



Application to Participate And Memorandum of Understanding

Every child in Riverside County must have access to a high-quality early learning environment that prepares them to succeed in school and life. At Quality Start Riverside County (QSRC), we work to provide an integrated approach to improving and supporting the quality of Riverside County's early learning environments.

State-funded preschool and infant/toddler programs, licensed child care centers, and family child care homes that serve children through age 5 in Riverside County and have current licenses "In Good Standings," as indicated by Community Care Licensing are eligible to enroll. Priority is given to programs who serve special populations of children, in particular, those located in geographically isolated and rural areas, low-income, children with special needs, children who are homeless or in foster care, and dual-language learners.

Please complete the application form and submit by email to info@qualitystartrc.org. For questions contact info@qualitystartrc.org or (800) 266-3880. Upon review of your application, you will be notified regarding the next steps in the Quality Start process.

Name of Program:

Site Contact Person:

Title:

Site Mailing Address:

Email:

Phone Number:

Type of Program:

Program Services: (check all that apply)

- Children receiving Subsidized Care
- Homeless Children in Foster Care
- Children with an IEP or IFSFP
- Dual-Language Learners
- Infants/Toddlers

QSRC was developed by First 5 Riverside (F5R) and Riverside County Office of Education (RCOE) to designed and implement a comprehensive quality rating system and to support quality improvement in early childhood learning settings across Riverside County. QSRC is made possible through First 5 Riverside, Riverside County Office of Education, and QRIS Block Grant Funding through the California Department of Education.

We are pleased that _____ has chosen to participate in the Quality Start Riverside County (QSRC) Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS). This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is entered into by and between your QSRC Lead Agency (First 5 Riverside or Riverside County Office of Education) and

This MOU defines the terms of your Agency's participation in the project and will become a mutual agreement once signed by First 5 Riverside or Riverside County Office of Education agency representatives. The spirit of this MOU is one of partnership and cooperation and sets forth responsibilities of each party.

The term of this MOU shall commence upon signature by both parties and expires on June 30, 2021 but may be terminated earlier upon written notification from either party.

QUALITY START RIVERSIDE COUNTY LEAD AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES:

- I. Project Components:** Comply with First 5 California IMPACT, QRIS Block Grant, and CA-QRIS (Quality Counts California) Consortium requirements.
 1. Provide a Quality Start Riverside County (QSRC) orientation presentation for the participating program director(s). The orientation will include QRIS and QSRC background information, expectations of participation in the program, a detailed description of the QRIS Matrix Elements and Tiers and how a program earns points to achieve a rating, and an overview of what QSRC offers for providers and for parents.
 2. Provide participating program with QSRC "Participant Guidelines" document, which outlines the program requirements.
 3. Offer support and guidance to the participants in the rating process for each early learning site or family child care home based upon the Quality Counts California Rating Matrix.
 4. Provide materials to assist eligible participants in quality improvement activities.
 5. Provide access to professional development trainings to support programs in meeting the requirements of the QRIS Matrix.
 6. Provide technical assistance (TA) and coaching in areas specific to the CA-QRIS Framework that the program may need in order to improve program quality.
 7. Schedule a Continuous Quality Improvement Plan (CQIP) meeting with the director/owner of the participating program in which to thoroughly review the QRIS, assessment results, and establish an action plan to achieve the desired tier rating.
 8. Ensure Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) and Environmental Rating Scales (ERS) assessments are conducted by reliable external assessors.
 9. Schedule an appointment to gather program data to verify that QRIS tier requirements are met in order to establish a rating.

10. Establish program participant rating to be published on the QRSC website. The Program's quality rating and program information will be posted on a searchable directory accessible to parents and the community.
11. Distribute a QRSC emblem to display at the program site in order to further acknowledge quality improvement efforts and level of quality.
12. Issued at the County's discretion, provide financial quality incentives to early learning centers and family child care homes on tiers 4 and 5 to support maintenance or level increase of site quality. Incentives provided support continuous quality improvement, teacher retention strategies, and classroom and facility improvements.
13. Provide training and technical assistance in the use and implementation of the iPinwheel (Integrated Data Management System) to collect agency, site, session, staff and child level data. This system will also collect the information that will be reported to the California Department of Education and First 5 California for California's Quality Rating and Improvement System (CA-QRIS) Common Data File.

II. Agency Autonomy: QRSC lead agencies support the right of the Agency to determine and administer its policies, programs, services, and budget, except those provisions voluntarily relinquished with the acceptance of this agreement.

III. Inclusiveness and Diversity: QRSC lead agencies will fully comply with all applicable laws concerning unlawful discrimination. QRSC lead agencies will encourage all agencies, as a system, to be inclusive and serve individuals, regardless of their ethnicity and race, religion, ancestry, age, gender, sexual orientation, marital, health, or socio-economic status, physical or mental disability, or geographic location within Riverside County. QRSC lead agencies to provide resources and referrals for training and technical assistance regarding inclusive and culturally sensitive practices.

IV. Cross-Promotion:

1. Privacy rules – QRSC lead agencies will not release personal information regarding any agency or its employees.
2. QRSC lead agencies agree to list Agency name on QRSC marketing materials including the website with the opportunity for a hyperlink to Agency's site.
3. Provide the program with a QRSC emblem and certificate of participation to display at the program site in order to further acknowledge program quality rating and improvement efforts.
4. QRSC lead agencies agree to raise parent and community awareness of Agencies participating in Quality Start Riverside County through marketing and promotional materials.
5. All correspondence to QRSC shall be addressed to:

First 5 Riverside – QRSC
Attention: Carol Abella
585 Technology Court
Riverside, CA 92507

AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES:

- I. **Project Components:** Expectations and Requirements to Participate in Quality Start Riverside County.
 1. Provide QSRC with copies of the provider's current Child Care License(s) through Community Care Licensing.
 2. Remain licensed and in good standing with no administrative action being taken or in the process of being taken. If a program receives notice of action mentioned above, they are required to inform QSRC staff immediately. If a site's license is changed to anything other than "in good standing" the QSRC rating and services to the site will be suspended pending corrective action.
 3. Agency Director will complete a self-assessment and program portfolio.
 4. Develop a Continuous Quality Improvement Plan (CQIP) and between ratings commit to engaging in an ongoing improvement process with technical assistance and coaching support.
 5. To receive program quality rating as per section VI of the California Quality Rating and Improvement System (CA-QRIS) Consortium Implementation Guide, which can be accessed here:
<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1bu2Owz15Sw5tXh9Lw0uNwhL6vcmgQ0en>
 6. Receive ratings by allowing program to receive external ERS and CLASS assessment as scheduled by QSRC, as well as an additional document review and validation for the other elements included in rating.
 7. To provide program, site, session, staff, and child data in iPinwheel, as needed, to rate sites. Child-level data will be visible to the Agency and QSRC iPinwheel; therefore, the implementation of the informed parent consent process will be necessary.
 8. To read and agree to the Terms and Conditions for use of the web-based data system, iPinwheel. Utilize iPinwheel for all required data collection activities (see attachment).
 9. Ensure that director and lead teacher attend professional development trainings in order to meet the QRIS Matrix requirements and improve the quality of the program.
 10. Directors and/or lead teachers will be available for necessary meetings (i.e., Director Orientation, CQIP meetings, document review and rating) and for ERS and CLASS assessments that are scheduled.
 11. Continually work toward improving program quality as defined by the CA-QRIS Matrix, in order to achieve desired tier rating and receive continued monitoring between rating intervals to ensure continued alignment to level of rating.

12. A program's rating will be posted on the searchable directory on the QSRC and RCOE Resource and Referral website upon receiving the tier rating.
13. Implement family engagement with the utilization of Strengthening Families™ Five Protective Factors Framework.
14. Agency Director or designated representative agrees to attend QSRC meetings or remain abreast of QSRC program information.
15. Support local and state campaigns for all quality improvement activities.
16. Collaborate with various Riverside County programs that support increasing quality in Riverside County to Strengthen families. Examples of partnerships include home visitation programs, NAP SACC, and breastfeeding/nutrition.
17. Quality incentive funding is intended for the purposed of purchasing products and/or services that are reasonable and necessary to achieve the goals and objectives of the QSRC.
18. To adhere to the QSRC Participant Guidelines – this outlines the program requirements.

II. Inclusiveness and Diversity: Agency agrees to fully comply with and support all laws concerning non- discrimination. Nothing in this MOU shall be used to lessen the nonsectarian nature of the Agency. Similarly, nothing in this MOU shall be used to interfere with Agency's Board or Owner approved policies and staffing requirements.

III. Cross-Promotion:

1. Agency agrees to market and support Quality Start Riverside County trainings by attending and providing information to others who may want to attend.
2. Agency will display QSRC emblem in a location visible to consumers inside or outside the Agency.
3. Agency agrees to assist QSRC with media products, including press releases, marketing materials, photographs, hosting site visits, and any other information relevant to the program.

IV. Notification of Changes to QSRC: Report any changes in program director or lead teacher to QSRC staff, in writing, within ten (10) business days of said change. An amended MOU must be signed if there is a change in Agency Executive Director or Owner.

All correspondences from agencies shall be addressed to:

First 5 Riverside – QSRC
Attention: Carol Abella
585 Technology Court
Riverside, CA 92507
cabella@rccfc.org
(951) 715-4500

Agency agrees to comply with all applicable provisions of federal, state and local laws, statutes, ordinances, rules, regulations, and permits that now or may in the future become applicable to Agency, Agency operations, equipment, and personnel engaged in the operations covered by this MOU or accruing out of the performance of such operations.

Agency acknowledges and agrees that the QSRC lead agency and QSRC Consortia will retain sole copyright ownership of all educational curriculum and professional development materials developed for the QSRC project.

First 5 Riverside, Riverside County Office of Education, and Agency agree to defend, indemnify, and hold each other, and their respective officers, employees, and agents harmless from any claims, demands or liabilities of any kind or nature, including but not limited to personal injury and property damage arising from or related to this MOU, except for F5R/RCOE or Agency negligent performance pursuant to this MOU.

This MOU constitutes the entire agreement between the parties with respect to the subject matter hereof and supersedes all prior agreements, whether written or oral, concerning the subject matter herein.

This MOU shall become effective upon execution by Agency and First 5 Riverside/Riverside County Office of Education. This MOU may be modified, in writing, by mutual consent of the parties.

Please complete the application form and submit by email to: info@qualitystartrc.org

A fully executed copy will be returned upon signature by First 5 Riverside/Riverside County Office of Education for Agency record.

AGREED:

Agency:

**First 5 Riverside/Riverside County
Office of Education**

Authorized Representative Signature

Authorized Representative Signature

Printed Name

Printed Name

Date

Date