

Mississippi State Child Care Quality Step System Criteria

The criteria for the MCCQSS are developed on a system of upward progression: For example, for a facility to move from a Step 1 to a Step 3 all criteria must be met in Steps 1, 2, and 3. This systematic approach to improving quality allows for gradual improvement that is acknowledged through public recognition of the stars found on the facility's licensing certificate.

SECTION 101

STEP 1 *

The first step in the MCCQSS is:

The child care facility must be licensed as outlined in the MS Department of Health's Regulations Governing Licensure of Child Care Facilities.

SECTION 102

STEP 2 **

The child care facility must be licensed and have successfully completed the following:

Section 102.01-Step 2: Administrative Policy Criteria

- The child care facility must have a staff handbook. (See Appendix A)

Section 102.02-Step 2: Professional Development Criteria

- The Director will receive additional training by approved training entities per MS Department of Health child care licensing regulations to exceed the required number for licensing by a minimum of five hours annually.
- Fifteen (15) hours annually of staff development for full time teaching staff by approved training entities per child care licensing regulations will be documented for each staff with no allowable in-house hours being allowed to be counted in the fifteen (15) hours total.

Section 102.03-Step 2: Learning Environments Criteria

- Weekly written lesson plans are present. (See example in Appendix B)

- Learning Centers are being utilized in the classrooms for all children (except infant rooms) as defined in the MCCSS glossary).
- A total score of 3.0-3.5 on the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-R (ECERS) and/or the Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale-R (ITERS) as defined in the glossary.

Section 102.04-Step 2: Parent Involvement Criteria

- A designated bulletin board for parent communication.
- Quarterly communication to parents through a newsletter.
- Monthly calendar disseminated to parents highlighting classroom activities and home learning activities.
- Annual documented parent-teacher conference.

Section 102.05-Step 2: Evaluation Criteria

- Director's self-assessment completed on file with a plan of self-improvement that indicates actions, which have been taken to address deficient areas that need improvement. **Self-assessment instruments must be approved by OCY, as listed in Appendix C as an example.**
- Annual staff evaluations on file that indicates each staff member has attended an evaluation conference with the director/supervisor, signed and dated by both parties.
- A total score of 3.0-3.5 on the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale- R (ECERS) and/or the Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale-R (ITERS).

SECTION 103

STEP 3 ***

The child care facility must have successfully completed all the criteria for Steps 1 and 2 and the following:

Section 103.01-Step 3: Administrative Policy Criteria

The Director will have successfully completed a course in the management of a child care facility as a business offered by the Mississippi State Extension Service.

- Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) completed, on file and signed by the child care director and the designated service agency. Documentation that at least one appropriate referral and/or assessment is on file. The MOU will indicate an arrangement with the child care facility and at least one other agency that can provide additional services to children and/or staff. Examples of partners include but are not limited to: Local Education Agency (LEA) for teacher training or special education services to children in the facility, mental health agencies to provide teacher training and/or services to children and families in the facility, MS Department of Health (MDH) or Public Health System (PHS) to provide screening to children per parental approval (See Appendix D).

Section 103.02-Step 3: Professional Development Criteria

- Director holds current OCY Director's Credential, or a credential approved by MDHS/OCY, or an associate or higher degree in child development, early childhood education, or a related field.
- Conduct and document monthly staff development meetings (i.e. sign-in sheets, minutes, etc).
- At least one staff member holds a current CDA credential or a higher credential such as an Associate Degree in Child Development Technology, Early Childhood Education or a Bachelor's Degree in Child Development, Early Childhood Special Education, Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education or related field.
- All staff members must be, eighteen (18) years of age or older, hold either a GED or high school diploma.
- Eighteen (18) hours of annual staff development training by approved training entities per child care licensing regulation for staff with ten(10) hours of training specific to the age of child(ren) they are teaching or caring for.

Section 103.03-Step 3: Learning Environments

- Director trained in Mississippi Early Learning Guidelines
- A total score of 3.6-4.0 on the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-R (ECERS) and/ Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale-R (ITERS).

Section 103.04-Step 3: Parent Involvement Criteria

- Weekly notes to parents describing the activities of the week with copies maintained on file.
- Parent education trainings offered and documented annually.
- Facility provides a parent/family lending library for parents as defined in glossary.

Section 103.05-Step 3: Evaluation Criteria

- A total score of 2.5-3.0 on the Caregiver Interaction Scale (Amett Scale).
- A total score of 3.6-4.0 on the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-R (ECERS) and/or Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale-R (ITERS).

SECTION 104

STEP 4 *****

The child care facility must have successfully completed all the criteria for Steps 1, 2 and 3 and the following:

Section 104.01-Step 4: Administrative Policy Criteria

- Annual staff evaluation completed and documentation on file.
- Documentation with implementation of a Professional Development Plan.

Section 104.02-Step 4: Professional Development Criteria

- The director holds an Associate Degree in Child Development Technology or Early Childhood Education or higher degree, Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education, Early Childhood Special Education with 18 credit hours in Early Childhood, Child Development, Elementary Education with 18 credit hours in Early Childhood courses.
- Fifteen percent (15%) of staff has a CDA or higher degree/credential (Associate and/or Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education, Early Childhood Special Education, Child Development, Elementary Education or related field).
- Twenty (20) hours of staff development training by approved training entities per child care licensing regulations for staff with ten (10) hours of training specific to the age of the child(ren) in their care.

Section 104.03-Step 4: Learning Environments Criteria

- All teaching staff of three and four year old children is trained to use the Mississippi Early Learning Guidelines.
- All teaching staffs of three and four year old children are trained to use on-going child assessment as described in the MS Early Learning Guidelines.
- A total score of 4.1-5.0 on the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-R (ECERS) and/or Infant toddler Environment Rating Scale-R (ITERS).

Section 104.04-Step 4: Parent Involvement Criteria

- Parent/family volunteer program is implemented and proof of participation is documented.
- Parent/family resource center is part of the facility's services.

Section 104.05-Step 4: Evaluation Criteria

- Parent/family survey to rate performance of staff completed and on file.
- A total score of a 3.0-3.3 on the Caregiver Interaction Scale (Arnett Scale).
- A total score of 4.1-5.0 on the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-R (ECERS) and/or Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale-R (ITERS).

SECTION 5

STEP 5 *****

The child care facility must have successfully completed all the criteria for Steps 1, 2, 3 and 4 and the following:

Section 105.01-Step 5: Administrative Policy Criteria

- Developmental checklist for each child is implemented and documented as defined in the glossary. (For example see Appendix E.)
- A transition plan with LEA's for children entering kindergarten is implemented and documented, as defined in the glossary.
- Director to peer mentor at a minimum of 2 hours per month established and documented for the purpose of helping a facility obtain a higher rating in the MCCQSS.

Section 105.02-Step 5: Professional Development Criteria

- Director holds a Bachelor's Degree or higher degree in, Child Development, Early Childhood Special Education, Elementary Education or a related field.
- Twenty-five percent (25% of staff holds a current CDA or higher credential/degree in Early Childhood Education, Child Development, Early Childhood Special Education, Elementary Education or a related field. (See Appendix F – Provider Support Professional Development)
- Twenty-five (25) hours of staff development training by approved entities per child care licensing regulations for staff with ten (10) hours of training specific to the age of the child(ren) in their care.

Section 105.03-Step 5: Learning Environment Criteria

- Mississippi Learning Guidelines fully implemented in all three and four year old classrooms.
- On-going child assessments documented and implemented in all three and four year old classrooms.
- A total score of 5.1-7.0 on the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-R (ECERS) and/or Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale-R (ITERS).

Section 105.04-Step 5: Parent Involvement Criteria

- Documentation showing that parent/teacher meetings are held at least twice a year.
- Monthly newsletter disseminated to parents.

Section 105.05-Step 5: Evaluation Criteria

- A total score of a 3.3-4.0 on the Caregiver Interaction Scale (Arnett Scale).
- A total score of 5.1-7.0 on the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-R (ECERS) and/or Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale-R (ITERS).

