Commitment to Quality (C2Q) Payment Policies

Quality Rated Policy: C2Q Payments	Effective Date: 2/18/25	Revision Effective: 1/1/26

Policies are subject to change at the sole discretion of Quality Rated and DECAL. Changes to policies will be communicated to providers upon revision and effective dates added to this document.
A glossary of terms is included following the policies.

Section 1 - Program Eligibility to C2Q Payments

1.1 To be eligible for Commitment to Quality (C2Q) quarterly payments, childcare program owners must be enrolled in **CAPS** and have a current 2- or 3- Star Rating.

1.2 Providers with a 1-Star Rating and providers currently designated **Provisional** or **Probationary** are not eligible to receive C2Q quarterly payments.

1.3 A CAPS provider is not required to have **active scholarships** at the time of C2Q payment. If CAPS payments were received during the preceding quarter, a C2Q payment can be made if the program meets all other eligibility requirements.

1.4 **Eligibility verification date** is the date each quarter on which DECAL systems are monitored to extract and evaluate data points to determine eligibility for C2Q payments. The systems monitored include Quality Rated, Child Care Services (CCS), and Child and Parent Services (GACAPS). **Eligibility verification dates** are established for each quarter and communicated annually.

1.5 A provider's license with Child Care Services (CCS) must be active, current with applicable licensure fees, and in **Good Standing**. A license with pending open or pending closed status on the **eligibility verification date** will result in non-payment.

1.6 A program whose license is **Pending Revocation** on the **eligibility verification date** will not be eligible for a C2Q payment, regardless of any pending appeal. Based on the outcome of the pending revocation, future C2Q payments may resume with the quarter following resolution of the pending revocation. Back payment of any withheld quarterly C2Q payments will not occur.

1.7 A program whose license is in **deficient status** with CCS on the **eligibility verification date** will not be eligible for a C2Q payment. C2Q payments will resume for the quarter in which Good Standing is regained. Back payment of any withheld quarterly C2Q payments will not occur .

1.8 A program whose license is in **support status** with CCS on the **eligibility verification date** will not be eligible for a C2Q payment. C2Q payments will resume for the quarter in which Good Standing is regained. Back payment of any withheld quarterly C2Q payments will not occur

1.9 If a provider is under an **enforcement action** with Quality Rated or CCS on the **eligibility verification date**, the provider may not be eligible for the C2Q payment for that quarter. C2Q payments will resume for the quarter in which QR or CCS enforcement action ends. Back payment of any withheld quarterly C2Q payments will not occur.

1.10 Quality Rated reserves the right to suspend or deny C2Q payments due to pending enforcement actions from Quality Rated or any DECAL division. Decisions regarding payments are not subject to appeal.

1.11 Any person who knowingly and willfully makes a false, fictitious, or fraudulent statement or representation in a statement to a government agency may be guilty of a felony of a violation of Code Section 16-10-20 of the Official Code of Georgia. Any person, firm, corporation, or other legal entity that 1) knowingly presents or causes to be presented a false or fraudulent claim for payment or approval or 2) knowingly makes, uses, or causes to be made or used a false record or statement material to a false or fraudulent claim, shall be liable for civil penalties. The civil penalty can range from $5,500 to $11,000 for each false or fraudulent claim, plus three times the amount of damages sustained by the government because of such act pursuant to Code Section 23-3-121 of the Official Code of Georgia.

1.12 If a program is confirmed to have engaged in fraudulent activity within any DECAL program or initiative, the program will not be eligible to receive C2Q payments until the program returns to Good Standing as reported to with both CAPS and Quality Rated.

Section 2 – C2Q Payments

2.1 - Payment Schedule

2.1.1 Beginning in 2025, C2Q payment issuance will occur on the following schedule:

- Quarter 1 Payment– C2Q payment issued at the end of February 2025
- Quarter 2 Payment– C2Q payment issued at the end of May 2025
- Quarter 3 Payment– C2Q payment issued beginning August 2025
- Quarter 4 Payment– C2Q payment issued beginning November 2025

2.1.2 On the **eligibility verification date**, data is extracted from licensing (Child Care Services), Quality Rated, and GACAPS to determine eligibility for payment and to calculate the amount of payment. **Eligibility verification dates** will be shared with providers annually. The following information is extracted from each data system:

- CCS: license status (open, closed, pending open or pending closed, pending revocation), compliance status (good standing, support, or deficient), any relevant enforcement actions
- Quality Rated: current Star Rating level or status designation (1-, 2-, 3- Star Ratings, Provisional or Probationary Status, any relevant QR enforcement actions)
- GACAPS: amount paid to provider during the applicable quarter

2.1.3 QR ratings are issued within 8 weeks of final program **ERS observations**. If a rating is issued before the **eligibility verification date**, the new rating level will be applied to determine eligibility as well as the percentage multiplier to use for the applicable C2Q payment for that quarter.

2.1.4 Eligibility to receive a C2Q payment and the amount of the C2Q payment will reflect the rating level associated with the program as of the **eligibility verification date.** If a new rating is issued after the eligibility verification date, any change in rating level will be applied to the next quarterly payment.

2.1.5 Quality Rated will not issue any new star ratings on **eligibility verification dates.**

2.1.6 Care Solutions is the payment vendor for all C2Q payments.

2.1.7 Eligible child care providers will have the option to receive C2Q payments through direct deposit or paper check by mail from Care Solutions. Quality Rated highly recommends selecting the direct deposit option to receive payments in a timely manner with minimum risk of delay.

2.1.8 To begin receiving C2Q payments, the child care provider must complete an annual enrollment process with Care Solutions. The child care provider will receive an email at their primary email address as shown in **KOALA**. The email will contain a unique identifier link from Care Solutions, specific to only their program. The provider must submit the following documentation:

- Online Direct Deposit Form (ACH information)
- W-9
- Complete an online Statement of Affirmation

2.1.9 Providers are required to ensure all submitted documents are current, accurate, authentic, and complete.

2.1.10 The provider is responsible for notifying Care Solutions of any changes to contact information or updates to submitted documents. Failure to maintain accurate contact and banking information may result in missed C2Q payments. Quality Rated and Care Solutions are not responsible for correcting missed payments due to outdated or incorrect information submitted by the provider.

2.1.11 If any error is made by DECAL or Care Solutions due to technical issues, the program must inform Care Solutions within six (6) months of the eligibility verification date for the relevant quarter. Notification to Care Solutions beyond six (6) months will not result in payment reviews or adjustments.

2.2– Payment Amounts

2.2.1 As of September 30, 2024, 2-Star Rated programs will receive a payment equal to 5% of the payment received from GACAPS as of the **eligibility verification date** each quarter.

2.2.2 As of September 30, 2024, 3-Star Rated programs will receive a payment equal to10% of the payment received from GACAPS as of the **eligibility verification date** each quarter.

2.2.3 The Star Rating in place on the **eligibility verification date** determines the percentage of the C2Q payment. Rating decreases or increases may occur during the quarter but the C2Q payment will be solely based on the rating in place on the **eligibility verification date**.

2.2.4 On each **eligibility verification date**, payment data is extracted from **GACAPS** and the C2Q payment amount is calculated based on the amount paid to the provider by CAPS for the preceding quarter.

2.2.5 C2Q payment amounts are based on the total amount each provider is paid by CAPS in the preceding quarter, regardless of which service week the payment may apply to. In the event of any

GACAPS system billing payment errors or payment adjustments, any changes necessary for accurate C2Q payments will be reflected in future C2Q payment quarters.

2.2.6 In the event of overpayment by CAPS or suspected fraud, Quality Rated reserves the right to adjust, withhold, or suspend the C2Q payment during the current payment quarter or future payment quarters.

2.2.7 QR reserves the right to fairly adjust payments impacted by a provider's Quality Rated status, as necessary.

2.2.8 C2Q payments are subject to review by DECAL's Audits and Compliance Division.

2.2.9 C2Q payments are funded by the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) and are subject to the availability of funds. All applicable provisions, rules and regulations of the funding source must be followed. Programs may be reduced or discontinued at any time if the Department (DECAL) determines that adequate funds are not available.

Section 3 – Change of Ownership/Change of Location/Program Closures

3.1 For a **Change of Ownership**, determination will be made on a case-by-case basis as to whether the previous owner, new owner or neither is eligible for the C2Q payment based on the timing of the Change of Ownership application, permit issuance date, star rating transfer date, and eligibility verification date for the quarter.

3.2 Following a **Change of Ownership** where the child care program is sold to a new entity, the new owner is not entitled to C2Q payments that would be calculated on CAPS scholarships billed by the previous owner. C2Q payments made to the program under the new ownership are calculated solely on CAPS payments made to the new owner's open license.

3.3 Following a **Change of Ownership** where the child care program remains with the same individual(s), DECAL may determine that the C2Q payment can be calculated based on CAPS scholarships billed to the owner(s) previous license number. For example, when an LLC is formed but no new individuals are added as owners, DECAL may determine that C2Q payments can be based on payments extracted from GACAPS for scholarships that were billed under the previous and new license numbers combined.

3.4 For a **Change of Location**, if requested and Quality Rated approves the rating transfer and the C2Q payment is otherwise deemed eligible to occur, the provider may be eligible to continue receiving the C2Q payment. Due to the timing of the COL process, Permission to Operate (PTO) issuance date, star rating transfer date, and the eligibility verification date, processing of the C2Q payment could be handled manually and C2Q payment may be delayed.

3.5 If a program's license is closed on an **eligibility verification date** and the closure is not due to Change of Ownership or Location, a C2Q payment will not be made regardless of operation status earlier in the quarter. If a program's license closes between the **eligibility verification date** and the **payment issuance date**, Care Solutions will not issue a payment.

Policy Revision History

Date	Description of Change
6/4/25	Added 2.2.6 – policy regarding overpayment or suspected fraud Added to 1.10: “Decisions regarding payments are not subject to appeal.”
6/10/25	Clarified wording in 2.1.1 regarding Q3 and Q4 payment issuance
1/1/26	Added: 1.11 and 1.12 Fraudulent Activity; 2.2.9 CCDF Availability; 2.1.11 Error Notifications

Commitment to Quality (C2Q) Payment Policies

Definitions

Active Scholarships- a child care scholarship provides authorization for CAPS eligibility to the parent. Active scholarships are those which are currently being billed for children enrolled and attending the childcare program.

CAPS- Child And Parent Services, Georgia's child care subsidy assistance program.

Change of Location- the current owner of a licensed child care program relocates the program to a new building location.

Change of Ownership- a new owner buys an existing child care business, building, or property that remains in continuous operation, or the current owner changes the ownership type (e.g., Inc. to LLC).

Deficient Status- this Child Care Services (CCS) compliance zone indicates a program is not demonstrating an acceptable level of performance in meeting the licensing rules.

Eligibility Verification Date- the date on which DECAL systems are monitored to extract and evaluate data points to determine eligibility for C2Q payments. The systems monitored include Quality Rated, Child Care Services (CCS), and Child and Parent Services (GACAPS).

Enforcement Actions- steps or measures taken by CCS or Quality Rated to address non-compliance with licensing rules and regulations, or quality standards measured by Quality Rated.

ERS Observation- the Environment Rating Scales are the measurement tools used by Quality Rated to observe and assess the quality of child care classrooms and family child care learning homes. The ERS observation scores are included in the determination of a program's Star Rating.

Georgia Childcare Administrative and Payment System (GACAPS)- the information technology system used to manage child care provider participation, payments, and data related to CAPS services.

Good Standing- this Child Care Services (CCS) compliance zone indicates a program is demonstrating an acceptable level of performance in meeting the licensing rules.

KOALA- is DECAL's provider self-service website where providers can access their licensing information, available 24/7 for convenience (Kids Online Administrative Licensing Application).

Payment Issuance date- the date Care Solutions begins processing payments to providers.

Pending Revocation- provider has received official notice from Child Care Services of the intention to revoke a license due to legal actions being enforced as defined by Child Care Services.

Provisional Status- A provider in the CAPS/QR Provisional Status is a licensed childcare program that is new to CAPS and in the process of attempting to earn an initial Star Rating.

Probationary Status- A provider in the CAPS/QR Probationary Status is a licensed child care program that has attempted the rating process but did not earn enough points to achieve a Star Rating and is in the process of attempting to regain a Star Rating.

Support Status- this Child Care Services (CCS) compliance zone indicates a program's performance is demonstrating a need for improvement in meeting licensing rules.