service delivery directly through the state-level Title V maternal and child health program administered by the Iowa department of public health, bureau of family health.

“Child development associate credential (CDA)” means a credential awarded by the Council for Professional Recognition to individuals working in child care settings who demonstrate proficiency in specific competency standards. The credential requires 120 hours of approved training over the past five years.

“ChildNet certification” means verified completion of the 25-hour ChildNet training series in areas specifically designed for child development home providers and completion of the certification process.

“Department” means the department of human services.

“Eligible applicants” means programs meeting the definition of “child care facility” or programs operating under the authority of an accredited school district or nonpublic school.

“Environment rating scale” means a child care program assessment instrument (scale) developed through the auspices of the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The scale is the measurement tool used by an assessor during an on-site observation of a child care classroom to evaluate and provide a score to a child care program. Scales must be administered by entities approved by the department of human services or the department’s designee. Four scales are available, based on the type of program being assessed:

1. Family child care environment rating scale for programs conducted in a provider’s own home for children from infancy through school age.
2. Infant/toddler environment rating scale for group programs for children from birth to 2½ years of age.

3. Early childhood environment rating scale for group programs for children of preschool through kindergarten age, 2½ to 5 years.

4. School-age care environment rating scale for group programs for children of school age, 5 to 12 years.

“*Head Start program performance standards*” means the standards that define the services that Head Start programs are required to provide to the children and families they serve. The standards constitute the expectations and requirements that Head Start grantees must meet.

“*Iowa quality preschool program standards*” means standards developed by the Iowa department of education, based on the ten standards of the National Association for the Education of Young Children accreditation.

“*National administrator credential (NAC)*” means the 40-hour comprehensive training for child care and education administrators and successful completion of the certification process.

“*Staff in the classroom*” means staff responsible for care of children in the classroom.
[ARC 9257B, IAB 12/1/10, effective 2/1/11]

441—118.2(237A) Application for quality rating. Eligible applicants shall apply for a quality rating by submitting the specified application form and any required supporting documentation to the department. Applications for a Level 1 rating will not be accepted from programs that have previously been rated at Level 1.

118.2(1) Transition period. For the period February 1, 2011, through July 31, 2011, eligible applicants may apply for a quality rating either under this subrule or under subrule 118.2(2).

a. A child care center or preschool applying under this subrule shall complete Form 470-4229, Application for Quality Rating—Center/Preschool. The quality rating will be based on the standards in rule 441—118.3(237A).

b. A child development home applying under this subrule shall complete Form 470-4302, Application for Quality Rating—Child Development Home. The quality rating will be based on the standards in rule 441—118.4(237A).

118.2(2) Ongoing standards. Effective June 1, 2022, for new applications, child care programs applying for a new rating will apply to the Iowa quality for kids (IQ4K) quality rating system outlined in Division II.

a. A child care center, preschool, or program operating under the authority of an accredited school district or nonpublic school applying under this subrule shall complete Form 470-4902, Quality Rating System Application for Licensed Centers, Preschools, and School-Based Programs. The quality rating will be based on the standards in rule 441—118.5(237A).

b. A child development home applying under this subrule shall complete Form 470-4901, Quality Rating System Application for Child Development Homes. The quality rating will be based on the standards in rule 441—118.6(237A).

118.2(3) Change in location of facility. If the location of a rated program changes, the program must notify the department and complete a new application form as specified in subrule 118.2(1) or 118.2(2). The department shall make a new determination of the appropriate rating.

[ARC 9257B, IAB 12/1/10, effective 2/1/11; ARC 6277C, IAB 4/6/22, effective 6/1/22]

441—118.3(237A) Rating standards for child care centers and preschools (sunsetting on July 31, 2011). For applications submitted under subrule 118.2(1), to participate in the quality rating system, a child care center or preschool shall certify that its facility meets the applicable criteria as defined in subrule 118.3(1).

118.3(1) Criteria. Criteria for each rating level are defined as follows.

a. Level 1. To be rated at Level 1, a facility must either:

(1) Have a full or provisional license from the department of human services with no action pending to revoke or deny the license; or

(2) Operate under the authority of an accredited school district or nonpublic school.

b. Level 2. To be rated at Level 2, a facility must meet the following criteria:

(1) The facility must have a full license from the department of human services with no action pending to revoke or deny the license, or operate under the authority of an accredited school district or nonpublic school.

(2) The facility must complete the Iowa department of public health's Form HCCI-BPA2006, Child Care Business—Partnership Agreement.

(3) The facility must complete the Iowa department of public health's provider health and safety questionnaire, Form HCCI-CDOS2006, Child Care Center Director/Owner Survey.

(4) If eligible, the facility must participate in the child and adult care food program (CACFP), unless children are in attendance less than four hours per day and the program does not serve meals.

(5) The facility must have on duty in each room at all times at least one staff member who has completed training in mandatory reporting of child abuse, universal precautions and infectious disease control, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and first aid as specified in 441—subrule 109.7(1) and subparagraphs 109.7(2)“a”(1) and (2).

(6) The facility must provide basic orientation for all staff before they begin work.

(7) All staff, including the facility's director, must complete Form 470-4234, Child Care Center Staff Self-Assessment, no more than 12 months before application for quality rating. The director must also complete Form 470-4233, Child Care Center Self-Assessment.

c. Level 3. To be rated at Level 3, a facility must meet the following criteria in addition to meeting the criteria for Level 2:

(1) The facility must earn a minimum of 10 points from the categories listed in subrules 118.3(2) through 118.3(6).

(2) The facility must earn at least one point from each category.

d. Level 4. To be rated at Level 4, a facility must meet the following criteria in addition to meeting the criteria for Level 2:

(1) The facility must earn a minimum of 18 points from the categories listed in subrules 118.3(2) through 118.3(6).

(2) The facility must earn at least one point from each category.

e. Level 5. To be rated at Level 5, a facility must meet the following criteria in addition to meeting the criteria for Level 2:

(1) The facility must earn a minimum of 26 points from the categories listed in subrules 118.13(2) through 118.13(6).

(2) The facility must earn at least one point from each category.

118.3(2) Professional development. A child care center or preschool may earn a maximum of 12 points in the professional development category. Points are awarded as follows:

a. Credential. Two points are awarded if the facility director:

(1) Has a current national administrator credential; or

(2) Is a school principal licensed by the Iowa board of educational examiners.

b. Related degree. One point is awarded if at least one staff member at the facility has at least a bachelor's degree in education specific to the age group for whom the person provides care.

c. Education and experience. A facility may earn a maximum of nine points for staff education and experience. Programs may select up to two of the following options:

(1) Five points are awarded if at least 50 percent of staff in each classroom have a minimum of a bachelor's degree in education specific to the age group for whom they provide care.

(2) Four points are awarded if at least 50 percent of staff in each classroom have a minimum of an associate's degree in education specific to the age group for whom they provide care.

(3) Three points are awarded if at least 50 percent of staff in each classroom have a minimum of a child development associate credential or apprenticeship certificate.

(4) Two points are awarded if at least 50 percent of staff in each classroom have a minimum of either six college credit hours in education specific to the age group for whom they provide care or have a paraeducator certificate from the Iowa board of educational examiners.

(5) Two points are awarded if at least 50 percent of staff in each classroom have received a minimum of 30 hours of training beyond regulatory requirements in the last 12 months and have at least five years

of experience working in a child care facility or a program operating under the authority of an accredited school district or nonpublic school.

(6) One point is awarded if at least 50 percent of staff in each classroom have received a minimum of 15 hours of training beyond regulatory requirements in the last 12 months.

118.3(3) Health and safety. A child care center or preschool may earn a maximum of eight points in the health and safety category. Points are awarded as follows:

a. Injury prevention. A facility may earn a maximum of three points for injury prevention. Points are awarded as follows:

(1) One point is awarded if the facility completes the Iowa department of public health's Form HCCI-IP2006, Injury Prevention Summary Report, during a visit with a child care nurse consultant.

(2) Two points are awarded if the child care nurse consultant verifies that the facility has started the process of making recommended corrections.

(3) Three points are awarded if the child care nurse consultant verifies that the facility has completed all corrections.

b. Child record review. A facility may earn a maximum of two points for child record review. Points are awarded as follows:

(1) One point is awarded if the facility completes the Iowa department of public health's Form HCCI-CRR2006, Child Record Review, during a visit with a child care nurse consultant.

(2) Two points are awarded if the child care nurse consultant verifies that the facility has worked with the child care nurse consultant to refer families to health care providers.

c. Health and safety assessment. A facility may earn a maximum of three points for health and safety assessment. Points are awarded as follows:

(1) One point is awarded if the facility completes the Iowa department of public health's Form HCCI-HSA2006, Health and Safety Assessment, during a visit with the child care nurse consultant.

(2) Two points are awarded if the child care nurse consultant verifies that the facility has developed a plan of action to correct deficiencies.

(3) Three points are awarded if the child care nurse consultant verifies that the facility has completed all corrections.

118.3(4) Environment. A child care center or preschool may earn a maximum of 11 points in the environment category. Points are awarded as follows:

a. Environment rating scale training and self-assessment.

(1) One point is awarded if the facility director or assistant director completes approved training on using the infant/toddler environment rating scale, the early childhood environment rating scale, or the school-age care environment rating scale to evaluate and improve the facility before outside evaluation.

(2) One point is awarded if, after completing training on how to use the infant/toddler environment rating scale, the early childhood environment rating scale, or the school-age care environment rating scale, the facility director or assistant director completes a self-assessment of at least one-third of the facility's classrooms, including at least one classroom in each age group served by the facility using the appropriate environment rating scale.

(3) One point is awarded if, after completing training on how to use the infant/toddler environment rating scale, the early childhood environment rating scale, or the school-age care environment rating scale, the facility director or assistant director completes Form 470-4288, Child Care Center Improvement Plan, based on the environment rating scale self-assessment. Form 470-4288 must be completed for each room for which a self-assessment was completed.

b. Environment rating scale. A facility may earn a maximum of three points on the environment rating scale. The facility director or assistant director must complete training on the use of one of the environment rating scales before requesting assessment. An assessor approved by the department of human services or the department's designee must perform the environment rating assessment. At least one-third of the facility's classrooms must be assessed, including at least one classroom in each age group served by the facility. Points are awarded as follows:

(1) One point is awarded if the facility receives an average score of 3 on a scale of 7 (with no subscale scores lower than 2) on the infant/toddler environment rating scale, the early childhood environment rating scale, or the school-age care environment rating scale.

(2) Two points are awarded if the facility receives an average score of 4 on a scale of 7 (with no subscale scores lower than 2) on the infant/toddler environment rating scale, the early childhood environment rating scale, or the school-age care environment rating scale.

(3) Three points are awarded if the facility receives an average score of 5 on a scale of 7 (with no subscale scores lower than 2) on the infant/toddler environment rating scale, the early childhood environment rating scale, or the school-age care environment rating scale.

c. Iowa quality preschool program standards. A facility may earn a maximum of two points on the Iowa quality preschool program standards. Points are awarded as follows:

(1) One point is awarded if the facility completes training on Iowa quality preschool program standards.

(2) One point is awarded if the facility completes the Iowa quality preschool program standards self-assessment and develops a quality improvement plan.

d. Accreditation. A facility may earn a maximum of three points for accreditation. Points are awarded as follows:

(1) One point is awarded if the facility meets accreditation standards for group or class size from an accrediting body identified in subparagraph (2) that is appropriate to the child care setting.

(2) Three points are awarded if the facility is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the National Afterschool Association, or another accrediting body approved by the department of human services or if a Head Start program demonstrates compliance with Head Start program performance standards.

118.3(5) Family and community partnerships. A child care center or preschool may earn a maximum of two points in the family and community partnerships category. Points are awarded as follows:

a. One point is awarded if the facility or the facility director is a member of a professional organization specific to the age group for whom care is provided.

b. One point is awarded if the facility provides orientation for new parents and holds annual conferences with parents.

118.3(6) Leadership and administration. A child care center or preschool may earn a maximum of four points in the leadership and administration category. Points are awarded as follows:

a. One point is awarded if the facility completes yearly written evaluations for all staff.

b. One point is awarded if the facility develops and updates Form 470-4235, Child Care Center Improvement Plan, annually.

c. One point is awarded if all staff complete Form 470-4236, Professional Development Plan.

d. One point is awarded if all staff who have direct contact with children have a full, facility-based orientation within four months of beginning employment with the facility.

[ARC 9257B, IAB 12/1/10, effective 2/1/11]

441—118.4(237A) Rating criteria for child development homes (sunsetting on July 31, 2011). For applications submitted under subrule 118.2(1), to participate in the quality rating system, a child development home provider shall certify that the home meets the applicable criteria as defined in subrule 118.4(1).

118.4(1) Criteria for each rating level.

a. To be rated at Level 1, the home must be a registered child development home.

b. To be rated at Level 2, the home must meet the following criteria in addition to meeting the criterion for Level 1:

(1) The provider completes and maintains ChildNet certification.

(2) The provider participates in the child and adult care food program (CACFP).

(3) The provider completes the Iowa department of public health's Form HCCI-BPA2006, Child Care Business—Partnership Agreement.

(4) The provider completes the Iowa department of public health's provider health and safety questionnaire, Form HCCI-HDOS2006, Home Child Care Center Director/Owner Survey.

(5) The provider completes Form 470-4231, Child Development Home Professional Development Self-Assessment.

(6) The provider completes Form 470-4236, Professional Development Plan.

c. To be rated at Level 3, the home must meet the following criteria in addition to meeting the criteria for Levels 1 and 2:

(1) The home must earn a minimum of seven points from the categories listed in subrules 118.4(2) through 118.4(5).

(2) The home must earn at least one point from each category.

d. To be rated at Level 4, the home must meet the following criteria in addition to meeting the criteria for Levels 1 and 2:

(1) The home must earn a minimum of 12 points from the categories listed in subrules 118.4(2) through 118.4(5).

(2) The home must earn at least one point from each category.

e. To be rated at Level 5, the home must meet the following criteria in addition to meeting the criteria for Levels 1 and 2:

(1) The home must earn a minimum of 16 points from the categories listed in subrules 118.4(2) through 118.4(5).

(2) The home must earn at least one point from each category.

118.4(2) Professional development. A child development home may earn a maximum of six points in the professional development category. Points are awarded as follows:

a. *Experience and training.* A home may earn a maximum of two points for experience and training. Points are awarded as follows:

(1) One point is awarded if the provider has at least two years of experience working in a child care facility or a program operating under the authority of an accredited school district or nonpublic school and 10 hours of additional training per year beyond regulatory requirements.

(2) Two points are awarded if the provider has at least five years of experience working in a child care facility or a program operating under the authority of an accredited school district or nonpublic school and 20 hours of additional training per year beyond regulatory requirements.

b. *Education.* A home may earn a maximum of four points for education. Points are awarded as follows:

(1) Two points are awarded if the provider has completed an apprenticeship certificate, child development associate credential, or at least nine college credit hours in education specific to the age group for whom care is provided.

(2) Three points are awarded if the provider has completed an associate's degree in education specific to the age group for whom care is provided.

(3) Four points are awarded if the provider has completed a bachelor's degree or higher in education specific to the age group for whom care is provided.

118.4(3) Health and safety. A child development home may earn a maximum of eight points in the health and safety category. Points are awarded as follows:

a. *Injury prevention.* A home may earn a maximum of three points for injury prevention. Points are awarded as follows:

(1) One point is awarded if the provider completes the Iowa department of public health's Form HCCI-IP2006, Injury Prevention Summary Report, during a visit with a child care nurse consultant.

(2) Two points are awarded if the child care nurse consultant verifies that the provider has started the process of making recommended corrections.

(3) Three points are awarded if the child care nurse consultant verifies that the provider has completed all corrections.

b. *Child record review.* A home may earn a maximum of two points for child record review. Points are awarded as follows:

(1) One point is awarded if the provider completes the Iowa department of public health's Form HCCI-CRR2006, Child Record Review, during a visit with a child care nurse consultant.

(2) Two points are awarded if the child care nurse consultant verifies that the provider has worked with the child care nurse consultant to refer families to health care providers.

c. Health and safety assessment. A home may earn a maximum of three points in the health and safety assessment category. Points are awarded as follows:

(1) One point is awarded if the provider completes the Iowa department of public health's Form HCCI-HSA2006, Health and Safety Assessment, during a visit with the child care nurse consultant.

(2) Two points are awarded if the child care nurse consultant verifies that the provider has developed a plan of action to correct deficiencies.

(3) Three points are awarded if the child care nurse consultant verifies that the provider has completed all corrections.

118.4(4) Environment. A child development home may earn a maximum of eight points in the environment category. Points are awarded as follows:

a. Environment rating scale training and self-assessment. A home may earn a maximum of three points for environment rating scale training and self-assessment. Points are awarded as follows:

(1) One point is awarded if the provider completes approved training on how to use the family day care rating scale to assess the child development home environment.

(2) One point is awarded if, after completing training on how to use the family day care rating scale, the provider completes a self-assessment using the family day care rating scale.

(3) One point is awarded if, after completing training on how to use the family day care rating scale, the provider completes Form 470-4232, Child Development Home Improvement Plan, based on the family day care rating scale self-assessment.

b. Environment rating scale. A home may earn a maximum of two points on the environment rating scale. An assessor approved by the department of human services or the department's designee must perform the environment rating assessment. The provider must complete training on the family day care rating scale before requesting assessment. Points are awarded as follows:

(1) One point is awarded if the home receives an average score of 4 on a scale of 7, with no subscale scores lower than 2.

(2) Two points are awarded if the home receives an average score of 5 on a scale of 7, with no subscale scores lower than 2.

c. Accreditation. Three points are awarded if the home is accredited by the National Association for Family Child Care or another accrediting body approved by the department of human services.

118.4(5) Family and community partnerships. A child development home may earn a maximum of two points in the family and community partnerships category. Points are awarded as follows:

a. One point is awarded if the provider is a member of a professional organization specific to the age group for whom care is provided.

b. One point is awarded if the provider offers an orientation for new parents and holds annual conferences with parents.

[ARC 9257B, IAB 12/1/10, effective 2/1/11]

441—118.5(237A) Rating standards for child care centers, preschools, and programs operating under the authority of an accredited school district or nonpublic school. To participate in the quality rating system, a child care center, preschool, or program operating under the authority of an accredited school district or nonpublic school applying under subrule 118.2(2) shall certify that its facility meets the applicable criteria as defined in subrule 118.5(1).

118.5(1) Criteria. Criteria for each rating level are defined as follows:

a. Level 1. To be rated at Level 1, a facility must either:

(1) Have a full or provisional license from the department with no action pending to revoke or deny the license; or

(2) Operate under the authority of an accredited school district or nonpublic school.

b. Level 2. To be rated at Level 2, a facility must meet the following criteria:

(1) The facility must have a full license from the department with no action pending to revoke or deny the license or must operate under the authority of an accredited school district or nonpublic school.

(2) If eligible, the facility must participate in the child and adult care food program (CACFP), unless children are in attendance less than four hours per day and the program does not serve meals.

(3) The facility must have on duty in each room at all times at least one staff member who has completed training in mandatory reporting of child abuse, universal precautions and infectious disease control, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and first aid as specified in 441—subrule 109.7(1) and subparagraphs 109.7(2)“a”(1) and (2).

(4) The facility must provide basic orientation for all staff before they begin work.

(5) All staff, including the facility’s director, must complete Form 470-4234, Child Care Center Staff Self-Assessment, no more than 12 months before application for quality rating. The director must also complete Form 470-4233, Child Care Center Self-Assessment.

c. Level 3. To be rated at Level 3, a facility must meet the following criteria in addition to meeting the criteria for Level 2:

(1) The facility must earn a minimum of 17 points from the categories listed in subrules 118.5(2) through 118.5(6).

(2) The facility must earn at least one point from each category.

d. Level 4. To be rated at Level 4, a facility must meet the following criteria in addition to meeting the criteria for Level 2:

(1) The facility must earn a minimum of 27 points from the categories listed in subrules 118.5(2) through 118.5(6).

(2) The facility must earn at least one point from each category.

e. Level 5. To be rated at Level 5, a facility must meet the following criteria in addition to meeting the criteria for Level 2:

(1) The facility must earn a minimum of 34 points from the categories listed in subrules 118.5(2) through 118.5(6).

(2) The facility must earn at least one point from each category.

(3) The facility must earn a minimum score of 5.0 in each assessed classroom on the appropriate environment rating scale. An assessor approved by the department or the department’s designee must perform the environment rating assessment. At least one-third of the facility’s classrooms must be assessed, including at least one classroom in each age group served by the facility.

118.5(2) Professional development. A maximum of 30 points may be earned in the professional development category. Points are awarded as follows:

a. Credential. A maximum of five points may be earned in the credential category.

(1) Five points are awarded if the facility director has a current national administrator credential or Aim4Excellence credential.

(2) Five points are awarded if the facility director is a school principal licensed by the Iowa board of educational examiners.

(3) Five points are awarded if a staff member has completed the two-year Head Start management acceleration program covering all aspects of Head Start management, services and systems.

b. Education and experience. A maximum of 25 points may be earned for education and experience. To arrive at the total number of points earned, each staff member shall indicate the highest applicable education and experience qualification. Points will be assigned for each staff member based on the following criteria, and the total points will be divided by the number of staff. Only one criterion may be scored for each staff member.

(1) Has a master’s degree in education appropriate to the age group for whom care is provided: 25 points.

(2) Has a bachelor’s degree in education appropriate to the age group for whom care is provided: 20 points.

(3) Has an associate’s degree in education appropriate to the age group for whom care is provided: 10 points.

(4) Has a one-year diploma in education appropriate to the age group for whom care is provided: 8 points.

(5) Has an apprenticeship certificate: 7 points.

(6) Has a child development associate credential: 6 points.

(7) Has an Iowa board of educational examiners paraeducator certificate at Level 2, early childhood, plus two years of experience in early childhood education under the supervision of a licensed early childhood teacher: 6 points.

(8) Has nine college credit hours in education specific to the age group for whom care is provided: 5 points.

(9) Has 30 hours of annual approved training beyond regulatory requirements and at least five years of experience working in a child care facility or a program operating under the authority of an accredited school district or nonpublic school: 4 points.

(10) Has 15 hours of annual approved training beyond regulatory requirements: 2 points.

118.5(3) Health and safety. A maximum of 19 points may be earned in the health and safety category. Points are awarded as follows:

a. Five points are awarded if within the five-year period before the application date the center director, assistant director, or on-site supervisor has successfully completed a three-semester-hour health, safety, and nutrition class through an approved community college or four-year college.

b. Two points are awarded if within the two-year period before the application date the center director, assistant director, or on-site supervisor has successfully completed a health and safety training approved by the department for the specific purpose of awarding points in the quality rating system.

c. Two points are awarded if the provider develops and implements an emergency preparedness plan in a format prescribed by the department.

d. Two points are awarded if the provider develops and implements enhanced health and safety policies in a format prescribed by the department.

e. Up to three points may be awarded for injury prevention.

(1) One point is awarded if the facility completes the Iowa department of public health's Form HCCI-IP2006, Injury Prevention Summary Report, during a visit with a child care nurse consultant.

(2) Two points are awarded if the child care nurse consultant verifies that the facility has started the process of making recommended corrections.

(3) Three points are awarded if the child care nurse consultant verifies that the facility has completed all corrections.

f. Up to two points may be awarded for child record review.

(1) One point is awarded if the facility completes the Iowa department of public health's Form HCCI-CRR2006, Child Record Review, during a visit with a child care nurse consultant.

(2) Two points are awarded if the child care nurse consultant verifies that the facility has worked with the child care nurse consultant to refer families to health care providers.

g. Up to three points may be awarded for health and safety assessment.

(1) One point is awarded if the facility completes the Iowa department of public health's Form HCCI-HSA2006, Health and Safety Assessment, during a visit with the child care nurse consultant.

(2) Two points are awarded if the child care nurse consultant verifies that the facility has developed a plan of action to correct deficiencies.

(3) Three points are awarded if the child care nurse consultant verifies that the facility has completed all corrections.

118.5(4) Environment. A maximum of 27 points may be earned in the environment category. Points are awarded as follows:

a. Training and self-assessment. A maximum of nine points may be earned in training and self-assessment.

(1) Two points are awarded if the facility director or assistant director completes approved training on the use of the infant/toddler environment rating scale, the early childhood environment rating scale, or the school-age care environment rating scale to evaluate and improve the facility before outside evaluation.

(2) Two points are awarded if, after completing approved training on how to use the environment rating scale, the facility director or assistant director completes a self-assessment and score sheet of at least one-third of the facility's classrooms, including at least one classroom in each age group served by the facility using the applicable environment rating scale.

(3) Two points are awarded if, after completing approved training on how to use the environment rating scale, the facility director or assistant director completes Form 470-4288, Child Care Center Improvement Plan, based on the environment rating scale self-assessment. Form 470-4288 must be completed for each room for which a self-assessment was completed.

(4) Three points are awarded if, after completing approved training on Iowa quality preschool program standards, the facility director or assistant director completes the Iowa quality preschool program standards self-assessment and develops a quality improvement plan.

b. Enhanced ratios. A facility may earn a maximum of three points for enhanced staff-to-child ratios. Three points are awarded if the facility meets accreditation standards for group or class size and staff-to-child ratio from an accrediting body identified at subparagraph 118.5(4)"d"(3) that is appropriate to the child care setting. These points may not be awarded to programs receiving points under subparagraph 118.5(4)"d"(3).

c. Accreditation preparation. A facility may earn a maximum of five points for accreditation preparation. Five points are awarded if the facility's accreditation self-assessment is approved by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. These points may not be awarded to programs receiving points under subparagraph 118.5(4)"d"(3).

d. Accreditation. A facility may earn a maximum of 18 points for accreditation. Points are awarded for one of the following criteria:

(1) Five points are awarded if the program is verified by the Iowa quality preschool program standards.

(2) Six points are awarded if a Head Start program demonstrates compliance with Head Start program performance standards.

(3) Eighteen points are awarded if the facility is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the National Afterschool Association, or another accrediting body approved by the department.

118.5(5) Family and community partnerships. A maximum of eight points may be earned in the family and community partnership category. Points are awarded as follows:

a. One point is awarded if the facility or the facility director is a member of a professional organization specific to the age group for whom care is provided.

b. One point is awarded if the facility provides orientation for new parents.

c. One point is awarded if the facility holds annual conferences with parents.

d. One point is awarded if the facility holds at least one parent meeting annually.

e. Two points are awarded if a parent advisory board coordinated by the facility meets quarterly.

f. Two points are awarded if the facility collects annual parent surveys and uses the results to inform program practices.

118.5(6) Leadership and administration. A maximum of seven points may be earned in the leadership and administration category. Points are awarded as follows:

a. Two points are awarded if the facility completes yearly written evaluations for all staff.

b. One point is awarded if the facility develops an improvement plan using Form 470-4235, Child Care Center Improvement Plan, and updates the form annually.

c. One point is awarded if all staff complete Form 470-4236, Professional Development Plan.

d. Three points are awarded if all staff who have direct contact with children complete one of the following within four months of beginning employment with the facility:

(1) The new staff orientation training delivered by Iowa state university that provides new center and preschool staff a full, program-based orientation, or

(2) Another curriculum approved by the department.

441—118.6(237A) Rating criteria for child development homes. To participate in the quality rating system, a child development home provider applying under subrule 118.2(2) shall certify that the home meets the applicable criteria as defined in subrule 118.6(1).

118.6(1) Criteria for each rating level.

a. *Level 1.* To be rated at Level 1, the home must be a registered child development home.

b. *Level 2.* To be rated at Level 2, the home must meet the following criteria in addition to meeting the criterion for Level 1:

- (1) The provider completes and maintains ChildNet certification.
- (2) The provider participates in the child and adult care food program (CACFP).
- (3) The provider completes Form 470-4231, Child Development Home Professional Development Self-Assessment.

(4) The provider completes Form 470-4236, Professional Development Plan.

c. *Level 3.* To be rated at Level 3, the home must meet the following criteria in addition to meeting the criteria for Levels 1 and 2:

(1) The home must earn a minimum of 14 points from the categories listed in subrules 118.6(2) through 118.6(5).

(2) The home must earn at least one point from each category.

d. *Level 4.* To be rated at Level 4, the home must meet the following criteria in addition to meeting the criteria for Levels 1 and 2:

(1) The home must earn a minimum of 19 points from the categories listed in subrules 118.6(2) through 118.6(5).

(2) The home must earn at least one point from each category.

e. *Level 5.* To be rated at Level 5, the home must meet the following criteria in addition to meeting the criteria for Levels 1 and 2:

(1) The home must earn a minimum of 25 points from the categories listed in subrules 118.6(2) through 118.6(5).

(2) The home must earn at least one point from each category.

(3) The home must earn a minimum score of 5.0 on the family child care environment rating scale.

An assessor approved by the department or the department's designee must perform the assessment.

118.6(2) Professional development. A child development home may earn a maximum of 34 points in the professional development category. For child development homes registered as Category C, points will be awarded only to the coprovider who has earned the most points. Points are awarded as follows:

a. *Experience and training.* A home may earn a maximum of four points for experience and training. Points are awarded as follows:

(1) Two points are awarded if the provider has at least two years of experience working in a child care facility or a program operating under the authority of an accredited school district or nonpublic school and 10 hours of additional training per year beyond regulatory requirements.

(2) Four points are awarded if the provider has at least five years of experience working in a child care facility or a program operating under the authority of an accredited school district or nonpublic school and 20 hours of additional training per year beyond regulatory requirements.

b. *Additional professional development.* A home may earn a maximum of five points for additional professional development. Points are awarded as follows:

(1) Two points are awarded if the provider successfully completes approved modules 1 and 2 of positive behavior and intervention support training developed by the Center on Social and Emotional Foundations for Learning (CSEFEL). Modules 1 and 2 total a minimum of 12 hours of training which focuses on promoting effective classroom and center practices that enhance the social and emotional competency of young children.

(2) Three points are awarded if the provider successfully completes modules 1 through 4 of the program for infant and toddler care developed by WestEd and the California Department of Education, covering social-emotional growth and socialization, group care, learning and development, culture, and family and providers.

c. Education. A home may earn a maximum of 25 points for education. Points are awarded for one of the following criteria:

- (1) Twenty-five points are awarded if the provider has completed a master's degree in education appropriate to the age group for whom care is provided.
- (2) Twenty points are awarded if the provider has completed a bachelor's degree in education appropriate to the age group for whom care is provided.
- (3) Ten points are awarded if the provider has completed an associate's degree in education appropriate to the age group for whom care is provided.
- (4) Eight points are awarded if the provider has completed a one-year diploma in education appropriate to the age group for whom care is provided.
- (5) Seven points are awarded if the provider has a current apprenticeship certificate.
- (6) Six points are awarded if the provider has a current child development associate credential.
- (7) Five points are awarded if the provider has completed at least nine college credit hours in education specific to the age group for whom care is provided.

118.6(3) Health and safety. A child development home may earn a maximum of 19 points in the health and safety category. Points are awarded as follows:

a. Five points are awarded if within the five-year period before the application date the provider successfully completes a three-semester-hour health, safety, and nutrition class through an approved community college or four-year college.

b. Two points are awarded if within the two-year period before the application date the provider successfully completes a health and safety training approved by the department for the specific purpose of awarding points in the quality rating system.

c. Two points are awarded if the provider develops and implements an emergency preparedness plan in a format prescribed by the department.

d. Two points are awarded if the provider develops and implements enhanced health and safety policies in a format prescribed by the department.

e. Up to three points may be awarded for injury prevention.

(1) One point is awarded if the facility completes the Iowa department of public health's Form HCCI-IP2006, Injury Prevention Summary Report, during a visit with a child care nurse consultant.

(2) Two points are awarded if the child care nurse consultant verifies that the facility has started the process of making recommended corrections.

(3) Three points are awarded if the child care nurse consultant verifies that the facility has completed all corrections.

f. Up to two points may be awarded for child record review.

(1) One point is awarded if the facility completes the Iowa department of public health's Form HCCI-CRR2006, Child Record Review, during a visit with a child care nurse consultant.

(2) Two points are awarded if the child care nurse consultant verifies that the facility has worked with the child care nurse consultant to refer families to health care providers.

g. Up to three points may be awarded for health and safety assessment.

(1) One point is awarded if the facility completes the Iowa department of public health's Form HCCI-HSA2006, Health and Safety Assessment, during a visit with the child care nurse consultant.

(2) Two points are awarded if the child care nurse consultant verifies that the facility has developed a plan of action to correct deficiencies.

(3) Three points are awarded if the child care nurse consultant verifies that the facility has completed all corrections.

118.6(4) Environment. A child development home may earn a maximum of 23 points in the environment category. Points are awarded as follows:

a. Environment rating scale training and self-assessment. A home may earn a maximum of six points for environment rating scale training and self-assessment. Points are awarded as follows:

(1) Two points are awarded if the provider completes approved training on how to use the family child care environment rating scale to assess the child development home environment.

(2) Two points are awarded if, after completing training on how to use the environment rating scale, the provider completes a self-assessment and score sheet using the environment rating scale.

(3) Two points are awarded if, after completing training on how to use the environment rating scale and completion of the environment rating scale self-assessment and score sheet, the provider completes Form 470-4232, Child Development Home Improvement Plan, based on the environment rating scale self-assessment.

b. Enhanced ratios. A home may earn a maximum of two points for enhanced staff-to-child ratios. Two points are awarded if no more than two children under the age of two are in care at any one time and no more than six children total are in care at any one time, including the provider's own children under school age.

c. Accreditation. A home may earn a maximum of 15 points for accreditation. Fifteen points are awarded if the home is accredited by the National Association for Family Child Care or another accrediting body approved by the department.

118.6(5) Family and community partnerships. A child development home may earn a maximum of six points in the family and community partnership category. Points are awarded as follows:

a. One point is awarded if the provider is a member of a professional organization specific to the age group for whom care is provided.

b. One point is awarded if the provider offers an orientation for new parents.

c. One point is awarded if the provider holds annual conferences with parents.

d. One point is awarded if the provider holds at least one parent meeting annually.

e. Two points are awarded if the provider collects annual parent surveys and uses the results to inform program practices.

[ARC 9257B, IAB 12/1/10, effective 2/1/11]

441—118.7(237A) Award of quality rating.

118.7(1) The facility shall display Form 470-4230, Quality Rating Certificate, in a conspicuous place.

118.7(2) Achievement bonuses may be awarded as funds are available.

118.7(3) Participants may request another quality rating for the purpose of increasing their rating no sooner than 12 months after issuance of a quality rating certificate.

118.7(4) Ratings are effective for 24 months from the date of issuance.

[ARC 9257B, IAB 12/1/10, effective 2/1/11]

441—118.8(237A) Adverse actions.

118.8(1) An eligible applicant must be notified of the right to appeal the rating decision in accordance with 441—Chapter 7.

118.8(2) A participant's quality rating shall be revoked if the facility no longer meets the definition of "eligible applicants."

118.8(3) Form 470-4230, Quality Rating Certificate, shall be returned to the department of human services if:

a. The certificate is revoked;

b. The certificate is not renewed; or

c. The provider voluntarily withdraws from the program.

118.8(4) Ratings are effective for 24 months from the date of issuance.

[ARC 9257B, IAB 12/1/10, effective 2/1/11]

DIVISION II IOWA QUALITY FOR KIDS (IQ4K)

PREAMBLE

Division II of this chapter establishes rules for the IQ4K rating system and Iowa's quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) for child care providers. Participation in IQ4K is voluntary. Division II

includes application procedures and standards to guide the quality rating process. The rules in Division II are in effect for new applications for child care providers applying for the IQ4K program.

[ARC 6277C, IAB 4/6/22, effective 6/1/22]

441—118.9(237A) Definitions.

“Action plan” means a written, detailed sequence of steps taken or activities performed to reach one or more goals.

“All staff” means program administrator or director, assistant program administrator or assistant director, on-site supervisor, lead teacher and staff counted as part of the staff-to-child ratio.

“Area education agency” or *“AEA”* means an agency working as an educational partner with public and accredited nonpublic schools to help learners, school staff, parents and communities. AEAs provide early intervention services, special education support services, media and technology services, a variety of instructional services, professional development and leadership to promote school improvement as established in Iowa Code chapter 273.

“Assessment tool” means a tool used to gather and provide educators, parents, guardians, and caretakers with critical information about a child’s educational growth and development. Assessment tools are used to determine what children in care know, understand and are able to do. Assessment results drive the ways teachers support and assess children’s learning, plan their curriculum to support each child, monitor progress and identify next steps.

“Assistant program administrator” or *“assistant director”* means the staff member working directly under the administrator or director and assisting with program planning, managing, marketing and directing.

“Assistant teacher” means any staff member working under the supervision of a lead teacher or other licensed personnel who has the ultimate responsibility for the design and implementation of education and related service programs. Other terms used may include paraprofessional, educational aide, associate, or instructional aide.

“Caring for our children” or *“CFOC”* means the national health and safety performance standard guidelines for early care and education programs representing the best practices based on evidence, expertise, and experience for quality health and safety policies for early care and education settings.

“Child and adult care food program” or *“CACFP”* means a federal United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) CNP that provides a subsidy for serving nutritious meals and snacks to eligible children and adults who are enrolled at participating child care centers, homes, and adult day care centers. CACFP also provides reimbursements for meals served to children and youth participating in afterschool care programs, children residing in emergency shelters, and adults over the age of 60 or living with a disability and enrolled in adult day care facilities. In order to qualify for reimbursement, the meals served must meet federal guidelines.

“Child care experience” means knowledge and skills learned through employment or volunteer work in a licensed child care center, a school-aged only program, a preschool, a registered child development home or as a child care home provider.

“Child care nurse consultant” or *“CCNC”* means a registered nurse licensed in the state of Iowa who has completed training incorporating the nationally approved child care health competencies for health and safety in child care and early education. The CCNC provides on-site consultation, technical assistance, care planning for children with special health needs and training to child care and early education providers regarding health and safety. The CCNC is employed by or has a written agreement with the local Title V maternal and child health agency or the Iowa department of public health (IDPH) for service delivery directly through the state-level Title V maternal and child health program administered by the IDPH bureau of family health.

“Child care resource and referral” or *“CCR&R”* means the statewide (regionally based) agency focused on supporting quality child care throughout the state of Iowa. CCR&R serves as the starting point for all IQ4K applications and provides free technical assistance and consultation to providers throughout the IQ4K application process.

“*Child development associate credential*” or “*CDA*” means a nationally recognized credential earned by individuals working in the early child care and education field. The CDA credential is based on a core set of competency standards and includes an assessment process by the Council for Professional Recognition.

“*Child development home*” means a person or program registered under Iowa Code section 237A.3A that may provide child care to seven or more children at any one time.

“*ChildNet certification*” means a verified completion of the 25-hour ChildNet training series and completion of the certification process.

“*ChildNet training*” means the 25-hour training series offered through CCR&R focused on areas specifically designed for child development home providers.

“*Child nutrition programs*” or “*CNP*” means federally funded programs administered by the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). The programs are designed to help ensure that children receive nutritious meals and snacks to assist in promoting health and educational readiness. Programs serving nutritious meals and snacks are reimbursed for participating.

“*Classroom assessment scoring system*” or “*CLASS*” means an observation instrument that assesses the quality of teacher-child interactions in center-based classrooms.

“*Community resources*” means the various people, places or services that offer support to child care programs and the children and families they serve.

“*Coprovider*” means a second approved provider in a Category C registered child development home.

“*Culturally sensitive*” means the knowledge, skills, attributes and beliefs that enable people to work well with, respond effectively to and be supportive of people in a cross-cultural setting.

“*Curriculum*” means a written plan that outlines how students shall be taught. The curriculum consists of the plans for the learning experiences through which children acquire knowledge, skills, abilities, and understanding. The curriculum may include lessons, instructional materials, teaching techniques, or activities.

“*Department*” means the Iowa department of human services.

“*Developmental screening tool*” means a research-based questionnaire or checklist that asks questions about a child’s development, including but not limited to language, movement, thinking, behavior and emotions. Developmental screening shall not be used to establish a diagnosis for a child but rather to help educators, parents, guardians or caretakers determine whether more in-depth assessment may be the next appropriate step.

“*Early childhood-positive behavioral interventions and supports*” or “*EC-PBIS*” means Iowa’s pyramid model initiative which offers early childhood programs a comprehensive, evidence-based approach to promoting social-emotional development and addressing challenging behaviors among young children. EC-PBIS creates nurturing environments for children equipped with supported staff trained to respond to challenging behaviors to support the goal of fostering positive mental health at a young age.

“*EC-PBIS module training*” means a series of training intended for staff working with young children. The training teaches the pyramid model, which is a framework of evidence-based practices for promoting young children’s healthy social and emotional development. There are different versions of the training depending on what setting and what age group the staff member is working with. Versions include:

1. EC-PBIS for Preschool (modules 1-3) intended for staff working in classroom-based programs with ages three to five.
2. EC-PBIS for Infants and Toddlers (modules 1-3) intended for staff working in classroom-based programs with ages zero to three.
3. EC-PBIS for Family Child Care (modules 1-2) intended for staff working with multiple ages of children in family child care settings.

“*Eligible applicants*” means programs meeting the definition of “facility.”

“*Environment rating scale*” or “*ERS*” means a set of early childhood tools or scales developed through the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute of the University of North Carolina

at Chapel Hill. The scales are used to measure classroom and program quality through assessments by a trained, independent observer. The scales may also be used for self-assessment and program improvement. Four scales are available based on the type of program and ages of children in the classroom assessed:

1. Family child care environment rating scale (FCCERS) for programs in a family child care or child development home setting for children from infancy through school age.
2. Infant and toddler environment rating scale (ITERS) for groups of children in center-based care from birth up to three years of age.
3. Early childhood environment rating scale (ECERS) for center-based care with groups of children aged three through five years.
4. School-age care environment rating scale (SACERS) for center-based programs with groups of school-age children aged 5 through 12 years.

“ERS assessment” means an evaluation conducted through an on-site observation of an early childhood care and education classroom or program using one of the environment rating scales: FCCERS, ITERS, ECERS, or SACERS. The assessment is completed by a trained assessor and administered by entities approved by the department or the department’s designee.

“ERS improvement plan” means the action plan created by a program or classroom to lay out ideas for improving program quality. It uses a framework based on ERS criteria and definitions. The ERS improvement plan follows and builds upon a completed ERS classroom or program self-assessment using the appropriate ERS.

“ERS score sheet” means the form used to evaluate and score a program or classroom based on the ERS items and indicators.

“Facility” means a licensed child care center, a preschool, a program operating under the authority of an accredited school district or nonpublic school, or a registered child development home.

“Full-time child care experience” means knowledge and skills learned through employment or volunteer work, at least 30 hours per week or 130 hours per month, in a licensed child care center, a school-aged only program, a preschool, or a registered child development home or as a child care home provider.

“Head Start program performance standards” means the mandatory regulations that grantees and delegate agencies must implement in order to operate a Head Start program. The performance standards are designed to ensure that Head Start goals and objectives are implemented successfully.

“Health and safety checklist for early care and education (ECE) programs” means the nationally recognized quality assessment tool, conducted by a CCNC or another designee as approved by the department, that uses key observable health and safety standards from CFOC. If followed, these standards are most likely to prevent adverse outcomes for children and staff in ECE settings. For the health and safety checklist, “observable” is defined as the following:

1. Requires interaction with the staff or director only to ask where to find an item or identify products.
2. Able to observe when walking through a program over a two-hour period of time.
3. The standard or item can be seen and evaluated in an objective way.
4. Observation may include opening windows, taking measurements (for example, measuring the depth of an impact surface or height of equipment), smelling for odors and reading labels (for example, checking dates on medication labels).
5. Does not require checking records or documents, such as child immunizations, professional development records or written program policies.

“Internal coach” means the staff member, identified by the program administrator, responsible for going into classrooms and supporting staff on the implementation of the EC-PBIS policies and practices. The internal coach shall be a member of the program’s positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) leadership team.

“Iowa early care and education program administrator roles career pathway” means the statewide professional development path (www.ecieducationpathway.org) designed to assist early childhood center

administrators or other early childhood leaders to develop a personal professional development plan as an early childhood educator II or early childhood educator III.

“Iowa early care and education teaching roles career pathway” means the statewide professional development path (www.ecieducationpathway.org) designed to assist early childhood teachers in a licensed center or a child development home to develop a personal professional development plan as an early childhood educator I, an early childhood educator II or an early childhood educator III.

“Iowa early learning standards” or *“IELS”* means a comprehensive resource tool developed to support and enhance children’s learning and development. The IELS provides descriptions of the knowledge, behaviors and skills that children from birth through age five may demonstrate and can be used to share information with anyone who cares for or works with children during the first 2,000 days of life.

“Iowa quality preschool program standards” means standards developed by the Iowa department of education based on the ten standards of the National Association for the Education of Young Children accreditation.

“IQ4K teaching staff qualifications worksheet” means the tool used to calculate an average score in the area of teaching staff qualification using a combination of the educational background and related work experience of identified teaching staff members.

“Leadership team” means the team of people that is working to implement a programwide EC-PBIS. The team is composed of program administrators, teachers and a coach. The leadership team is responsible for guiding the programwide process and making decisions on how to support implementation of the EC-PBIS practices throughout the whole program.

“Lead teacher” means the staff member responsible for providing a safe and developmentally appropriate classroom that complies with legislation, policies, and procedures. The lead teacher nurtures children, plans and provides instruction and other activities, ensures student safety, directs the work of other teachers in the classroom, communicates with parents and guardians, is familiar with emergency procedures, and ensures children with diverse needs are included and have their needs met at all times.

“Meals” means any breakfasts, lunches, snacks and suppers the child care program serves to children while in care.

“National Administrator Credential” or *“NAC”* means the 40-hour comprehensive training for child care and education administrators and successful completion of the certification process offered through the National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA) Commission.

“National School Lunch Program” or *“NSLP”* means a federal CNP operating in public and nonprofit private schools and residential child care institutions. The NSLP provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or no-cost lunches to children each school day.

“On-site supervisor” means the individual responsible for the daily supervision of the program who must be on site daily, either during the hours of operation that children are present or at a minimum of eight hours of the program’s hours of operation.

“Prevent-Teach-Reinforce for Young Children” or *“PTR-YC”* means the training based on the PTR-YC process for use in early childhood care and education settings including pre-K classrooms and consists of teams and goal setting, practical data collection, functional behavioral assessment, intervention planning and implementation. All steps are designed for use by early childhood providers.

“Professional development plan” means the individualized plan used to improve knowledge and skills. Professional development plans shall address the following:

1. Assessment of an individual’s current interests, knowledge and skills.
2. Identification of specific areas for improvement.
3. Development of strategies and resources.
4. Creation of opportunities to reflect and demonstrate an individual’s professional growth.

“Professional development training” means continuing education and career training offered by a department-approved training organization to child care and education providers to help them develop new skills, stay up to date on current trends and advance their careers.

“Program” refers to the complete operation of an eligible facility applying for an IQ4K rating.

“*Program administrator or director*” means a department-approved staff member responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations of a child care program. The person is in charge of all aspects of running the program, including scheduling trainings, planning educational activities, hiring and managing properly trained staff, handling the budget, and establishing well-defined policies and procedures. The person is responsible for everything that takes place within the program and acts as the main communication hub between parents, teachers and children.

“*Programwide PBIS training*” or “*PW PBIS training*” means the training intended for leadership teams of classroom-based early childhood programs. The purpose of the training is to help guide and support the leadership team through the programwide EC-PBIS process.

“*Provider*” means the person or program that applies for registration to provide child care and is approved as a child development home.

“*Quality rating oversight team*” means the workgroup convened to provide oversight and guidance to the department regarding Iowa’s QRIS.

“*School-aged only program*” means an eligible facility providing care primarily to children aged 5 through 12 when school is not in session, including but not limited to before school, after school, out-of-school days during the school year and summer break.

“*Seamless summer option*” or “*SSO*” means a federal CNP which allows school food authorities participating in the National School Lunch or School Breakfast Program to serve meals free of charge to children 18 years and under from low-income areas.

“*Self-assessment*” means an evaluation of current program policies, practices and procedures in comparison to best-practice standards based on the most up-to-date research.

“*Social-emotional-behavioral mental health*” or “*SEBMH*” means the way in which an individual thinks, feels, communicates, acts and learns. These skills contribute to resilience and to how individuals relate to others, respond to stress and emotions, and make choices. Foundational knowledge and skills that promote positive SEBMH include self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision-making, social awareness, and relationship skills that support positive well-being and academic success.

“*Specialized track*” means a modified IQ4K application for eligible applicants who have successfully provided adequate documentation of current verification and certification in one of the department’s preapproved specialized track areas.

“*Staff*” means any individual employed by and working at the facility under the supervision of the program administrator or director or assistant program administrator or assistant director.

“*Summer food service program*” or “*SFSP*” means a federal CNP that reimburses program operators who serve free healthy meals and snacks to children 18 years and under from low-income areas.

“*Teaching staff*” means all lead teachers and assistant teachers.

[ARC 6277C, IAB 4/6/22, effective 6/1/22]

441—118.10(237A) Application for Iowa quality for kids (IQ4K) rating. Eligible applicants shall apply for an IQ4K rating by completing the appropriate application and submitting all required supporting documentation.

118.10(1) Standards to be used. The quality rating will be based on the standards in rules 441—118.21(237A) through 441—118.25(237A) for a child care center, preschool, or program operating under the authority of an accredited school district or nonpublic school; rules 441—118.27(237A) through 441—118.31(237A) for school-aged only programs; and rules 441—118.33(237A) through 441—118.37(237A) for child development homes.

118.10(2) Application for IQ4K. All applications must be accessed, completed and submitted to the applicant’s designated CCR&R representative through the IQ4K database located at iq4k.stateofiodawhs.org/login.

[ARC 6277C, IAB 4/6/22, effective 6/1/22]

441—118.11(237A) Application effective date. The effective date of an approved IQ4K application shall be determined as listed in these subrules.

118.11(1) New or nonrated applicant, Levels 1-4. The application effective date will be the day the department certifies the application is complete and makes the appropriate award determination.

118.11(2) *New or nonrated applicant, Level 5.* The application effective date will be the day the department confirms the program's scores on the ERS and subsequently makes the appropriate award determination. The effective date of a program whose assessment opportunity has been forfeited, as outlined in rule 441—118.25(237A), shall be the date the department determined the assessment opportunity was forfeited.

118.11(3) *Currently rated applicant, Levels 1-4.* If the program's new application is submitted prior to the IQ4K expiration date, the new application's effective date shall be the first day of the month following the program's current expiration date.

118.11(4) *Currently rated applicant, Level 5.* If the program's new application is submitted 30 calendar days prior to the IQ4K expiration date, the new application's effective date shall be the first day of the month following the program's current expiration date.

a. If the program's new application is not submitted 30 calendar days prior to the IQ4K expiration date, the new application effective date will be the day the department confirms the program's scores on the ERS and subsequently makes the appropriate award determination.

b. If the ERS process is not complete by the time of the program's IQ4K expiration date, the program's IQ4K rating will expire and the program will not have an IQ4K rating until the ERS process is complete and a new IQ4K rating is determined.

c. The effective date of a program whose assessment opportunity has been forfeited, as outlined in rule 441—118.25(237A), shall be the date the department determined the assessment opportunity was forfeited.

118.11(5) *Currently rated applicant, mid-rating increase to Levels 2-4.* The application effective date will be the day the department certifies the application is complete and makes the appropriate award determination.

118.11(6) *Currently rated applicant, mid-rating increase to Level 5.* The application effective date will be the day the department confirms the program's scores on the ERS and subsequently makes the appropriate award determination. The effective date of a program whose assessment opportunity has been forfeited, as outlined in rule 441—118.25(237A), shall be the date the department determined the assessment opportunity was forfeited.

[ARC 6277C, IAB 4/6/22, effective 6/1/22]

441—118.12(237A) Approved program's expiration date. An approved program's IQ4K expiration date shall be the last day of the month, two years from the application's effective date.

[ARC 6277C, IAB 4/6/22, effective 6/1/22]

441—118.13(237A) Renewal application submission, Levels 1-4. Eligible applicants may submit an application for IQ4K renewal up to 45 calendar days in advance of the current IQ4K expiration date.

[ARC 6277C, IAB 4/6/22, effective 6/1/22]

441—118.14(237A) Renewal application submission, Level 5. Eligible applicants may submit an application for IQ4K renewal up to 60 calendar days in advance of the current IQ4K expiration date.

[ARC 6277C, IAB 4/6/22, effective 6/1/22]

441—118.15(237A) Increased rating. Currently rated IQ4K programs may submit an application for a higher quality rating no sooner than 12 months after the effective date of the current IQ4K certificate.

[ARC 6277C, IAB 4/6/22, effective 6/1/22]

441—118.16(237A) Change in location of facility. If the location of a rated program changes, the program must notify the department. The program's current IQ4K rating will be invalid, and the program must submit a new application. The department shall make a new determination of the appropriate rating.

[ARC 6277C, IAB 4/6/22, effective 6/1/22]

441—118.17(237A) Ongoing eligibility. All applicants awarded an IQ4K certification level must continue to meet all eligibility requirements of the awarded level throughout the entire certification period.

118.17(1) Programs unable to maintain full compliance with all eligibility requirements at their awarded level may apply for a waiver of eligibility within 30 calendar days of their inability to do so.

118.17(2) Waivers shall be awarded at the discretion of the department, in consultation with the quality rating oversight team.

118.17(3) Programs that are not able to meet all eligibility requirements of the awarded level throughout the entire certification period or that do not receive a waiver will have their IQ4K rating removed immediately.

118.17(4) Provisionally licensed programs are not eligible to apply for IQ4K participation.
[ARC 6277C, IAB 4/6/22, effective 6/1/22]

441—118.18(237A) Monitoring. Programs awarded an IQ4K rating shall agree to scheduled on-site and virtual program monitoring by the department or the department's designee to confirm and review compliance with criteria of awarded IQ4K rating.

[ARC 6277C, IAB 4/6/22, effective 6/1/22]

441—118.19(237A) Professional development training. Only training taken from a department-approved training organization shall be accepted toward professional training requirements. Secondary education credits shall count as one secondary education credit equaling 15 training hours based on ages of the children served in the program.

[ARC 6277C, IAB 4/6/22, effective 6/1/22]

441—118.20(237A) Rating standards for a child care center, a preschool, or a program operating under the authority of an accredited school district or nonpublic school. To participate in IQ4K QRIS, a child care center, preschool, or program operating under the authority of an accredited school district or nonpublic school shall certify that its facility meets the applicable criteria as defined in rules 441—118.21(237A) through 441—118.25(237A).

118.20(1) Eligible applicants providing adequate documentation of current verification or certification in one of the preapproved specialized track areas shall only be required to satisfy the criteria outlined in the application consistent with their specialized track.

118.20(2) Programs with more than one classroom shall not be eligible to apply using a specialized track application unless over 50 percent of their eligible classrooms meet the specialized track requirements.

118.20(3) Eligible applicants shall be able to earn credit for participation in more than one of the specialized track areas.

[ARC 6277C, IAB 4/6/22, effective 6/1/22]

441—118.21(237A) Criteria for IQ4K—Level 1 child care center, preschool, or program operating under the authority of an accredited school district or nonpublic school. To be rated at a Level 1, an eligible facility must satisfy all of the criteria in each of the seven designated categories listed in Level 1 or complete all of the criteria designated in its respective specialized tracks.

118.21(1) *Nutrition and physical activity.*

a. All staff members who prepare meals shall complete one of the department-approved food safety trainings.

b. A self-assessment and action plan in the area of nutrition shall be completed for an eligible facility.

c. A self-assessment and action plan in the area of physical activity shall be completed for an eligible facility.

118.21(2) *Professional development.*

a. All staff shall complete a professional development plan within six months of each person's hiring date and update the plan annually.

b. All staff shall complete one of the department-identified new staff orientation courses and must provide a valid certificate of completion. Newly hired staff shall have nine months from date of hire to complete this requirement.

118.21(3) *Family and community partnerships.*

a. The program shall provide an orientation for new families.

b. The program shall complete one annual activity that promotes partnerships.

118.21(4) *Teaching staff qualifications.* All lead teachers shall show participation in Tier 1 training or meet a higher tier qualification on the Iowa early care and education teaching roles career pathway within six months of starting employment.

118.21(5) *Teaching and learning.*

a. The program administrator and at least one lead teacher shall complete two hours of training on the Iowa early learning standards.

b. The program shall develop and implement a comprehensive discipline and behavior policy that promotes positive relationships.

118.21(6) *Environment.*

a. The program shall develop and implement, as applicable to ages served, the following policies aligned to CFOC:

- (1) Supervision.
- (2) Safe sleep.
- (3) Playground equipment stability and fall surfacing and inspection.
- (4) Missing child.
- (5) Strangulation prevention.
- (6) Sign in and out tracking system for children and visitors.

b. The program shall submit one of the following annually:

(1) Form 470-5676: IQ4K Interaction and Relationship Self-Assessment, which shall be completed by teaching staff.

(2) CLASS assessment for the age level being served completed for each classroom by a trained observer.

(3) Teaching pyramid observation tool (TPOT) or teacher pyramid infant toddler observation scale (TPITOS) assessment tools for infants and toddlers completed for each classroom by a trained observer.

118.21(7) *Leadership and administration.*

a. All staff shall complete Form 470-5680: IQ4K Staff Self-Assessment annually.

b. The program administrator shall complete Form 470-5677: IQ4K Program Assessment annually.

[ARC 6277C, IAB 4/6/22, effective 6/1/22]

441—118.22(237A) Criteria for IQ4K—Level 2 child care center, preschool, or program operating under the authority of an accredited school district or nonpublic school. To be rated at a Level 2, an eligible facility must satisfy all of the criteria in each of the seven designated categories listed in Levels 1 and 2 or complete all of the criteria designated in its respective specialized tracks for Levels 1 and 2.

118.22(1) *Nutrition and physical activity.*

a. The program shall choose one of the following:

- (1) The program shall actively participate in CACFP, NSLP, or another department-approved CNP.
- (2) The program shall complete all of the following as applicable to ages served:

1. Program staff and their supervisor planning the menu shall complete the CACFP Steps to Success module 2 lessons as identified by the department that cover the CACFP meal pattern.

2. Infant lead teachers and their supervisor shall complete the video “CACFP Child Care Center Infant Staff Training” or Iowa CACFP Infant Training—Steps to Success module 15, parts as identified by the department.

3. All lead teachers and their supervisors responsible for mealtime supervision shall complete the video “CACFP Child Care Center Staff Training” or the Iowa CACFP Wellness module—Meaningful Mealtimes.

b. The program shall identify and implement one physical activity goal from the completed action plan in Level 1.

118.22(2) Professional development.

a. All staff who administer medication shall complete the Medication Administration Skills Competency Course or other training as approved by the department and hold a valid certification of completion.

b. All staff who administer medication shall also successfully complete a competency skills evaluation assessment checklist or department-approved equivalent and hold a valid certification of completion. There shall be one person who meets these criteria present on site in the program at all times.

c. All teaching staff shall complete ten annual training hours of professional development.

118.22(3) Family and community partnerships.

a. The program shall offer one conference with each family per year to discuss each child's progress, strengths, and needs in all developmental areas.

b. Programs shall share child assessment information with the child's family.

c. The program shall complete two activities annually that promote partnerships.

118.22(4) Teaching staff qualifications. All lead teachers shall meet Tier 1, step 1 of 40 hours of training toward a CDA or shall meet a higher tier qualification on the Iowa early care and education teaching roles career pathway.

118.22(5) Teaching and learning.

a. The program shall use a curriculum that is aligned with the Iowa early learning standards, addresses the multiple domain areas, and is specific to the ages of the children the program serves.

b. The program shall develop and implement a policy that eliminates or severely limits expulsion, suspension, and punitive or other exclusionary discipline.

c. The program shall develop and implement policies regarding the use of an approved developmental screening tool for all children within 60 days of enrollment and at least annually to identify children who may need additional evaluation and intervention strategies.

118.22(6) Environment.

a. The program administrator or assistant administrator shall complete an ERS training, choosing between ITERS, ECERS or SACERS, and provide a certificate of completion.

b. The program shall provide an environment supportive to, and encouraging of, culture, age, race, ability, special needs, and gender diversity.

c. The program shall develop and implement a tobacco-free and nicotine-free policy aligned to the Iowa department of public health's policy guidelines.

118.22(7) Leadership and administration.

a. The program administrator shall complete and annually update Form 470-5679: IQ4K Quality Improvement Action Plan.

b. All staff shall receive a written evaluation at least once a year.

c. The program administrator shall have at least two years of full-time experience working in the field.

[ARC 6277C, IAB 4/6/22, effective 6/1/22]

441—118.23(237A) Criteria for IQ4K—Level 3 child care center, preschool, or program operating under the authority of an accredited school district or nonpublic school. To be rated at a Level 3, an eligible facility must satisfy all of the criteria in each of the seven designated categories listed in Levels 1, 2 and 3 or complete all of the criteria designated in its respective specialized tracks for Levels 1, 2 and 3.

118.23(1) Nutrition and physical activity.

a. The program shall choose one of the following:

(1) The program shall actively participate in CACFP, NSLP, or another department-approved CNP.

(2) If exempt from CACFP or NSLP, the program shall identify and implement two nutrition goals from the completed action plan in Level 1.

1. Programs providing adequate documentation they provide care for four hours a day or less are exempt from the CACFP or NSLP participation requirement.

2. Nonprofit programs shall qualify for an exemption from the CACFP or NSLP requirement if they provide adequate documentation that meets one of the following criteria:

- The percentage of children enrolled in the program qualifying for free or reduced meals is five percent or less.
- The program's licensed capacity is 30 or less.
- The program serves two or fewer meals or snacks per day.
- The program is open and operating three days a week or less.

3. For-profit programs shall qualify for an exemption from the CACFP or NSLP requirement if they are able to provide adequate documentation that the percentage of children enrolled in the program qualifying for free or reduced meals is 25 percent or less.

b. The program shall identify and implement two physical activity goals from the completed action plan in Level 1.

118.23(2) Professional development. All teaching staff shall complete ten annual training hours of professional development.

118.23(3) Family and community partnerships.

a. The program shall promote culturally sensitive practices and procedures.

b. The program shall complete three activities annually that promote partnerships.

118.23(4) Teaching staff qualifications. The average score for all lead teachers shall be three points or more on the IQ4K teaching staff qualifications worksheet.

118.23(5) Teaching and learning.

a. The program shall utilize an appropriate assessment tool throughout the year that aligns with the curriculum to gather information on each child's strengths, progress, and needs.

b. The program shall share community resources with families as needed based on the information gathered from the child's assessment.

c. The program shall develop and implement policies and procedures for inclusive practices for children with diverse needs, including those with identified disabilities, language barriers, identified behavioral needs, or specialized health needs.

118.23(6) Environment.

a. Thirty percent or more of lead teachers shall complete an appropriate ERS training, choosing between ITERS, ECERS or SACERS as applicable to ages served, and provide a certificate of completion.

b. The program shall participate in the completion of the health and safety checklist for early care and education programs.

c. The program shall develop and implement a policy regarding oral health aligned with CFOC.

118.23(7) Leadership and administration.

a. The program administrator shall complete one of the following:

(1) NAC or another DHS-approved credential.

(2) Thirty training hours (or more) in early childhood and ten training hours or more in leadership, administration, or management.

b. The program administrator shall have one of the following:

(1) Three years or more of full-time experience working in the field.

(2) One year or more full-time experience as a program administrator.

[ARC 6277C, IAB 4/6/22, effective 6/1/22]

441—118.24(237A) Criteria for IQ4K—Level 4 child care center, preschool, or program operating under the authority of an accredited school district or nonpublic school. To be rated at a Level 4, an eligible facility must satisfy all of the criteria in each of the seven designated categories listed in Levels 1, 2, 3 and 4 or complete all of the criteria designated in its respective specialized tracks for Levels 1, 2, 3 and 4.

118.24(1) Nutrition and physical activity.

a. The program shall choose one of the following:

- (1) The program shall actively participate in CACFP, NSLP, or another department-approved CNP and shall identify and implement one nutrition goal from the completed action plan in Level 1.

- (2) If exempt from CACFP or NSLP, the program shall identify and implement three nutrition goals from the completed action plan in Level 1.

b. The program shall identify and implement three physical activity goals from the completed action plan in Level 1.

118.24(2) Professional development.

a. All teaching staff shall complete 12 annual hours or more of professional development.

b. Sixty percent or more of all lead teachers shall complete the applicable EC-PBIS trainings based on age groups served.

- (1) EC-PBIS Preschool modules 1 and 2.

- (2) EC-PBIS Infant and Toddler modules 1 and 2.

118.24(3) Family and community partnerships. The program shall complete four activities annually that promote partnerships.

118.24(4) Teaching staff qualifications. The average score for all teaching staff shall be four points or more on the IQ4K teaching staff qualification worksheet.

118.24(5) Teaching and learning.

a. The teaching staff shall use assessment data and information gathered about children and families to make changes in their learning environment and activities.

b. The teaching staff shall participate in planning with families and outside experts, as needed, for children with diverse needs, including those with identified disabilities, language barriers, identified behavioral needs, and specialized health needs.

118.24(6) Environment.

a. Sixty percent or more of lead teachers shall complete an appropriate ERS training choosing between ITERS, ECERS or SACERS as applicable to ages served, and provide a certificate of completion.

b. One-third of all classrooms shall complete the ERS scoresheet with self-assessment and improvement plan using a minimum of one classroom per scale, if applicable.

c. The program shall score an average of 2.5 or higher on the health and safety checklist for early care and education.

118.24(7) Leadership and administration.

a. The program administrator shall meet Tier 1 or higher on the Iowa early care and education program administrator roles career pathway.

b. The program administrator shall have two or more years of full-time experience as a program administrator.

[ARC 6277C, IAB 4/6/22, effective 6/1/22]

441—118.25(237A) Criteria for IQ4K—Level 5 child care center, preschool, or program operating under the authority of an accredited school district or nonpublic school.

118.25(1) Criteria for each category. To be rated at Level 5, an eligible facility must satisfy all of the criteria in each of the seven designated categories listed in Levels 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 or complete all of the criteria designated in its respective specialized tracks for Levels 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. To be rated at a Level 5, an eligible facility must also meet the following criteria:

a. Minimum score. The facility must earn a minimum score of 5.0 in each assessed classroom on the appropriate ERS.

b. Approved assessor. An assessor approved by the department or department's designee must perform an environment rating assessment.

c. Number of classrooms assessed. At least one-third of the facility's classrooms must be assessed, including at least one classroom in each age group serviced by the facility.

d. Time frame for assessment. Programs eligible for ERS assessment must undergo their assessment within 90 days of department approval unless an extension is requested and approved by the department.

e. Assessments not done timely. Programs that do not undergo their assessment within 90 days of approval by the department or do not receive an approved extension from the department shall forfeit their opportunity for an assessment and will be awarded an IQ4K Level 4 rating with an effective date as outlined in rule 441—118.11(237A).

118.25(2) Nutrition and physical activity.

a. The program shall choose one of the following:

(1) The program shall actively participate in CACFP, NSLP, or another department-approved CNP and shall identify and implement two nutrition goals from the completed action plan in Level 1.

(2) If exempt from CACFP or NSLP, the program shall identify and implement four nutrition goals from the completed action plan in Level 1.

b. The program shall identify and implement four physical activity goals from the completed action plan in Level 1.

118.25(3) Professional development.

a. All teaching staff shall complete 12 annual hours or more of professional development.

b. Sixty percent or more of all lead teachers and the internal coach shall complete the EC-PBIS trainings as follows:

(1) EC-PBIS Preschool modules 3a and 3b.

(2) EC-PBIS Infant and Toddler modules 3.

(3) Prevent-Teach-Reinforce for Young Children (PTR-YC).

118.25(4) Family and community partnerships.

a. The program shall complete five activities annually that promote partnerships.

b. The program shall offer one additional conference with each family of preschool age children in care, per year, to discuss each child's progress, strengths, and needs in all developmental areas. Assessment information shall be shared with the family.

118.25(5) Teaching staff qualifications. The average score for all teaching staff shall be eight points or more on the IQ4K teaching staff qualification worksheet.

118.25(6) Teaching and learning.

a. The teaching staff shall work with families and other experts to implement instructional and environmental adaptations that support learning for each child, including those with diverse needs, identified disabilities, language barriers, identified behavioral health needs and specialized health needs.

b. The leadership team shall complete PW PBIS training. A leadership team must include an administrator, internal coach and teacher.

118.25(7) Environment.

a. Eighty percent or more of lead teachers shall complete an appropriate ERS training, choosing between ITERS, ECERS or SACERS, as applicable to ages served, and provide a certificate of completion.

b. One-third of all classrooms shall receive an overall score of five or higher on each classroom's ERS assessment when using a minimum of one classroom per scale, if applicable.

c. The program shall score an average of 2.75 or higher on the health and safety checklist for early care and education.

118.25(8) Leadership and administration.

a. The program administrator shall meet Tier 2 or higher on the Iowa early care and education program administrator roles career pathway.

b. The program administrator shall have three or more years of full-time experience as a program administrator.

[ARC 6277C, IAB 4/6/22, effective 6/1/22]

441—118.26(237A) Rating standards for school-aged only programs.

118.26(1) To participate in IQ4K QRIS, a school-aged only program shall certify that its facility meets the applicable criteria as defined in rules 441—118.27(237A) through 441—118.31(237A).

118.26(2) The following program requirements apply:

a. Eligible applicants providing adequate documentation of current verification or certification in one of the preapproved specialized track areas shall only be required to satisfy the criteria outlined in the application consistent with their specialized track.

b. Programs with more than one classroom shall not be eligible to apply using a specialized track application unless over 50 percent of their eligible classrooms meet the specialized track requirements.

c. Eligible applicants shall be able to earn credit for participation in more than one of the specialized track areas.

[ARC 6277C, IAB 4/6/22, effective 6/1/22]

441—118.27(237A) Criteria for IQ4K—Level 1 school-aged only programs. To be rated at a Level 1, an eligible facility must satisfy all of the criteria in each of the six designated categories listed in Level 1 or complete all of the criteria designated in its respective specialized tracks.

118.27(1) *Nutrition and physical activity.*

a. The program administrator and any staff members who prepare meals shall complete one of the department-approved food safety trainings.

b. A self-assessment and action plan in the area of nutrition shall be completed for an eligible facility.

c. A self-assessment and action plan in the area of physical activity shall be completed for an eligible facility.

118.27(2) *Professional development.*

a. All staff shall complete a professional development plan within six months of each person's hiring date and update the plan annually.

b. All staff shall complete one of the department-identified new staff orientation courses and must provide a valid certificate of completion. Newly hired staff shall have nine months from date of hire to complete this requirement.

118.27(3) *Family and community partnerships.*

a. The program shall provide an orientation for new families.

b. The program shall complete one annual activity that promotes partnerships.

118.27(4) *Teaching and learning.*

a. The program shall provide assistance or access to tutors to support homework or students' learning needs.

b. The program shall develop and implement a comprehensive discipline and behavior policy that promotes positive relationships.

c. The program shall develop and implement a comprehensive and age-appropriate schedule of activities.

118.27(5) *Environment.*

a. The program shall develop and implement, as applicable to ages served, the following policies aligned to CFOC:

- (1) Supervision.
- (2) Bullying prevention.
- (3) Playground equipment stability and fall surfacing and inspection.
- (4) Missing child.
- (5) Strangulation prevention.
- (6) Sign in and out tracking system for children and visitors.
- (7) Technology.

b. The program shall submit one of the following annually:

(1) Form 470-5676: IQ4K Interaction and Relationship Self-Assessment, which shall be completed by teaching staff.

(2) CLASS assessment for the age level being served and completed for each classroom by a trained observer.

118.27(6) Leadership and administration.

a. All staff shall complete Form 470-5680: IQ4K Staff Self-Assessment annually.

b. The program administrator shall complete Form 470-5677: IQ4K Program Assessment annually.

c. Meetings for all staff shall be conducted two or more times per year.

[ARC 6277C, IAB 4/6/22, effective 6/1/22]

441—118.28(237A) Criteria for IQ4K—Level 2 school-aged only programs. To be rated at a Level 2, an eligible facility must satisfy all of the criteria in each of the six designated categories listed in Levels 1 and 2 or complete all of the criteria designated in its respective specialized tracks for Levels 1 and 2.

118.28(1) Nutrition and physical activity.

a. The program shall choose one of the following:

(1) The program shall actively participate in CACFP, NSLP or another department-approved CNP.

(2) The program shall complete all of the following as applicable to ages served:

1. Program staff planning the meals and their supervisor shall complete the CACFP Steps to Success module 2 lessons as identified by the department that cover the CACFP meal pattern.

2. All lead staff and their supervisors responsible for mealtime supervision shall complete the video “CACFP School-Age Program Staff Training.”

b. The program shall identify and implement one physical activity goal from the completed action plan in Level 1.

118.28(2) Professional development.

a. All staff who administer medication shall complete the Medication Administration Skills Competency Course or other training as approved by the department and hold a valid certification of completion.

b. All staff who administer medication shall also successfully complete a competency skills evaluation assessment checklist or department-approved equivalent and hold a valid certification of completion. There shall be one person who meets these criteria present on site in the program at all times.

c. All staff shall complete ten annual training hours of professional development.

118.28(3) Family and community partnerships.

a. The program shall offer one conference with each family per year to discuss each child’s progress, strengths, and needs in all developmental areas.

b. The program shall complete two activities annually that promote partnerships.

118.28(4) Teaching and learning.

a. The program shall develop and implement a curriculum that includes all of the following opportunities each day:

(1) Active physical activity.

(2) Creative expression.

(3) Cooperative games.

(4) Free choice with a variety of materials.

(5) Academic support.

b. The program shall develop and implement a policy that eliminates or severely limits expulsion, suspension, and punitive or other exclusionary discipline.

118.28(5) Environment.

a. The program administrator or assistant administrator shall complete the SACERS training and provide a certificate of completion.

b. The program shall provide an environment supportive to and encouraging of culture, age, race, ability, special needs, and gender diversity.

c. The program shall develop and implement a tobacco-free and nicotine-free policy aligned to the Iowa department of public health's policy guidelines.

118.28(6) Leadership and administration.

a. The program administrator shall complete and annually update Form 470-5679: IQ4K Quality Improvement Action Plan.

b. All staff shall receive a written evaluation at least once a year.

c. The program administrator shall have at least two or more years of full-time experience working in the field.

[ARC 6277C, IAB 4/6/22, effective 6/1/22]

441—118.29(237A) Criteria for IQ4K—Level 3 school-aged only programs. To be rated at a Level 3, an eligible facility must satisfy all of the criteria in each of the six designated categories listed in Levels 1, 2 and 3 or complete all of the criteria designated in its respective specialized tracks for Levels 1, 2 and 3.

118.29(1) Nutrition and physical activity.

a. The program shall choose one of the following:

(1) The program shall actively participate in CACFP, NSLP or another department-approved CNP.

(2) If exempt from CACFP or NSLP, the program shall identify and implement two nutrition goals from the completed action plan in Level 1.

1. Programs providing adequate documentation that they provide care for four hours a day or less are exempt from the CACFP or NSLP participation requirement.

2. Nonprofit programs shall qualify for an exemption from the CACFP or NSLP requirement if they provide adequate documentation that meets one of the following criteria:

- The percentage of children enrolled in the program qualifying for free or reduced meals is five percent or less.

- The program's licensed capacity is 30 children or fewer.

- The program serves two or fewer meals or snacks per day.

- The program is open and operating three days a week or less.

3. For-profit programs shall qualify for an exemption from the CACFP or NSLP requirement if they are able to provide adequate documentation that the percentage of children enrolled in the program qualifying for free or reduced meals is 25 percent or less.

b. The program shall identify and implement two physical activity goals from the completed action plan in Level 1.

118.29(2) Professional development. All staff shall complete ten or more annual training hours of professional development.

118.29(3) Family and community partnerships.

a. The program shall promote culturally sensitive practices and procedures.

b. The program shall complete three activities annually that promote partnerships.

118.29(4) Teaching and learning.

a. Program staff shall utilize an appropriate tool throughout the year to gather information about children's strengths, progress, and needs.

b. The program shall share community resources with families as needed based on the information gathered.

c. The program shall develop and implement policies and procedures for inclusive practices for children with diverse needs, including those with identified disabilities, language barriers, identified behavioral needs, or specialized health needs.

118.29(5) Environment.

a. The on-site supervisor shall complete the SACERS training series and provide a certificate of completion.

b. The program shall participate in the completion of the health and safety checklist for early care and education programs.

118.29(6) Leadership and administration.

- a. The program administrator shall complete:
 - (1) NAC or another department-approved credential, or
 - (2) Thirty training hours or more in a related field and ten training hours or more in leadership.
 - b. The program administrator shall have three years or more of full-time experience working in the field or one year or more of full-time experience as a program administrator.
 - c. The on-site supervisor shall have 30 training hours or more in a related field and two years or more of full-time experience working in the field.
- [ARC 6277C, IAB 4/6/22, effective 6/1/22]

441—118.30(237A) Criteria for IQ4K—Level 4 school-aged only programs. To be rated at a Level 4, an eligible facility must satisfy all of the criteria in each of the six designated categories listed in Levels 1, 2, 3 and 4 or complete all of the criteria designated in its respective specialized tracks for Levels 1, 2, 3 and 4.

118.30(1) Nutrition and physical activity.

- a. The program shall choose one of the following:
 - (1) The program shall actively participate in CACFP, NSLP or another department-approved CNP and shall identify and implement one nutrition goal from the completed action plan in Level 1.
 - (2) If exempt from CACFP or NSLP, the program shall identify and implement three nutrition goals from the completed action plan in Level 1.
- b. The program shall identify and implement three physical activity goals from the completed action plan in Level 1.

118.30(2) Professional development.

- a. All staff shall complete 12 or more annual training hours of professional development.
- b. Thirty percent or more of all staff shall complete six or more hours of department or IQ4K-approved training in the area of SEBMH.

118.30(3) Family and community partnerships. The program shall complete four activities annually that promote partnerships.

118.30(4) Teaching and learning.

- a. Staff shall use information gathered about children and families to make changes in their learning environment and activities.
- b. Staff shall participate in planning with families and outside experts as needed for children with diverse needs, including those with identified disabilities, language barriers, identified behavioral needs, or specialized health needs.

118.30(5) Environment.

- a. One staff member or more shall complete the SACERS training series and provide a certificate of completion.
- b. One-third of classrooms shall complete the SACERS scoresheet with self-assessment and an improvement plan with a minimum of one classroom per scale if applicable.
- c. The program shall score an average of 2.5 or higher on the health and safety checklist for early care and education.

118.30(6) Leadership and administration.

- a. The program administrator shall have 120 training hours or more in a related field and 10 training hours or more in leadership, administration or management.
- b. The program administrator shall have two years or more of full-time experience as a program administrator.
- c. The on-site supervisor shall have 90 training hours or more in a related field and one year or more of full-time experience as an on-site supervisor.

[ARC 6277C, IAB 4/6/22, effective 6/1/22]

441—118.31(237A) Criteria for IQ4K—Level 5 school-aged only programs.

118.31(1) Criteria for each category. To be rated at a Level 5, an eligible facility must satisfy all of the criteria in each of the six designated categories listed in Levels 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 or complete all of the

criteria designated in its respective specialized tracks for Levels 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. To be rated at a Level 5, an eligible facility must also meet the following criteria:

a. Minimum score. The facility must earn a minimum score of 5.0 in each assessed classroom on the SACERS assessment.

b. Approved assessor. An assessor approved by the department or department's designee must perform the ERS assessment.

c. Number of classrooms assessed. At least one-third of the facility's classrooms must be assessed, including at least one classroom in each age group served by the facility.

d. Time frame for assessment. Programs eligible for an ERS assessment must undergo their assessment within 90 days of department approval unless an extension is requested and approved by the department.

e. Assessments not done timely. Programs that do not undergo their assessment within 90 days of approval by the department or do not receive an approved extension from the department shall forfeit their opportunity for an assessment and will be awarded an IQ4K Level 4 rating with an effective date as outlined in rule 441—118.11(237A).

118.31(2) Nutrition and physical activity.

a. The program shall choose one of the following:

(1) The program shall actively participate in CACFP, NSLP or another department-approved CNP and shall identify and implement two nutrition goals from the completed action plan in Level 1.

(2) If exempt from CACFP or NSLP, the program shall identify and implement four nutrition goals from the completed action plan in Level 1.

b. The program shall identify and implement four physical activity goals from the completed action plan in Level 1.

118.31(3) Professional development.

a. All staff shall complete 12 or more annual training hours of professional development.

b. Sixty percent or more of all staff shall complete six or more hours of department-approved or IQ4K-approved training in the area of SEBMH.

118.31(4) Family and community partnerships. The program shall complete five activities annually that promote partnerships.

118.31(5) Teaching and learning. The teaching staff shall work with families and other experts to implement instructional and environmental adaptations that support the learning for each child including those with diverse needs, language barriers, identified behavioral needs, or specialized health needs.

118.31(6) Environment.

a. Eighty percent or more of lead teachers shall complete the SACERS training series and provide a certificate of completion.

b. One-third of classrooms shall receive an overall score of 5.0 or higher on the SACERS assessment with a minimum of one classroom per scale if applicable.

c. The program shall score an average of 2.75 or higher on the health and safety checklist for early care and education.

118.31(7) Leadership and administration.

a. The program administrator shall have 9 or more credit hours in a related field and 12 or more training hours in leadership, administration or management.

b. The program administrator shall have three or more years of full-time experience as a program administrator.

c. The on-site supervisor shall have six or more credit hours in a related field and two or more years of full-time experience as an on-site supervisor.

[ARC 6277C, IAB 4/6/22, effective 6/1/22]

441—118.32(237A) Rating standards for registered child development homes. To participate in IQ4K QRIS, a registered child development home shall certify that it meets the applicable criteria as defined in rules 441—118.33(237A) through 441—118.37(237A). The following program requirements apply:

1. For Category C homes operating with an approved coprovider, both providers must satisfy the applicable criteria where designated.

2. Eligible applicants providing documentation of current verification or certification in one of the preapproved specialized track areas shall only be required to satisfy the criteria outlined in the application consistent with their specialized track.

3. Eligible applicants shall be able to earn credit for participation in more than one of the specialized track areas.

[ARC 6277C, IAB 4/6/22, effective 6/1/22]

441—118.33(237A) Criteria for IQ4K—Level 1 rating standards for registered child development homes. To be rated at Level 1, an eligible registered child development home must satisfy all of the criteria in each of the six designated categories listed in Level 1 or complete all of the criteria designated in its respective specialized tracks for Levels 1 and 2.

118.33(1) Nutrition and physical activity.

a. The provider and coprovider, where applicable, shall complete one of the department-approved food safety trainings.

b. The program shall complete a self-assessment and create an action plan in the area of nutrition.

c. The program shall complete a self-assessment and create an action plan in the area of physical activity.

118.33(2) Professional development. The provider and coprovider, where applicable, shall complete a professional plan annually.

118.33(3) Family and community partnerships.

a. The program shall provide an orientation for new families.

b. The program shall complete one annual activity that promotes partnerships.

118.33(4) Provider qualifications. The provider and coprovider, where applicable, shall have one year or more of full-time child care experience.

118.33(5) Teaching and learning.

a. The provider and coprovider, where applicable, shall complete two hours of training on the Iowa early learning standards.

b. The program shall develop and implement a comprehensive discipline and behavior policy that promotes positive relationships.

118.33(6) Environment.

a. The program shall develop and implement, as applicable to ages served, the following policies aligned to CFOC:

- (1) Supervision.
- (2) Safe sleep.
- (3) Missing child.
- (4) Strangulation prevention.
- (5) Sign in and out tracking system for children and visitors.

b. The provider and coprovider, where applicable, shall complete Form 470-5676: IQ4K Interaction and Relationship Self-Assessment.

c. The program shall annually complete Form 470-5678: IQ4K Program Assessment.

[ARC 6277C, IAB 4/6/22, effective 6/1/22]

441—118.34(237A) Criteria for IQ4K—Level 2 rating standards for registered child development homes. To be rated at a Level 2, an eligible registered child development home must satisfy all of the criteria in each of the six designated categories listed in Levels 1 and 2 or complete all of the criteria designated in its respective specialized tracks.

118.34(1) Nutrition and physical activity.

a. The program shall choose one of the following:

- (1) The program shall actively participate in CACFP.
- (2) The provider and coprovider, where applicable, shall complete all of the following as applicable to ages served:

1. Iowa CACFP Steps to Success module 2 lessons as identified by the department that cover the CACFP Meal Pattern.
 2. Iowa CACFP Infant Training—Steps to Success module 15, parts one and two.
 3. Iowa CACFP Wellness module—Meaningful Mealtimes.
- b.* The program shall identify and implement one physical activity goal from the completed action plan in Level 1.

118.34(2) Professional development. There shall be one person who meets the following criteria present on site in the program at all times.

- a.* The provider and coprovider, where applicable, shall complete ChildNet Training.
- b.* The provider and coprovider, where applicable, shall complete 15 hours or more of annual training hours of professional development.
- c.* The provider shall complete the medication administration skills competency course or other department-approved training and hold a valid certification of completion.
- d.* The provider shall also successfully complete a competency skills evaluation assessment checklist or department-approved equivalent and hold a valid certification of completion.

118.34(3) Family and community partnerships.

- a.* The program shall offer one conference with each family annually to discuss each child's progress, strengths and needs in all developmental areas. Programs shall share child assessment information with the child's family.
- b.* The program shall complete two activities annually that promote partnerships.

118.34(4) Provider qualifications. The provider and coprovider, where applicable, shall meet one of the following:

- a.* Two years or more of full-time experience in child care.
- b.* Six college credit hours or more in education specific to the age group for whom care is provided.

118.34(5) Teaching and learning.

- a.* The program shall develop and implement a daily schedule with predictable routines that are developmentally appropriate for all ages served.
- b.* The program shall develop and implement a policy that eliminates or severely limits expulsion, suspension, and punitive or other exclusionary discipline.
- c.* The program shall develop and implement policies regarding the use of an approved developmental screening tool for all children in care within 60 days of enrollment and at least annually to identify children who may need additional evaluation and intervention strategies.

118.34(6) Environment.

- a.* The program shall provide an environment supportive to, and encouraging of, culture, age, race, ability, special needs, and gender diversity.
- b.* The program shall develop and implement a policy regarding playground equipment stability and fall surfacing and inspection which are aligned with CFOC.
- c.* The program shall develop and implement a tobacco-free and nicotine-free policy.
- d.* The program shall annually complete and update Form 470-5679: IQ4K Quality Improvement Action Plan.

[ARC 6277C, IAB 4/6/22, effective 6/1/22]

441—118.35(237A) Criteria for IQ4K—Level 3 rating standards for registered child development homes. To be rated at a Level 3, an eligible registered child development home must satisfy all of the criteria in each of the six designated categories listed in Levels 1, 2 and 3 or complete all of the criteria designated in its respective specialized tracks for Levels 1, 2 and 3.

118.35(1) Nutrition and physical activity.

- a.* The program shall actively participate in CACFP.
- b.* The program shall identify and implement two physical activity goals from the completed action plan in Level 1.

118.35(2) Professional development.

- a. The provider and coprovider, where applicable, shall complete ChildNet Certification.
- b. The provider and coprovider, where applicable, shall choose one of the following trainings to complete their initial IQ4K rating:
 - (1) Complete one module of the Program for Infant and Toddler Care.
 - (2) Complete module 1 of the EC-PBIS for Family Child Care and complete the following implementation guide checklists and review with coach:
 - 1. Relationships.
 - 2. Environments.
 - 3. Expectations, Activities and Feedback.
 - (3) Complete School Age Matters training.
- c. The provider and coprovider, where applicable, shall choose one of the other trainings listed above for their subsequent IQ4K ratings until all of the trainings applicable per ages served have been completed.
- d. Once the provider and coprovider, as applicable, have completed all of the age applicable trainings, the provider and coprovider shall complete 18 annual hours of approved professional development training on all subsequent IQ4K applications.

118.35(3) *Family and community partnerships.*

- a. The program shall promote culturally sensitive practices and procedures.
- b. The program shall complete three activities annually that promote partnerships.

118.35(4) *Provider qualifications.* The provider and coprovider, where applicable, shall meet one of the following:

- a. Three years or more of child care experience.
- b. Nine or more college credit hours in education, specific to the age group for whom care is provided.

118.35(5) *Teaching and learning.*

- a. The program shall utilize an appropriate assessment tool throughout the year that aligns with the curriculum to gather information on each child's strengths, progress, and needs.
- b. The program shall share community resources with families as needed, based on the information gathered from the child's assessment.
- c. The program shall develop and implement policies and procedures for inclusive practices for children with diverse needs, including those with identified disabilities, language barriers, identified behavioral needs, and specialized health needs.

118.35(6) *Environment.*

- a. The provider shall complete the FCCERS training and provide a certificate of completion.
- b. A self-assessment and action plan in the area of nutrition shall be completed for an eligible facility.
- c. A self-assessment and action plan in the area of physical activity shall be completed for an eligible facility.

[ARC 6277C, IAB 4/6/22, effective 6/1/22]

441—118.36(237A) Criteria for IQ4K—Level 4 rating standards for registered child development homes. To be rated at Level 4, an eligible registered child development home must satisfy all of the criteria in each of the six designated categories listed in Levels 1, 2, 3 and 4 or complete all of the criteria designated in its respective specialized tracks for Levels 1, 2, 3 and 4.

118.36(1) *Nutrition and physical activity.*

- a. The program shall actively participate in CACFP.
- b. The program shall implement one nutrition goal from the completed action plan in Level 1.
- c. The program shall identify and implement three physical activity goals from the completed action plan in Level 1.

118.36(2) *Professional development.*

- a. The provider and coprovider, where applicable, shall choose one of the following trainings to complete for their initial IQ4K rating:

(1) Complete two additional modules of the Program for Infant and Toddler Care.
 (2) Complete module 2 of the EC-PBIS for Family Child Care and complete the following implementation guide checklists and review with coach:

1. Emotions and Emotional Regulation.

2. Friendships and Problem Solving.

b. The provider and coprovider, where applicable, shall choose one of the other trainings listed above for their subsequent IQ4K ratings until all of the trainings applicable per ages served have been completed.

c. Once the provider and coprovider, as applicable, have completed all of the age applicable trainings, the provider and coprovider shall complete 20 annual hours of approved professional development training on all subsequent IQ4K applications.

118.36(3) *Family and community partnerships.* The program shall complete four activities annually that promote partnerships.

118.36(4) *Provider qualifications.* The provider and coprovider, where applicable, shall meet one of the following:

a. The provider shall meet Tier 2 or higher on the Iowa early care and education teaching roles career pathway.

b. The provider shall have three or more years of full-time child care experience.

118.36(5) *Teaching and learning.*

a. The program shall use information gathered about children and families to make changes in their learning environment and activities.

b. The program shall participate in planning with families and other experts, as needed, for children with diverse needs, including those with identified disabilities, language barriers, identified behavioral health needs and specialized health needs.

118.36(6) *Environment.*

a. The program shall complete the FCCERS scoresheet with self-assessment and improvement plan.

b. The program shall score an average of 2.5 or higher on the health and safety checklist for early care and education programs.

[ARC 6277C, IAB 4/6/22, effective 6/1/22]

441—118.37(237A) Criteria for IQ4K—Level 5 rating standards for registered child development homes.

118.37(1) *Criteria for each category.* To be rated at a Level 5, an eligible registered child development home must satisfy all of the criteria in each of the six designated categories listed in Levels 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 or complete all of the criteria designated in its respective specialized tracks for Levels 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. To be rated at a Level 5 the following criteria must also be met:

a. Minimum score. The program must earn a minimum score of 5.0 on the FCCERS assessment.

b. Approved assessor. An assessor approved by the department or department's designee must perform the ERS assessment.

c. Time frame for assessment. Programs eligible for an ERS assessment must undergo their assessment within 90 days of department approval unless an extension is requested and approved by the department.

d. Assessments not done timely. Programs that do not undergo their assessment within 90 days of approval by the department or that do not receive an approved extension from the department shall forfeit their opportunity for an assessment and will be awarded an IQ4K Level 4 rating with an effective date as outlined in rule 441—118.11(237A).

118.37(2) *Nutrition and physical activity.*

a. The program shall actively participate in CACFP.

b. The program shall identify and implement two nutrition goals from the completed action plan in Level 1.

c. The program shall identify and implement four physical activity goals from the completed action plan in Level 1.

118.37(3) Professional development.

a. The provider shall choose one of the following trainings to complete the initial IQ4K rating:

(1) Complete two additional modules of the Program for Infant and Toddler Care.

(2) Complete EC-PBIS for Family Child Care Benchmarks of Quality and action plan for continued implementation and growth with coach. The EC-PBIS for Family Child Care must be completed.

b. The provider shall then choose one of the other trainings listed above for the subsequent IQ4K ratings until all of the trainings applicable per ages served have been completed.

c. Once the provider has completed all of the age-applicable trainings, the provider shall complete 22 annual hours of approved professional development training on all subsequent IQ4K applications.

118.37(4) Family and community partnerships. The program shall complete five activities annually that promote partnerships.

118.37(5) Provider qualifications.

a. The provider shall meet Tier 2 or higher on the Iowa early care and education teaching roles career pathway.

b. The provider shall have four or more years of full-time child care experience.

118.37(6) Teaching and learning. The program shall work with families and other experts to implement instructional and environmental adaptations that support the learning for each child, including those with diverse needs, identified disabilities, language barriers, identified behavioral health needs and specialized health needs.

118.37(7) Environment.

a. The program shall achieve a score of 5.0 or higher on the FCCERS assessment.

b. The program shall score an average of 2.75 or higher on the health and safety checklist for early care and education programs.

[ARC 6277C, IAB 4/6/22, effective 6/1/22]

441—118.38(237A) Award of quality rating.

118.38(1) The facility shall display Form 470-5681: IQ4K QRIS rating certificate in a conspicuous place.

118.38(2) Achievement bonuses may be awarded as funds are available.

[ARC 6277C, IAB 4/6/22, effective 6/1/22]

441—118.39(237A) Adverse actions.

118.39(1) An eligible applicant shall be notified of the right to appeal the rating decision in accordance with 441—Chapter 7.

118.39(2) A participant's quality rating shall be revoked if the facility no longer meets the definition of eligible applicant.

[ARC 6277C, IAB 4/6/22, effective 6/1/22]

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