

Delaware Early Care and Education (DE ECE)

Quality Improvement Award (QIA) Application Guide

Version 3.0.142(205)

WELS Systems Foundation



Table of Contents

Overview	1
Timeline	1
Program Eligibility	1
Eligible Amounts.....	1
Additional Information	2
Need Help?	2
Program Portal Dashboard	2
Apply for the Quality Improvement Award (QIA)	3
(1) Your Program Information	3
(2) Your Eligibility Information	4
(3) Your Budget Information	5
(4) Your Payment Information.....	6
(5) Your Tax Information	8
(6) Your Agreement.....	9
(7) Review and Submit.....	9
Next Steps in the Quality Improvement Award Process.....	10
Verification and Approval.....	10
Payment.....	10
Upload Evidence	10

Overview

This guide walks you through each step required to complete the Delaware Office of Early Learning’s Quality Improvement Award application. We hope this streamlined application will make it easier to apply for funding.

Timeline

Funds will be distributed in 3 rounds:

- (1) **August 21:** State-funded Early Care and Education Partners
- (2) **October 1:** Historical Stars 3-5 Programs
- (3) **January 1, 2024:** All other licensed Programs

Program Eligibility

To be eligible for a Delaware Office of Early Learning (DE OEL) Quality Improvement Award (QIA), programs must:

- Be licensed by the Delaware Office of Child Care Licensing (DE OCCL),
- Be open and available to provide services,
- Have a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) that was co-created with a Stars Quality Improvement Specialist and aligned with Quality Indicators and state prioritized Key Practices,
- *and* Use Teaching Strategies GOLD, or a developmental assessment tool with fidelity (as intended by the publisher) to inform curriculum planning, teaching, and individualization across all developmental domains.

**Delaware Stars for Early Success will offer targeted support for programs to build systems supportive of ongoing child assessments. This support will include training and follow-up assistance.*

Eligible Amounts	Based on capacity	State-Funded Early Care and Education
Family Childcare	\$15,000	\$20,000
Large Family Childcare	\$15,000	\$20,000
Small Center (less than or equal to 59)	\$40,000	\$45,000
Large Center (greater than or equal to 60)	\$50,000	\$55,000

Additional Information

Documentation is required for all expenditures.

As part of accepting a Quality Improvement Award, programs are agreeing to collaborate with STARS Quality Improvement Specialists to implement the Quality Improvement Plan.

Payments (with the exception of school district programs) will be distributed by WELS Systems Foundation through the Delaware Early Care and Education (DE ECE) Portal.

Award approvals will be sent via email to a designated program contact. If further clarifications are needed, an OEL review team member will contact your program to discuss and resolve via telephone and/or email.

Need Help?

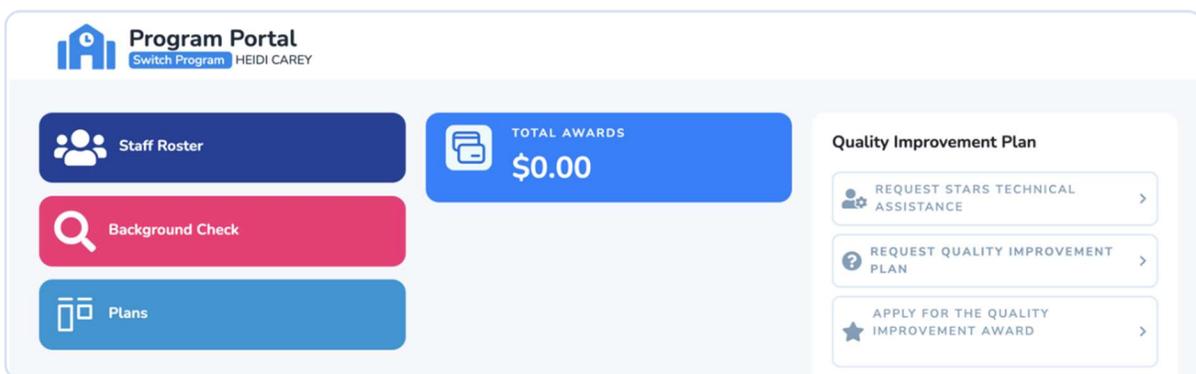
Please direct all questions to: early.learning@doe.k12.de.us

Program Portal Dashboard

To get to your Program Portal Dashboard, click the **Program Portal** button on your Delaware Early Care and Education (ECE) Portal home page.



When you have successfully claimed your site, you are given access to your **Program Portal Dashboard**.

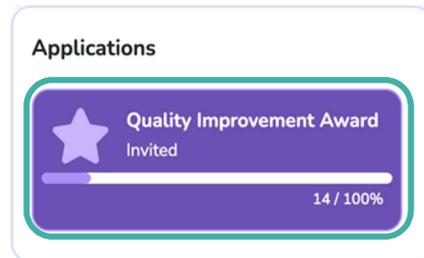


Apply for the Quality Improvement Award (QIA)

Once you and your Quality Improvement Specialist have developed a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) and aligned it with a budget narrative, you will be invited to apply for a QIA. When invited, you will see a new option on your Dashboard under **Quality Improvement Plan** that says **Apply for a Quality Improvement Award**. Click this button to get started.



Once you have started your QIA, save your progress and revisit as needed using the **Quality Improvement Award** button that will become available on your Dashboard under **Applications**. This section also reflects the current status of your application.



(1) Your Program Information

Your program information will populate using the information you entered when signing up in the Portal. Be sure the information is correct before moving to the next section.

Enter the name and contact information for the administrator of the program.

Click **Next** to save and continue to the next section.

A screenshot of a web form titled "Program Information". It is divided into two main sections. The first section, "Program Information", contains several input fields with green checkmarks indicating they are filled: "Name (as printed on your OCCL License)" with "WELS TEST SITE", "Office of Child Care Licensing License Number" with "A12345", "Address Line 1" with "302 Dorman St Harrington 19952-1066", "Address Line 2" with "Enter Address Line 2", "City" with "HARRINGTON", "State" with "DE", "Zip Code" with "19952-1054", and "Phone Number" with "7867350200". The second section, "Administrator/Designated Program Contact Information", also has green checkmarks: "First Name" with "Emily", "Last Name" with "Snowden", "Email" with "esnowden@welsfoundation.org", and "Phone Number" with "3055555555". At the bottom right, there are "Previous" and "Next" buttons.

(2) Your Eligibility Information

To be eligible for a Delaware Office of Early Learning (DE OEL) Quality Improvement Award (QIA), programs must:

- Be licensed by the Delaware Office of Child Care Licensing (OCCL),
- Be open and available to provide services,
- Have a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) that was co-created with a Stars Quality Improvement Specialist and aligned with Quality Indicators and state prioritized Key Practices,

**Delaware Stars for Early Success will offer targeted support for programs to build systems supportive of ongoing child assessments. This support will include training and follow-up assistance.*

The screenshot shows a form titled "Eligibility Information" with a dashed border. It contains three statements, each followed by a "Yes" button. A blue arrow points to the first "Yes" button. Below the statements is a text input field containing "Vera Smith". At the bottom right, there are two buttons: "Previous" and "Next". The "Next" button is highlighted with a red border.

Statement	Response
My program is licensed by the Department of Education's Office of Child Care Licensing.	Yes
My program is open and available to provide services for children and families.	Yes
My program has worked with a Stars Quality Improvement Specialist to create a Quality Improvement Plan aligned with DDOE Quality Indicators and associated Key Practices.	Yes

Name of Quality Improvement Specialist

Navigation: ← Previous Next →

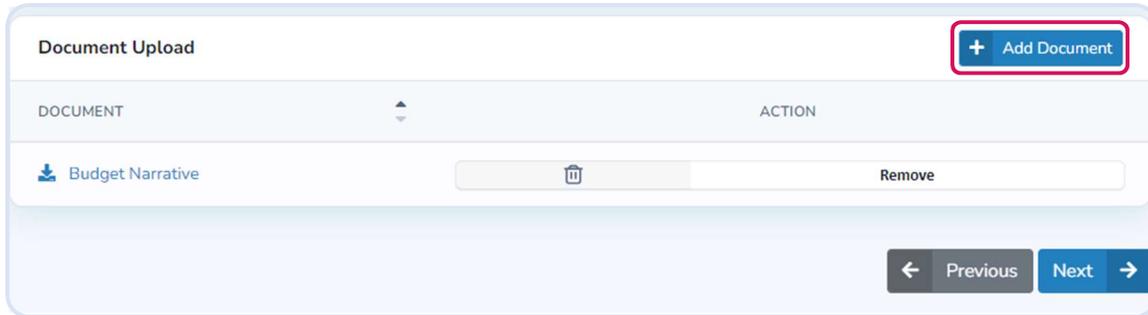
Read each requirement listed carefully. If the statement is true, click **NO** and it will change to a **YES**. If the statement is not true, leave the space to read **NO**.

The name of your Quality Improvement Specialist will automatically populate.

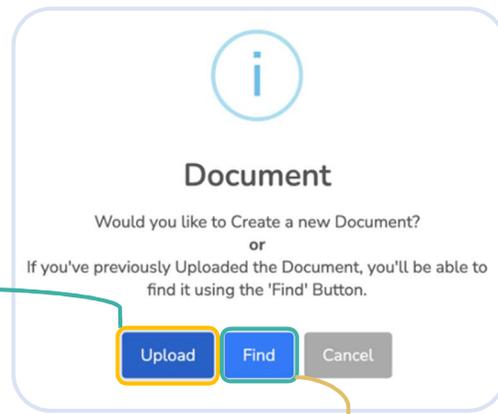
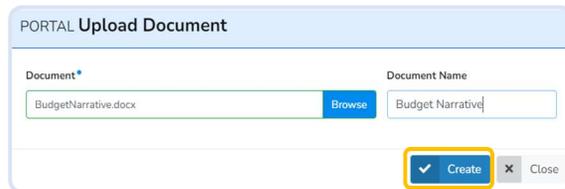
Click **Next** to save and continue to the next section.

(3) Your Budget Information

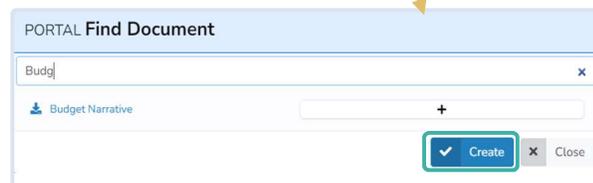
Upload a budget narrative that is aligned with your Quality Improvement Plan. Upload your document(s) by clicking **Add Document**.



The next window asks you to either **Upload** a new document or **Find** a document you have previously uploaded. Choose the best option for you.



When your budget narrative has been successfully added, click **Next** to save and move to the next section.



(4) Your Payment Information

Once approved, you will receive your award payment through Direct Deposit. The issue date of this payment is based on the date of your DE OEL approval.

**We strive to be inclusive with the payment methods we accept. If you use a financial technology service (such as Chime), we are also able to accept that information. Please provide the routing and account numbers to use this payment method.*

Enter the name of your bank, type of account, routing number, and account number. Or, contact your bank or look on a check for this information (*Click the link provided for more on where you find your banking information on a check*).

Then, click **Add Document** to upload either a:

- a) Voided check (A voided check is a blank check from your account that has the word “VOID” written across the face of the check)
- OR**
- b) Direct Deposit Authorization form (A Direct Deposit Authorization form can be requested from your bank).

Payment Information

Receive Payment Via* Bank Name, City & State*

Direct Deposit Enter Bank Name, City & State

Account Type* Routing Number* Account Number*

Select Option Enter Routing Number Enter Account Number

Having trouble finding your Check Information? [Click here for help.](#)

Document Upload + Add Document

DOCUMENT

Unspecified_9683_147677.jpg Remove

Previous Next

The next window asks you to either **Upload** a new document or **Find** a document you have previously uploaded. Choose the best option for you.

PORTAL Upload Document

Document* Browse

Document Name

i

Document

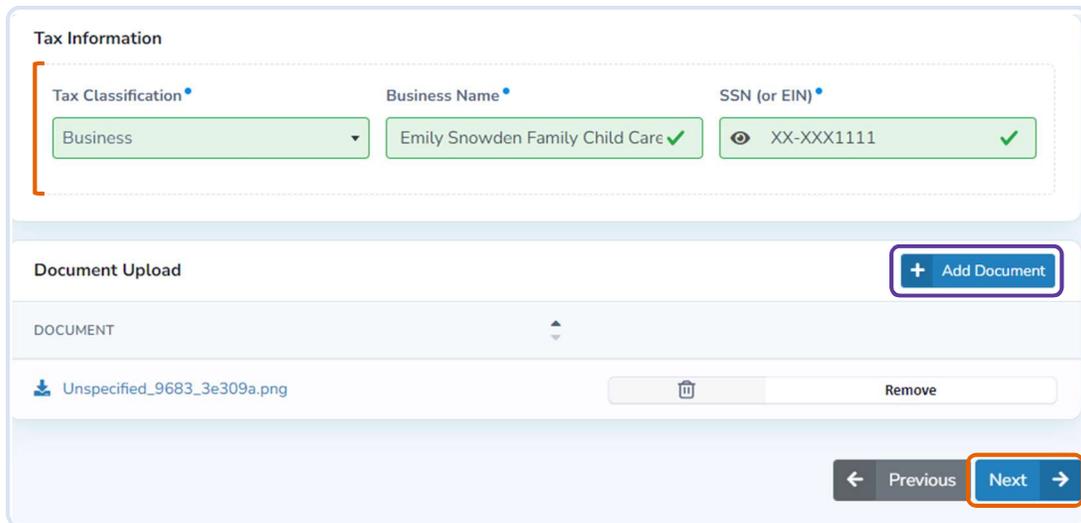
Would you like to Create a new Document?
or
If you've previously Uploaded the Document, you'll be able to find it using the 'Find' Button.

Once you have uploaded your voided check or Direct Deposit Authorization form, click **Next** to save and move to the next section.

PORTAL Find Document

(5) Your Tax Information

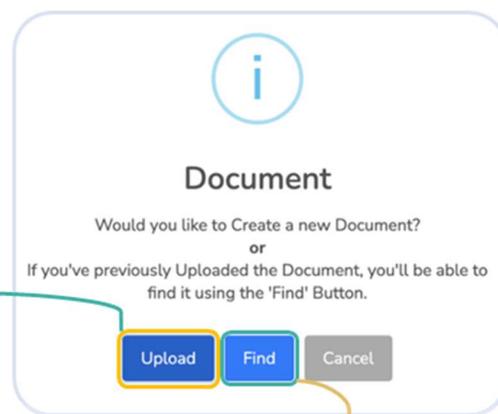
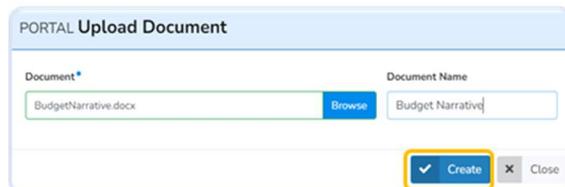
Because this award is over \$600 and considered income, you will need to provide a signed and completed W-9 form. Download the W-9 form from the official IRS website at <https://www.irs.gov/forms-pubs/about-form-w-9>.



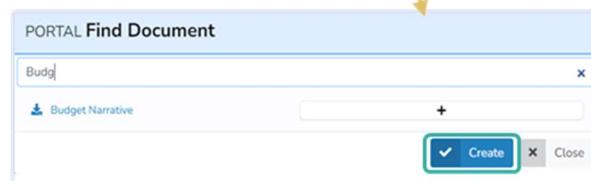
If you choose the *Tax Classification of Personal* and enter your SSN... you can expect to receive a 1099-MISC from the WELS Foundation by January 31, 2024 that you will use when you file taxes and claim the bonus as part of your income. You will receive an email when the 1099-MISC is available for you to view and download in your Professional Portal. It is important that you remember your username and be prepared to log in to view the 1099-MISC at the start of 2024.

Recipients of Quality Improvement Award are responsible for reporting and paying any personal income taxes due.

The next window asks you to either **Upload** a new document or **Find** a document you have previously uploaded. Choose the best option for you.



Once you have uploaded your W-9, click **Next** to save and move to the next section.



(6) Your Agreement

Read each requirement listed carefully. If the statement is true, click **NO** and it will change to a **YES**. If the statement is not true, leave the space to read **NO**.

Next, read the Attestation Statement and indicate your agreement by typing or drawing in your signature. Click on your preference and follow instructions to complete your signature.

Click **Next** to review and submit your application.

As part of accepting a Quality Improvement Award, I agree to the following.

Submit documentation for all expenditures associated with the award within the timeframe established by the Office of Early Learning. *	<input type="button" value="Yes"/>
Collaborate with Stars Quality Improvement Specialists to implement the Quality Improvement Plan. *	<input checked="" type="button" value="Yes"/> 
Use a developmental assessment tool with fidelity to inform curriculum planning, teaching and individualization across all developmental domains. *	<input type="button" value="No"/>

Use a developmental assessment tool with fidelity to inform curriculum planning, teaching and individualization across all developmental domains. is required.

As part of accepting a Quality Improvement Award, I agree to the following:

I hereby certify that I am authorized to apply on behalf of the eligible early care and education program for this state funding. Further, I hereby certify that the information provided herein is true and accurate. By signing this document, I understand that I am required to maintain the original supporting documents to confirm this information for a period of five years beyond the receipt of any payment, which may be received from this grant program. During any audit, if my records are not available and/or this information is found to be inaccurate, I understand that I may be required to make full reimbursement for any amounts identified as payment that were not eligible. I submit this application under penalty of perjury.

Signature *

(7) Review and Submit

 Your Program Information <i>Congratulations, you have completed all of the requirements for this section.</i>	100%
 Your Eligibility Information <i>Congratulations, you have completed all of the requirements for this section.</i>	100%
Your Budget Information Click here to Update. <i>Missing Required Document Upload.</i>	
Your Payment Information Click here to Update. <i>Account Type is required.</i>	83%
 Your Tax Information <i>Congratulations, you have completed all of the requirements for this section.</i>	100%
Agreement Click here to Update. <i>Use a developmental assessment tool with fidelity to inform curriculum planning, teaching and individualization across all developmental domains. is required.</i>	75%

The last screen will show the status of all application requirements. The status will be **green** if you have completed all requirements for that section.

If you are missing information, you will see a **blue** bar indicating the percentage of your progress. You will also see in **red**, at-a-glance, what requirements are missing. You can go back by clicking on the blue window on missing sections or clicking on that section in the menu to the left.

Once all requirements are completed, click **Submit** to complete your Quality Improvement Award application.

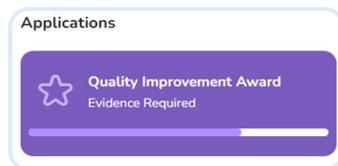
Next Steps in the Quality Improvement Award Process

Verification and Approval

Your application will be reviewed and either approved or sent back to you with comments requesting more information. If for any reason the documentation you uploaded cannot be verified, you will receive an email letting you know more information is needed to verify and approve your application. Sign in to your [Delaware ECE Portal](#) account and update the information in the corresponding section of your QIA application in the Program Portal. Then, make sure to resubmit your application through the **Review and Submit** section at the end of your QIA application.

Payment

Once your QIA application is approved, your payment will be processed and distributed by WELS Systems Foundation through the Delaware Early Care and Education Portal. Award approvals will be sent via email to a designated program contact. If further clarifications are needed, an OEL review team member will contact your program to discuss and resolve via telephone and/or email.



Upload Evidence

After you have received your QIA funds and your QIP task(s) have been completed, the next step is to upload the required evidence.

Please refer to the *Guide to Quality Improvement for Early Care and Education Programs in Delaware* (<https://www.dieec.udel.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Guide-to-Quality-Improvement-for-ECE-Programs-in-DE-updated-12.20.23.pdf>) for examples regarding appropriate documentation.

Click **Add Document** to upload this documentation from your device. Select **Browse** to find and add the file from your device. You can also type in a **Document Name**.

Click **Upload** to finish adding the file.

When you have added your **Evidence Information** document(s), click **Next** to save before you *Review and Submit*.

Your uploaded documentation will then be verified and approved as your last step of the process.

