



# Georgia Dept of Early Care and Learning

BRIGHT FROM THE START

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**Brian P. Kemp**  
*Governor*

**Amy M. Jacobs**  
*Commissioner*

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October 4, 2021

Dear CAPS Child Care Provider,

This letter is to remind you of some important milestones for the CAPS program and to inform you of changes to CAPS policy.

In a letter dated July 1, 2021, I shared information with you about the CAPS/Quality Rated deadline and some important milestones we set to minimize disruptions to children and families with a CAPS scholarship and to allow unrated licensed providers time to become rated. As a reminder, providers eligible to participate in the Quality Rated initiative must be Quality Rated as detailed in [CAPS Participating Providers Policy \(CAPS/00-11\)](#) by **December 31, 2021** to continue receiving CAPS funding. To meet this requirement, we identified the following milestones:

- **August 1, 2021:** CAPS providers who have not registered for a 2021 Quality Rated Cohort Group will no longer be able to accept new CAPS families.
- **January 1, 2022:** CAPS families whose children are enrolled with an unrated provider will have to choose a Quality Rated Provider at their redetermination in 2022.
  - If you are registered for and participate in 2021 Cohort 4 but have not received your rating by January 1, 2022, your CAPS funding will not be affected.
  - If you participate in a 2021 Cohort and receive a zero-star rating, you will be offered a probationary status, and your CAPS funding will not be affected if you make adequate progress toward a star rating as measured by Quality Rated.

To ensure we provide complete information on the guidelines and requirements for the CAPS/Quality Rated deadline, the following changes to CAPS policies went into effect **October 1, 2021**.

- The CAPS/Quality Rated Guidelines and Requirements (Appendix II) was created as an addendum to the [CAPS Child Care Participating Providers Policy \(CAPS/00-11\)](#) and [CAPS Child Care Provider Rights and Responsibilities Policy \(CAPS/00-11\)](#). The document provides families and child care providers information about the CAPS/Quality Rated goal, milestones, and guidance on how child care programs can become Quality Rated.
- CAPS/Quality Rated guidelines and requirements have been updated to include a provisional status for newly licensed programs or programs new to participating in the CAPS program who are working on attaining their star rating. These guidelines and requirements have also been updated to include a probationary status for programs who do not achieve at least a one-star rating after their initial review, and commit to continuing to improve their quality to achieve a star rating.

- We revised the Quality Rated language to say that providers in CAPS/Quality Rated Provisional or Probationary Status will be enrolled in a Quality Rated Cohort Group as directed by Quality Rated. Licensed providers that choose not to participate in Quality Rated will be dismissed from the CAPS program. These policy changes can be viewed in [CAPS Participating Providers Policy \(CAPS/00-11\), section 11.4.2](#) and [CAPS Child Care Provider Rights and Responsibilities Policy, section 12.4.3](#).
- We added language to explain that the provider is responsible for submitting complete and accurate contact information, including email address. CAPS will use the provider's email address as the primary contact to communicate and send information. This policy change can be viewed in [CAPS Child Care Provider Rights and Responsibilities Policy, section 12.4.2](#).

**NOTE:** Notifications regarding families enrolled in your program will be generated and sent through the state's integrated eligibility system, Georgia Gateway Platform on behalf of DECAL and CAPS.

A more in-depth overview of the items detailed in this letter will be provided in the future through a recorded webinar. You will have an opportunity to share questions and comments through a survey that will be available when the webinar is released.

CAPS providers should review CAPS policies regularly because policies are subject to change. For more information on CAPS policy, visit <https://caps.dec.al.ga.gov/en/Policy/>. If you have questions, contact us at 1-833-4GA-CAPS (1-833-442-2277).

Sincerely,



Elisabetta Kasfir  
Deputy Commissioner for Federal Programs