

Quality Rated Annual Workforce Bonus Payments

Frequently Asked Questions

General Information

What is the QRWB Payment?

The Quality Rated Workforce Bonus (QRWB) is an annual payment of \$500 provided to eligible child care program staff working in eligible child care centers and family child care learning homes.

My center had a change in ownership after the center was rated, am I still eligible to receive a payment?

If the rating is transferred from the previous owner to the new owner, staff will continue to be eligible for the QRWB. If the rating was not transferred then staff will not be eligible until the program is awarded a 1, 2, or 3-Star rating.


Can I receive more than one QRWB payment if I work at multiple programs?

No. If employed at multiple Quality Rated child care programs, staff can receive only one annual QRWB payment and must choose one program under which to apply.

Who do I contact if I have issues with my application?

For assistance, contact Care Solutions at:

 support@decalsqrpayments.com

 800-227-3410, ext. 613

The QRWB payment is made annually. Do I have to reapply every year?

Yes. For each year that you and the program you work for remain eligible to receive the bonus, you will have to complete a new application during the program's payment application month to receive the \$500 payment.

How do I find my program's payment application month?

Each child care program has been assigned a specific payment application month. Check the assigned month for your program at: <https://decalsqrpayments.com/quality-rated-workforce-bonus>.

Will all employees in the same center have the same payment application month?

Yes. The payment application month applies to the child care program, not to the individuals who work within it. When an employee actually receives their payment after applying will depend on many factors, including when in the month they apply, how quickly the director verifies employment, the number of applications in the queue ahead of them for processing, whether or not they need to resubmit any missing or incorrect documents, and whether or not they elect to be paid by direct deposit or by paper check.

How was my program's payment application month determined?

The most equitable way to spread the payments across the entire year was to assign the payment application month based on each child care program's initial star rating. This allowed for an even distribution to ensure timely processing of applications throughout the year. For example, if your initial rating was in October, regardless of the year, your program's payment application month will also be October every year.

What happens if my payment application month falls in January, February, or March 2025?

The application process begins in 2025 with programs that have been assigned to April. To ensure all eligible staff receive payment in 2025, staff who work at programs with a January, February, or March payment application month will be handled in the following manner:

- Applications will be staggered into April, May, and June 2025 payment application months (April/January, May/February, and June/March).
- After 2025, your assigned payment application month will remain consistent.

The payment application month for my program is March. In 2025 I understand that my staff cannot apply until June. Can an employee that starts in February apply since we are not applying until June even though our recurring annual application month will be March?

For 2025 only the answer is yes. Your employees will be eligible to apply providing they meet the 90-day work requirement on or before the application deadline of June 30.

Will we receive a reminder email when our payment application month window opens?

Yes. Prior to the start of each payment application month, the eligible programs will receive a reminder email, in addition social media posts will be released to DECALS social media pages.

Our program is enrolled in Cohort 3, will we be eligible for the QRWB when we rate, or will we have to wait until next year to be eligible?

Newly rated programs will be eligible the month following their initial rating. In future recurring years the payment application month will revert to the month the initial rating was received.

My program was rated many years ago but has since expired, if we come back to Quality Rated and earn a new rating when will my staff be eligible for the QRWB?

Staff will be eligible the month following your new rating date. For as long as you maintain an active rating, your future recurring years payment application month will revert to the month the new rating was received.

Can I apply if I miss my payment application month?

No. If an application is not submitted within the assigned month, you will not be able to receive the bonus for that year. You will resume eligibility the following year, assuming your program maintains its star rating eligibility status.

What legal action might be taken if false information is provided?

Providing false or fraudulent information can lead to legal penalties, these may include but are not limited to:

- Felony charges under Code Section 16-10-20 (Official Code of Georgia).
- Civil penalties from \$5,500 to \$11,000 per false claim, plus triple damages under Code Section 23-3-121.

Will I be required to pay tax on the QRWB or report it as income?

Individuals who receive \$2,000 or more in total payments are required to report payments to the IRS. Care Solutions will issue an IRS Form 1099 if you receive at least \$2,000 in payments from them during the tax year. Other payments that you receive from Care Solutions could include payments for Incentives and Academic Scholarships, Project LITTLE or Thrive Business Academy stipends, or Family and Peer Ambassador stipends, etc. The previous threshold for receiving a 1099 form was \$600 in total payments. The threshold is \$2,000 for payments made after December 31, 2025, according to updated tax law. For more information, visit [Internal Revenue Service | An official website of the United States government](#).

Eligibility

Who is eligible for the QRWB payment?

To qualify, staff must:

1. Be an employee of an open and operating Quality Rated child care learning center or a family child care learning home with a 1-, 2-, or 3-star rating.
2. Have worked at least 90 days at the child care program at the time of application.
3. Work full-time on-site at the child care facility (30+ hours per week) or 15+ hours per week if working with school-age only children
4. Be employed at the program at the time of application.
5. Have a verified Georgia Professional Development System (GaPDS) profile reflecting employment status (support staff do not need to upload transcripts or submit for a career level to create a GaPDS profile).
6. Meet lawful U.S. presence requirements and have a satisfactory records check on file for the child care program at DECAL.

Are staff working in a Provisional or Probationary child care program eligible to receive the QRWB?

No. The child care program must be rated at the 1, 2, or 3-Star level in order for the staff working there to be eligible to receive the bonus. The Workforce Bonus is provided to recognize and acknowledge the hard work that staff do every day to achieve and maintain higher levels of quality. As soon as a Provisional or Probationary program receives their star rating the staff will be eligible to apply for the bonus the month after their rating has been issued.

Are all childcare staff eligible, including admin staff, Head Start teachers, GA Pre-K teachers, food service workers, maintenance, and transportation staff etc.?

Yes, all teaching, admin, and support staff are eligible to apply for the QRWB providing they meet all the eligibility requirements.

Our program is a subsidiary of a nonprofit and the maintenance staff are employees of the nonprofit. Would the maintenance staff be eligible?

Yes, providing all other eligibility requirements are met. The center director can submit a letter stating the working hours and length of time the maintenance staff were employed at the child care facility to support the pay stub being issued from a different entity.

Are long-term substitutes eligible for QRWB? How do they prove they work at the facility, if their paystub is issued from a sub agency?

Yes, long-term substitutes are eligible for QRWB providing all other eligibility requirements are met. Care Solutions will require a Director letter stating the substitute's working hours and length of time teaching at the facility (to prove eligibility of 30+ hrs/week and 90 days onsite).

I have a few high school students that work at my center. Will they be able to receive the bonus as well?

If they meet the eligibility criteria then they will be eligible to apply for the bonus. Minors have to submit an Employment Verification for Minors form in lieu of the notarized affidavit for lawful presence

Can I apply if I reach 90 days of employment during my payment application month?

Yes, but you must wait until your 90th day to apply.

I understand that the 90 days of employment is based on the payment application month. If December is the application month, do staff have to be employed 90 days on or before December 1, or 90 days on or before December 31?

The 90 days are calculated from the last day of the month, so in this scenario an employee would need to have 90 days on or before December 31.

For an employee who hasn't been employed for 90 days during their program's payment application month, can they apply once their 90 days is up, or do they have to wait until the next year's payment application month?

If an employee does not meet the 90-day window during your program's payment application month they will have to wait until the next year when your program is again in its payment application month.

What if I leave my job before my payment application month?

If you leave employment before the child care program's payment application month, you are not eligible for payment under the umbrella of that child care program. If you join another eligible child care program and meet all eligibility criteria during their payment application month you would become eligible again assuming you had not already received a bonus during the same calendar year from working at a different program.

Are unpaid volunteers, helpers, or family members who work at my program eligible to receive the bonus?

Only paid staff who meet the eligibility criteria are able to receive the Quality Rated Workforce bonus.


What if I have transferred within the company to a new position, do I still qualify for the incentive?

Providing you meet all the eligibility requirements, changing your title or position within the same company would not prevent you from qualifying for the bonus.

What if I receive an ineligibility notice but believe I qualify?

If you meet the criteria but are marked ineligible, contact Care Solutions at:

 support@decalqrpayers.com

 800-227-3410, ext. 613

Application and Payment Processing

How do I apply for the QRWB payment?

Apply through Care Solutions at: <https://decalfpayments.com/quality-rated-workforce-bonus>.

Applications can only be submitted during the Payment Application Month assigned to the program with which you work.

What documents are required for the application?

Applicants must:

- Submit a verified GAPDS profile reflecting employment (support staff do not need to upload transcripts or submit for a Career Level in order to create a GaPDS profile).
- Maintain a satisfactory records check (per DECAL's policies) on file in the provider's DECAL KOALA account – you will not need to submit documentary evidence.
- Submit two recent paystubs showing full-time employment (regardless of frequency of pay). Family child care learning home providers will submit IRS Form 1040 Schedule C, Schedule K, or other federal tax form documenting net business income.
- Submit notarized affidavit, signed within the current year, and valid ID (the application system will prompt submission of this document if the individual has not previously been paid by Care Solutions).

My coworker was required to upload different documents than me, is there something wrong with my application?

The document upload screen will vary between applicants, depending on whether they have previously been e-verified for lawful presence in the U.S. Therefore, some applicants may need to upload only a GaPDS Profile and paystubs, and other applicants may need to upload all documents including the affidavit and ID.

How will Care Solutions determine if I've met the required working hours (30 hrs for full-time staff, 15 hrs for school-age staff)?

Care Solutions will ask for your 2 most recent paystubs to verify that you are a current employee, and use the year-to-date gross wages and hourly rate, to calculate the average hours worked per week. If there is a reason for lower hours, please upload a signed and dated Director's letter stating the exception.

Will I be required to complete the E-Verify process?

The application will prompt you if you need to complete the E-Verify process. If you are a U.S. citizen and have completed the E-Verify process for a previous DECAL payment, you will not be required to submit another notarized affidavit. If you are a non-U.S. citizen and have received a previous DECAL payment within the last 10 months you will not be required to complete the E-Verify process. If you do

need to complete a notarized affidavit the system will prompt you to submit it, you can download a blank copy here: <https://decalfpayments.com/quality-rated-workforce-bonus-resources>.

Is my personal information protected?

Yes, all personal information is encrypted by a third-party vendor to protect your banking and sensitive information. Care Solutions, DECAL and Quality Rated do not view, collect or store your banking information.

Can I still get the QRWB payment if I'm on leave or my program was closed?

Because there is only one payment application month for your program, you would still need to complete your application at some point during that month. The application will not be available before or after the assigned month. If your last two paystubs do not reflect the required 30+ hours (center) or 15+ hours (school-age only) due to leave or temporary closures, your case will be reviewed individually by Care Solutions, and you may be requested to submit additional documentation.

I am a GA Pre-K teacher, and my center application payment month is July. Would GA Pre-K teachers upload their May check stubs?

Yes, if the last two paystubs that you received were for May, you would include those in your application.

What should I do if my banking information changes?

Notify Care Solutions immediately of any banking or contact information updates to avoid missed payments.

How will payment be made?

Payments will be made via direct deposit (recommended for faster processing) or via paper check. During the application process you will select your preferred payment method.

What happens if my application is incomplete?

If documents are missing or incorrect, Care Solutions will notify the applicant.

- Corrections must be submitted within 14 days (with a 5-day grace period).
- If no response is received within 20 days, the application will be denied.

Can I appeal if my QRWB application is denied?

Yes. If your application is denied, you may initiate an appeal by contacting Care Solutions via email or phone within 10 calendar days of the denial notification date. Once the appeal is started, you will be asked to submit supporting documentation (e.g., a program director's letter, paystubs, or timesheets) within 7 calendar days. Failing to respond within these timeframes will result in your application remaining Denied with no further appeal allowed.

How many chances do I have to submit documentation during the appeal?

You are allowed up to two attempts to provide adequate documentation. If both attempts fail, the Denial will be final, and your application will not be eligible for reconsideration during the current application period.

What responsibilities does my program director have?

The director, owner, or other responsible party must:

- Verify staff employment via email within 7 days of application. Employee verification requests are sent to the primary email address as shown in KOALA.
- Maintain an updated KOALA account with ported satisfactory records checks for all staff.

What if I am the owner/director, would I verify myself or will I need to get someone else to verify for me?

At this point in time, directors will verify themselves, this is subject to change.

What if my employer does not verify my employment?

- The program director, owner, or other responsible party must verify employment within 7 days.
- If no response is received, a reminder will be sent, the applicant can request verification up to three times.
- If still unverified, the application will be archived, and the employee will not receive a bonus.

What happens if I start but do not submit my application?

- Applications can be saved after starting and completed at a later time but must be submitted within the Payment Application Month to be accepted.
- If an application is started but not submitted within the Payment Application Month, it will be removed from the system, and you will not receive the payment.

Troubleshooting Issues with My Account

I got a message saying, “Invalid SSN”, what can I do?

Make sure your name is exactly as it appears on your social security card. If you have a second last name appearing on your social security card, please use both names. If your social security card has your maiden name, please use that name.

I got a message saying, “SSN already in use”, what can I do?

This means you already have an account in our system. Please reset your password using the email address you used to apply for the QR Restoration Grant, Scholarships, Incentives or other DECAL Scholars programs.

My account does not show my new name, what can I do?

This [document](#) contains instructions for what is needed to update your name.

How do I change the email address associated with my account?

- If you still have access to your email address on file, click [here](#) for instructions on how to update it in your profile account.
- If you no longer have access to the email on file:
 - Send an email to support@decalfpayments.com with the subject line “Request Email Update/ Change”.
 - The body of the email should include your name, the last 4 digits of your social security number and the previous email address and new email address.
 - Please allow 3 -5 business days for us to update your information.

What does the Status of my application mean?

- Not Yet Submitted – You have not finished completing your application. It must be completed and submitted before it can be reviewed.
- Employer Verification – Your application is submitted and waiting for Employment Verification. It must be verified by your employer before Care Solutions can review it.
- Received - Your application was verified by your Employer and sent to Care Solutions for review.
- Under Review – Your application is actively being reviewed by Care Solutions.
- Incomplete- Your application has been reviewed. More documentation (or updated documentation) is required in order to complete the processing of your application. Please upload the requested documentation.
- Denied – Your application has been reviewed. It was determined that you do not meet the eligibility criteria to receive the QR Workforce Bonus.
- Approved with Stipulations – Your application is going through E-verify to confirm your eligibility to work in the United States.
- Approved – Your application has been reviewed and approved for payment. Please allow 2-4 weeks for payment to be processed.
- Payment Sent – Your application was approved, and payment has been sent.

How do I check the status of my payment?

Once your application has been processed and approved, you will receive notification of your status via email. Make sure to check your SPAM folder or add support@decalfpayments.com to your address book.

Troubleshooting Issues with My Application:

I am getting a server error message with my document upload. What should I do?

- All documents must be in .pdf, .png, or .jpg format.
- If using a device with a camera, take a picture of the document and upload the photo. Please make sure everything is legible when submitting a photo.

I do not have a scanner, is there a way to upload my documents?

- You can complete the application on your mobile device and upload pictures for each requested document or you can take a picture of your documents and email them to yourself. Download the pictures and save each separately to upload.

- Please ensure that all photos are clear and legible.
- Please note: all documents must be in .pdf, .gif, .png, or .jpg format. If using an iPhone, you must convert your images from HEIC format (click [here](#) for instructions on how to do so).

My director did not receive the email for Employment Verification, what do I need to do?

Log into your account and resend the “Resend Verification” button next to your application.

The email address listed for Employment Verification is not the Director or Owner of my program. What do I need to do?

- Please have your Director or Owner of your program send an email to support@decalscholars.com with the subject line “Facility Email Update”
- The body of the email should have the program License number, the new employment verification contact’s name and updated email address.
- Please allow 3 -5 business days for us to update your information.
- Once we have updated the email address, your Director will receive an email requesting your employment verification.

How do I create a GaPDS profile?

Click [here](#) for instructions on how to create your GaPDS profile account.

I received a request for additional documents. Can I email you the document(s)?

- We do not accept emailed documents. You will receive a Document Request email with a link. Please click on the link and follow the directions to upload the requested document(s).
- You may also log into your profile at <https://app.decalscholars.com/login>. Click on your initials in the top-right corner and click on Uploads. The required documents will be listed and allow you to upload and submit them.

How do I remove the Pop-up Blocker?

- If using Chrome: [Block or allow pop-ups in Chrome - Computer - Google Chrome Help](#)
- If using Microsoft Edge: [How to Allow Pop-Ups in Microsoft Edge](#)
- If using Firefox: www.makeuseof.com/firefox-manage-pop-ups

General Questions:

I recently changed employers; can I apply for the Workforce Bonus at my new facility if I meet all the requirements?

You must meet the eligibility criteria at your current facility to receive the bonus. You can only receive one bonus per calendar year.

I am the owner of several Daycare Centers; can I receive a bonus for each center?

This is a one-time per calendar year individual bonus. You must work onsite at one of your locations and meet the eligibility criteria to receive the bonus.

If I received money/scholarships in the past from DECAL, do I have to resubmit my information again?

Each application requires specific documentation. You will need to submit all documents requested in your application. Have your most recent paystubs, updated GaPDS profile, and identification ready to upload.