Quality Counts Child Care Grant Program
Instructions & Requirements
July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014

4-C: Community Coordinated Child Care, working in cooperation with the Illinois Department of Human Services, announces the availability of the Quality Counts Child Care (QCCC) Grant funds. Applicants should read the entire QCCC grant pack before completing the application. Attendance at a QCCC Grant Information Session is required for participation in the grant program.

The QCCC Grant Program is designed to support center/community based and family child care in the improvement of quality care provided to infants, toddlers, preschool, and school age children. These funds are to support planned program improvements. They are also to assist providers in the achievement and maintenance of Illinois Quality Counts – Quality Rating System (QRS) or ExceleRate Illinois certification.

The QCCC Grant Program consists of two types of grants:

**Training Grant**- This grant provides training on program quality improvement in a cohort model. A group of providers will meet a set number of times for training and for guidance using a program assessment tool. Using assessment tool results, items can be requested for purchase with grant funding as available.

**Competitive Grant** - This grant provides funding as available through a competitive application process. The applicant must show through documentation that a program improvement assessment tool or process has been completed and used to inform the grant request.

In this QCCC Grant Pack you will find:

Section 1  The QCCC Grant Overview Chart
Section 2  Approved Funding Areas
Section 3  Frequently Asked Questions
Section 4  Grant Application Checklist
Section 5  Commonly Used Terms/Acronyms
Section 6  Application Forms
   1.  Training Grant
   2.  Competitive Grant
Quality Counts Child Care Grants
July 2013 – June 2014

Section 1: Grant Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FCC = family child care</th>
<th>CCC = child care center</th>
<th>Providers must select one (1) grant to apply for per Fiscal Year</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grant</td>
<td></td>
<td>Training Grant (Cohort Model)</td>
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<td>Competitive Grant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Open To</td>
<td>Licensed FCC &amp; CCC</td>
<td>Licensed FCC</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>License Exempt FCC &amp; CCC</td>
<td>Licensed CCC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Eligibility</td>
<td>1. Program must be listed on the local CCR&amp;R provider database</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Must currently be providing Child Care services in one of the following Illinois counties: Carroll, DeKalb, Lee, McHenry, Ogle, or Whiteside.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. Have no unpaid financial obligation to CCR&amp;R agency or IDHS Bureau of Child Care &amp; Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program Prerequisites</td>
<td>Attend a QCCC Grant Information Session</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Attend a QCCC Grant Information Session</td>
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<td>2. Completed an Assessment Tool/Process</td>
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<td>3. Working towards/ Participating in QRS/ExceleRate Illinois</td>
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<tr>
<td>Priority Programs</td>
<td>1. Programs that serve children and families receiving IDHS child care financial assistance</td>
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<td>2. Programs that are full year/full day programs (at least 8 hours/day and at least 47 weeks/year)</td>
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<td>3. School age only programs that operate a minimum of nine (9) months a year</td>
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<td>4. Programs that are not currently Quality Counts QRS/ExceleRate Illinois certified and not currently accredited</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5. Programs that did not receive a Quality Counts grant from July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Approved Funding Areas</td>
<td>1. Learning Environment</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. Professional Resources</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. Facility Improvement</td>
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<td>4. Parent Resources</td>
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<td></td>
<td>See page 3 for complete descriptions</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Learning Environment</td>
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<td>2. Professional Resources</td>
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<td>3. Facility Improvement</td>
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<td>4. Parent Resources</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5. Staff Training</td>
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<td></td>
<td>6. Program Improvement</td>
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<td></td>
<td>See page 3 for complete descriptions</td>
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</table>

Funding Levels – as available

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>License Exempt FCC</th>
<th>Minimum Funding: $300</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maximum Funding: $500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Licensed FCC</td>
<td>Minimum Funding: $300</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Maximum Funding: $700</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lic. Group Homes</td>
<td>Minimum Funding: $300</td>
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<td>Maximum Funding: $900</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lic. And Lic. Exempt Child Care Centers</td>
<td>Minimum Funding: $300</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capacity</td>
<td>Maximum Funding: $1,700</td>
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<tr>
<td>50 or less</td>
<td>51-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>51-100</td>
<td>101 or more</td>
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<tr>
<td>$3,500</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
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<td>$4,000</td>
<td>$8,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>$12,000</td>
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</table>

Additional Information
A provider or program may participate in this grant for up to two (2) years.
Section 2: Approved Funding Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Training Grant</th>
<th>Competitive Grant</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning Environment</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional Resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>Facility Improvement</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parent Resources</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff Training</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program Improvement</td>
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</table>

All requested items must be directly related to and used solely for child care purposes. Item requests are to be informed and prioritized through the use of a program assessment tool(s) or process.

**Learning Environment:** The physical set up of a classroom / home setting and the materials that are used for teaching, learning and care. Examples include child-sized table/chairs, cribs, blocks, books, playground equipment, musical instruments, multi-cultural resources, curricula, etc. All items must be directly related to the safety and quality of the child care services. All items should be age and developmentally appropriate.

**Professional Resources:** Examples include business computers/software, professional library (e.g., books on curriculum, classroom activities, child development).

**Facility Improvement:** Minor modifications/repairs to the facility. Examples include child size restroom, fence, modifications for children with special needs, fire door, playground surface, etc.

**Parent Resources:** Examples include printed information on health, safety and child development, family resource library, children's book lending library, parent training.

**Staff Training:** Group training and/or on-site consultation which leads to increased knowledge and high-quality child care practice. Examples include training on child guidance/behavior, relationships with families, etc.

**Program Improvement:** Funds may be requested for consultants to assist with preparing for Quality Counts QRS Star Level or Excelerate Illinois certification or national accreditation.

**Non-eligible Funding Items and Activities:**
Items that a program cannot apply for include, but are not limited to:
- Cosmetic Home/Building Improvements
- Decks
- Pools
- Trampolines
- Screen devices for children under 2 years old (tablets, computers, etc.)
- Televisions
- Video Games
- Motorized riding toys
- Items that restrict child mobility (indoor infant swings, walkers, playpens, etc)
- Items that do not meet legal standards
- Used equipment
- Items from online auctions or third party purchases
- Consumable items (e.g., paper, paint, markers, diapers, food, etc)
- Non-age appropriate items
- Developmentally inappropriate items
- Service agreements (e.g., cell phone minutes, internet access, subscriptions, etc.)
- Operating expenses (business supplies, rent, gas, advertising, etc)
- Child Care staff salaries, bonuses, etc.
- Travel
- Vehicles/vehicle repairs
Section 3: Frequently Asked Questions

General – applies to Training and Competitive Grants

1. When is the QCCC Grant timeline?
   Grant application packets may be mailed or hand delivered. They must be received at 4-C no later than 4:30 PM on Monday, December 16, 2013. Grants received after this deadline will not be reviewed. An applicant may not add further documentation once the grant is submitted to the CCR&R.

2. If a program has questions, who is the contact?
   Kim Sciacero at kims@four-c.org or (815) 758-8149, Ext. 226
   Jan Fox at janf@four-c.org or (815) 344-5510, Ext. 11

3. Can a program apply for both grants?
   No. A program may only apply for one of the QCCC grants per fiscal year.

4. Is it a requirement to attend a Grant Information Session?
   Yes. All programs applying for either the Training or Competitive Grant are required to attend an Information Session provided by their local CCR&R.

5. If a program received a QCCC Grant last year, can they apply this year?
   Yes. However, a provider or program may participate in the training grant for no more than two (2) years.

6. Which programs receive higher priority?
   For the Training Grant and the Competitive Grant the following programs will receive higher priority:
   • Programs that serve children and families receiving IDHS Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) funds.
   • Programs that are full year/full day (at least 47 weeks / year and at least 8 hours per day).
   • School age only programs that operate a minimum of nine (9) months per year.
   Please note: additional priorities apply to each grant. See FAQs #18 and #25.

7. What can a program request funds for?
   There are six funding areas available in the Competitive Grant: Learning Environment, Professional Resources, Facility Improvement, Parent Resources, Staff Training, and Program Improvement.
   There are four funding areas available in the Training Grant: Learning Environment, Professional Resources, Facility Improvement, and Parent Resources.
   Applicants, who request funds for Facility Improvements and do not own the building, must include written permission from the landlord.

8. Am I required to use a program improvement assessment tool or process?
   Yes. All participants in both grants are to complete a program improvement assessment tool or process. Additional information regarding assessment tools and processes is available in FAQ #20 and FAQ #27.

9. Which assessment tools are recognized?
   Depending on the type of program and the request, the following tools are used or recognized:
   • Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale Revised
   • Infant & Toddler Environment Rating Scale Revised: Ages birth – 30 months
   • Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale Revised: Ages 2½ - 5 years
   • School-Age Care Environment Rating Scale: Ages 5 –12 years
   • Business Administration Scale (FCC)
   • Program Administration Scale (center based)
   • Accreditation Self Study

10. What accreditation/review processes are recognized?
    • NAFCC National Association of Family Child Care www.nafcc.org 1-800-359-3817
    • NACCP National Accreditation Commission for Early Care & Education www.naccp.org 1-512-301-5557
    • NAEYC National Association for the Education of Young Children www.naeyc.org 1-800-424-2460
    • NECPA National Early Childhood Program Accreditation www.necpa.net 1-800-505-9878
    • COA Council on Accreditation/School-Age www.coafterschool.org 1-866-262-8088
    • Office of Head Start

11. Can an agency submit one application for all sites if they have more than one site?
    No. Each site/location is considered a different program. Each program (site) must submit an application with requests specific to that program. One license=one site=one program=one application.

12. Can a program submit more than one application?
    No. A program may only submit one grant application from July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014.
13. How many grants will be awarded?
The number of grants funded depends on the number of applications received and amount awarded to successful grant requests.

14. If a program’s grant request is approved, will the full amount of funding requested be received?
A request may be fully or partially funded depending on availability. Any costs exceeding the grant award are considered out-of-pocket expenses for the program and will not be reimbursed by the CCR&R.

15. If a program is awarded funding, how do they receive the funds
If your request is approved you will receive a check for 75% of your award with your award letter. The remaining funds will be sent to you when we receive receipts for 100% of your expenses and the required documentation.
- Any item purchased prior to the award letter date will not be considered for reimbursement.
- Any costs exceeding the award amount are considered out-of-pocket expenses and will not be reimbursed.

16. Is this a grant or a loan?
This is a grant program, not a loan, which means funds do not generally need to be paid back. Grant funds come from the State of Illinois, and certain policies and procedures must be followed. Please note: if a program goes out of business within two years of the grant award, funds will need to be repaid at a pro-rated amount. In some cases 4-C may be able to recoup materials purchased with grant funds.

17. Do grant funds need to be reported as income?
Grant funds may need to be reported as income. If awarded grant funds, a completed W-9 form will be required. Items purchased with grant money may be eligible to claim as business deductions. Please consult an accountant or tax preparer for further information.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
Training Grant Only

18. Which programs receive priority?
- Programs that serve children and families receiving IDHS Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) funds.
- Programs that are full year/full day programs (at least 8 hours and at least 47 weeks/year)
- School age only programs that operate a minimum of nine (9) months a year
- Programs that are not currently Quality Counts QRS/ExceleRate Illinois certified and not currently accredited
- Programs that did not receive a Quality Counts grant between July 1, 2010 and June 30, 2013.

19. What documents are required to be included with the grant application?
In addition to the application, copies of the following should be submitted if applicable:
- Copy of IDCFS license
- Quality Counts QRS/ExceleRate Illinois certificate OR QRS/ExceleRate Illinois Summary Report/Facility report OR letter stating QRS/ExceleRate Illinois level was not achieved

20. What are the expectations of a program participating in this grant?
- Attend all required training and cohort meetings
- Complete a program self-assessment using an Environment Rating Scale(s) with the assistance of a CCR&R staff specialist
- Develop a quality improvement plan with the CCR&R staff specialist
- Submit requests for grant dollars based on program self-assessment and quality improvement plan
- Submit receipts and required documentation for all grant purchases no later than 4:30 PM, Monday, April 7, 2014.

21. How many years can a program participate in the training grant?
A provider or program may participate in the training grant for no more than two (2) years.

22. Who should represent the child care program in the training cohort?
For a center an administrative staff member must attend. For a family child care home the primary caregiver must attend. The same person must attend all the trainings and cohort meetings.

23. What training/meetings will be required?
- Introduction to the Environment Rating Scales training - attendance within last 6 months will be accepted (optional for 2nd year participants)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Child Care (FCC)</th>
<th>Centers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FCCERS, Saturday, 2/22/2014, 8:30 AM-12:30 PM (optional for 2nd year participants)</td>
<td>ERS, Saturday, 2/22/2014, 8:30 AM-12:30 PM (optional for 2nd year participants)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget 1:00 PM-2:30 PM</td>
<td>Budget 1:00 PM-2:30 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-C Office, 155 N. 3rd St. Suite 300, DeKalb, 3rd floor Conference Room</td>
<td>4-C Office, 155 N. 3rd St. Suite 300, DeKalb, Lower Level Training Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-Depth review of ERS - Part 1, Saturday, 3/1/2014, 8:30 AM – 2:30 PM</td>
<td>In-Depth review of ERS - Part 1, Saturday, 3/1/2014, 8:30 AM – 2:30 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-C Office DeKalb, 3rd floor Conference Room</td>
<td>4-C Office, DeKalb, Lower Level Training Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-Depth review of ERS - Part 2, Saturday, 3/15/2014, 8:30 AM – 2:30 PM</td>
<td>In-Depth review of ERS - Part 2, Saturday, 3/15/2014, 8:30 AM – 2:30 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-C Office, DeKalb, 3rd floor Conference Room</td>
<td>4-C Office, DeKalb, Lower Level Training Center</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
24. How are grant funds awarded?
Funds will be awarded upon completion of the expectations listed in FAQ #20.

25. Who will be reviewing the applications?
Child Care Resource and Referral staff will be reviewing applications. Programs will be selected based on priorities and on the date received.

Competitive Grant Only

26. Which programs receive priority?
- Programs that serve children and families receiving IDHS Child Care Assistance Program funds.
- Programs that are full year/full day programs (at least 8 hours and at least 47 weeks/year)
- School age only programs that operate a minimum of nine (9) months a year
- Programs that are Quality Counts QRS/ExceleRate Illinois certified, Head Start certified or nationally accredited

27. What supporting documents are required to submit with the grant packet?
In addition to the application, copies of any and all of the following documents that are applicable to the grant request should be submitted:

- Narrative
- Completed request grid
  - Items are to be listed in order of need (highest need listed first)
  - The request grid is to be used to assist in writing the narrative
- Completed budget form and attachments
  - Form should list all requests in the same order/priority as the request grid
  - Bids/estimates for any contracted work requested
  - Pictures, if applicable
- Copy of IDCCS license
- Written permission from the landlord for facility improvements
- Corrective action plan
- Qualifications of consultant/consultant group
- Quality Counts QRS/ExceleRate Illinois certificate OR Summary Report/Facility Report
- Accreditation request for visit and receipt of payment OR a copy of accreditation certificate
- Head Start grantee letter or certificate
- One page Assessment Profile Sheet(s):
  - FCCERS
  - ITERS
  - ECERS
  - SACERS (only available at www.fpg.unc.edu/~ecers/)
  - BAS
  - PAS

28. Should a program’s request relate to the assessment tool(s) and/or the standards for accreditation?
The grant request should be directly related to improving the quality of the child care program. Results of assessment tool used or an accreditation or Head Start process are to be used to inform and prioritize a program’s grant requests.

29. If an assessment tool(s) is used for program self-assessment, is there a time limit?
Yes, self-assessments need to be completed after July 1, 2012.

30. If a center-based program is requesting funds for items used by more than one classroom, are they required to complete an assessment tool for each classroom?
Yes, the appropriate assessment tool must be completed for each room.

31. If a grant request includes labor or installation, how many bids should be included?
For contracted labor work, you must attach at least two (2) itemized bid estimates for work and materials. All contracted labor must be licensed. The preferred bid should be used on your budget form. A materials list from a home improvement store is required if you plan to do the work yourself.

32. Who will be reading the grant application/narrative and how will it be scored?
- An initial review of the grant application is done to confirm all eligibility requirements are met and that all required documentation is attached. QCCC Grant Applications not meeting the requirements, incomplete applications or applications missing required documentation will be disqualified and will not be reviewed.
- A knowledgeable and impartial panel of readers will review and score the grant applications. All steps will be taken to ensure reviewers do not have a conflict of interest with a particular program.
- A grant request will be rated on priorities (up to 35%), the clarity of narrative (up to 40%), completeness of budget (up to 10%) and the request grid (up to 15%).
- An applicant may not add additional documentation once the grant is submitted to the CCR&R.
Section 4: Grant Application Checklist

For the Training Grant, a total of four (4) sets of documents (the original + three (3) copies) are required. For the Competitive Grant, a total of four (4) sets of documents (the original + three (3) copies) are required.

A complete Grant Application Pack includes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Training Grant</th>
<th>Competitive Grant</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Completed Application</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative (No more than 5 double-spaced pages and font size no less than 10 pt.)</td>
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<td>✗</td>
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<tr>
<td>Completed Request Grid</td>
<td></td>
<td>✗</td>
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<tr>
<td>Completed Budget Form and attachments</td>
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<td>✗</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ If applicable: Bids/estimates, Pictures</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Copy of IDCFS license (if licensed)</td>
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<td>Supporting Documentation, as applicable:</td>
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<td>Written permission from the landlord</td>
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<tr>
<td>Copy of Corrective Action Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Qualifications of consultant or consultant group</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality Counts QRS/ExceleRate Illinois status</td>
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<td>✗</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Copy of letter that QRS/ExceleRate Illinois level was not achieved</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Copy of the Summary Report/Facility Report</td>
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<td>▪ Copy of QRS/ExceleRate Illinois certificate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accreditation status</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Request for visit and receipt of payment</td>
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<td>▪ Copy of certificate</td>
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<td>Head Start Status</td>
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<td>▪ Copy of Grantee letter or certificate</td>
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<tr>
<td>One Page Assessment Profile Sheet(s):</td>
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<td>▪ FCCERS</td>
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<td>▪ ITERS</td>
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<td>▪ ECERS</td>
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<td>▪ BAS</td>
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Section 5: Commonly Used Terms/Acronyms

Accredited/Accreditation
A process through which child care programs voluntarily meet specific standards to receive endorsement from a national agency. The following accreditation agencies are approved for funding through this grant process:

- NAFCC National Association for Family Child Care
- NACCP National Association of Child Care Professionals
- NAEYC National Association for the Education of Young Children
- NECPA National Early Child Care Program Accreditation
- COA/SA Council on Accreditation – School Age Accreditation

Accreditation Self Study
Applies to programs that are in the process of becoming accredited.

BAS Business Administration Scale
A tool for family child care programs to measure overall quality of management and business practices

CCAP Child Care Assistance Program funded by the Illinois Department of Human Services

CCRR Child Care Resource & Referral agency

Corrective Action Plan
Plan to meet required standards for a local or state agency

IDCFS Illinois Department of Children and Family Services

IDHS Illinois Department of Human Services

INCCRA Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies

ERS Environment Rating Scales
Assessment tools used to measure and assess the level of quality in a program. Each ERS is designed for specific program types and/or age groups.

- FCCRS-R Family Child Care Rating Scale Revised
- ITERS-R Infant & Toddler Environment Rating Scale Revised ages birth – 30 months
- ECERS-R Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale Revised ages 2½ - 5 years
- SACERS School Age Care Environment Rating Scale ages 5-12 years

ExceleRate Illinois
Illinois’ voluntary system for early care and education center-based programs which recognizes program quality above licensing standards and provides supports and incentives to programs.

PAS Program Administration Scale
A tool for center-based programs to measure the overall quality of management and administrative practices.

QRS Quality Counts Quality Rating System
Illinois voluntary system for family child care providers which recognizes program quality above licensing standards and provides Child Care Assistance Program bonus payments.

Program Assessment
An evaluation tool used to determine a program’s strengths and areas in need of improvement. Assessments are based upon observation of the program and its environment.

For more information on the following programs, please contact the listed agency.

Quality Counts Quality Rating System (QRS)/ExceleRate Illinois
- Your local CCR&R www.four-c.org 1-815-758-8149, ext. 296 or 223
- Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies www.ilqualitycounts.com 1-866-697-8278 or qrsinfo@inccrra.org www.excelerateillinois.com

Accreditation Programs:
- National Association of Family Child Care www.nafcc.org 1-800-359-3817
- National Accreditation Commission for Early Care & Education www.naccp.org 1-512-301-5557
  A division of the National Association of Child Care Professionals
- National Association for the Education of Young Children www.naeyc.org 1-800-424-2460
- National Early Childhood Program Accreditation www.necpa.net 1-800-505-9878
- Council on Accreditation / School-Age www.coaaferschool.org 1-866-262-8088

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