**UPDATE** on the Massachusetts QRIS – Interim Changes

In Fall 2018, the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) announced plans to develop the next generation of the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) in Massachusetts, which will be known as *StrongStart to Program Quality*. *StrongStart to Program Quality* will streamline requirements and reduce barriers to participating in the QRIS. EEC has made interim changes that simplify the current QRIS standards, and these changes will remain in effect until *StrongStart to Program Quality* is implemented.

**Why Interim Changes?**

Based on recommendations from the QRIS validation study – conducted from 2014 to 2016 – and feedback from the field, EEC is working to improve the current system prior to the implementation of *StrongStart to Program Quality*. These changes will simplify the application process, remove barriers to participation, and help improve program quality.

**Goals for the Interim Changes**

- **Eliminate some requirements that are not clearly tied to quality, and have been barriers to program participation.**
- **Simplify the QRIS based on recommendations from the QRIS validation study.**
- **Streamline the standards and reduce duplication.**
- **Strengthen the requirements found to support quality and that bridge the current QRIS with *StrongStart to Program Quality*.**

**Making QRIS Participation EASIER While Maintaining Quality**

The following changes are now in effect for All QRIS Program Types:

- Professional Development Points (PDPs) will be accepted for meeting formal professional development requirements.
- Training for all staff on specialized diets, allergies, and feeding issues is no longer required.
- A health consultant visit is no longer required at Level 3.
- A memorandum of understanding with outside consultants or social services agencies is no longer required.
- Submitting an operating budget is no longer required.
- Sharing QRIS ratings is no longer required.

For detailed descriptions of each of these changes, and additional changes specific to each program type, visit EEC’s website at [https://www.mass.gov/service-details/revisions-to-qris-standards](https://www.mass.gov/service-details/revisions-to-qris-standards).

**When do the Interim Changes start?**

**Right Now!**

The Interim Changes went into effect on May 1, 2019.

We suggest that you review the guidance documents to familiarize yourself with these changes as soon as possible. You can find resources in the QRIS Toolbox at [https://www.mass.gov/lists/quality-rating-and-improvement-system-qris-toolbox-for-programs](https://www.mass.gov/lists/quality-rating-and-improvement-system-qris-toolbox-for-programs).

If you need additional assistance or have questions about these interim changes, please contact your Program Quality Specialist.

**COMING SOON!** Starting July 1, 2019 specific training by QRIS level will not be required.