

ExceleRate® Illinois – Steps to Apply Licensed Child Care Centers Silver Assessment Path

1. Attend an ExceleRate Illinois Orientation
2. Review the ExceleRate Illinois Quality Standards Overview
<http://www.excelerateillinoisproviders.com/docman/resources/13-overview-of-charts/file>
3. Review the Circle of Quality charts for details of evidence needed <http://www.excelerateillinoisproviders.com>
select: *How it Works / Licensed Child Care* and then select the specific circle
4. Select the Circle of Quality your program will work towards and apply for
5. Complete required training
<http://www.excelerateillinoisproviders.com> select: *How it Works / Licensed Child Care Overview*
6. Follow these steps for chosen Circle of Quality
 - Sign Consultant Agreement (if Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) Specialist is providing consultation).
 - Complete classroom and program self-assessments using ECERS-3, ITERS-R, SACERS-U, and PAS 2nd Edition and other program standards as needed.
 - Complete the Continuous Quality Improvement Plan (CQIP) Worksheet/Summary, as necessary.
 - Apply for Gateways Credentials as needed.
 - Create portfolio inclusive of all ExceleRate Illinois documentation for on-site review.
7. Work with your Illinois Department of Children & Family Services licensing representative to clear program violations.
To check if your program has violations, please visit: <https://sunshine.dcf.illinois.gov/>
8. Submit completed application packet to INCCRRA. An application packet consists of:
 - Complete Application
 - A supplemental application for specific Circle of Quality
 - Any required documentation as specified by the Circle of Quality chart
9. INCCRRA will review the initial application packet and within 15 business days will communicate with the program. Silver verification is a 2 part process. When the program is ready to receive their on-site verification visit, the CCR&R will contact the program to set an appointment date/time for **part 1** of the verification visit. This visit will occur within 15 business days.

The CCR&R Specialist will be reviewing all documentation as specified on page 2. Specialist will also need to interview the Program Director.

For **part 2** of the verification, National Louis University McCormick Center will contact the program to establish a 3 week window to conduct classroom assessments using ERS/CLASS (CLASS can be used for ages 3-5 only).
10. Program is to have a complete, organized PROGRAM PORTFOLIO with all necessary information included at the time of part 1 of the verification visit. The CCR&R Specialist will review this portfolio as part of the visit to determine if ExceleRate Illinois standard(s) are being met. **All documentation must be provided by the conclusion of the verification visit.**

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For the Silver Circle of Quality, the portfolio must include:

- 1A.** ERS classroom self-assessments and CQIP to address any subscale below 4.5 and/or any classroom overall score below 4.0. **NOTE: ITER-S-R is used to assess classrooms with children birth thru 35 months. ECERS-3 is used to assess classrooms with children 36 months to 5 years (unless you have chosen CLASS). SACERS-U is used to assess classrooms with children 5 years and older.**
If a program has a combined classroom of 2 and 3 year old children, ECERS-3 will be used if 75% or more of the children are age 3 or older at the time of verification. Otherwise ITER-S-R will be used to assess the classroom.
- 1B.** Documentation of chosen curriculum that aligns with Illinois Early Learning Guide/Illinois Early Learning Development Standards (IELG/IELDS). Specialist will review curriculum on site. **NOTE: if the program is not currently using a curriculum that aligns with IELG/IELDS, program may submit a narrative on how the curriculum in use aligns as part of the ExceleRate application. Program must submit a crosswalk to the Governors Office of Early Childhood Development demonstrating alignment for your chosen curriculum. This standard must be met by annual standard.**
- 1C.** ERS classroom self-assessments and CQIP to address any classroom score below 3.0 on “Interactions” and “Language and Literacy/Listening and Talking” subscales.
- 1D.** Policy and procedures to ensure all children (birth-5) are screened at least annually and parents are provided results and information on where to go for additional evaluation and resources.
- 1E.** Documentation of chosen child assessment tool that aligns with IELG/IELDS.
- 1F.** Program policy and procedures for supporting inclusion of children with special needs.
- 2A.** Documentation of at least five family supports, as listed in Program Administration Scale (PAS) item #17, and offering two parent-staff conferences per year.
- 2B.** Program policy and procedures related to transition. This may include transition of children/families into or out of classrooms, early learning environments, community services and school setting including transition to kindergarten.
- 3A.** Documentation of PAS self-assessment/PAS Profile sheet, as well as CQIP to address any PAS subscale below 4.5. Program chooses 3 PAS subscales in which to be verified by the Specialist. Documentation needed will vary based on subscales chosen on application. **NOTE: Child Assessment and Family Partnerships are covered in other ExceleRate standards and cannot be chosen for 3A.**
- 3D.** Documentation of self-assessment results for support of cultural/linguistic diversity; Documentation of CQIP based on these self-assessment results.
- 4C.** Policy and procedures for classroom teaching staff to attain 20 hours of professional development annually. Policy should include how the program tracks each teacher’s training hours. Individual Staff Development Plans for all classroom teaching staff.