

# **The Relationship Between Licensing and QRIS: Challenges and Opportunities**



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# CLASP's Work Related to QRIS

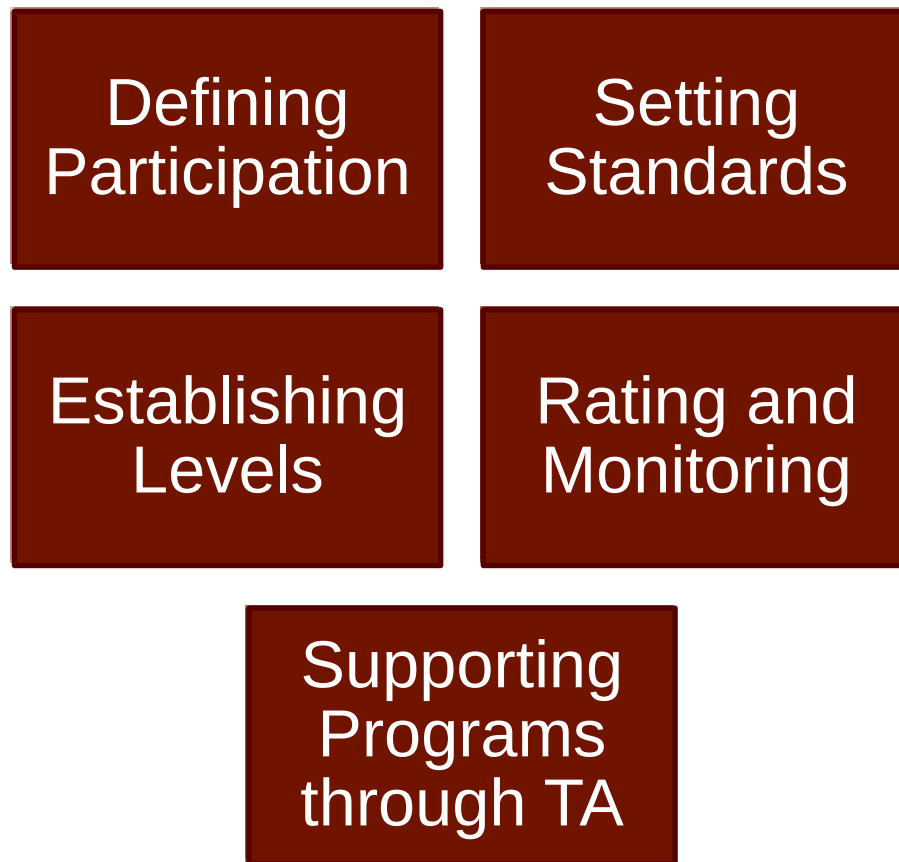
- **Research** on states' and programs' experiences designing and implementing QRIS.
- **Technical assistance** to states to design, implement, expand and improve QRIS with the goal of helping disadvantaged children access high quality child care and early education.
- Particular focus on **meeting the needs of infants, toddlers, and culturally diverse children** and families.

# CLASP's Work Related to Child Care Licensing

Working with states and at the federal level to:

- **Promote strong licensing standards** that reach an acceptable level of quality for all children in early childhood programs.
- Strengthen licensing standards to **better meet the needs of infants, toddlers, culturally diverse children, and disadvantaged children.**
- Promote **licensing practices that work for children and families** while also building on the strengths of the child care and early education field.

# How do licensing and QRIS Interact?



# Defining Participation

- Some states tie eligibility to participate in QRIS to licensing, excluding programs that are license exempt.
- Six states require licensed programs to participate in QRIS.
- Most states make QRIS voluntary for licensed programs.
- Consider the reach of your QRIS. Are you reaching the most vulnerable children?

# Setting Standards

- States must consider existing licensing standards when setting QRIS standards and requirements.
- The goal is to build on licensing – not to duplicate it, and not to undermine it.
- Consider the areas where your licensing standards could be strengthened – these are good areas to incorporate into your QRIS.
- Make sure your licensing, early learning guidelines, and QRIS standards align.



# Establishing Levels

- Many states have licensing as their first level in QRIS.
- If your licensing regulations are strong, it may be a good first level.
- If your licensing regulations are more basic, you may want level one to be licensing PLUS some other requirements.
- Consider the distance between licensing and your highest level of quality when establishing steps.

# Rating and Monitoring

- States must decide the **role** of licensors in the QRIS system, if there is one.
- In most states, **licensing violations** trigger the re-rating of a program.
- Consider the **tools** you use for licensing and monitoring, and how they can be aligned with QRIS monitoring and rating tools. Aligning tools can save time and expense for programs and for the agency.





# Program Support and Technical Assistance

- Will licensing staff be involved in providing program support and technical assistance related to the QRIS, or are there others that will play this role?
- If licensors are playing this role, they will need training and support in standard areas, such as supporting quality for infants and toddlers and culturally, linguistically diverse providers and children.

# What providers think...

- Directors thought it is essential for there to be good communication between licensors responsible for monitoring a center's adherence to basic regulations and assessors responsible for determining a center's rating level.
- Directors stressed the need to coordinate assessments for QRIS with other assessment and monitoring requirements, such as licensing, fire safety, state prekindergarten participation, and/or accreditation.

# What providers think...

- Coordination across agencies can help minimize duplication, so that programs do not have to have to be assessed multiple times by different agencies on the same set of standards with the same observational tools.
- Coordination can also avoid conflicts among assessment standards, so that directors are not asked to meet contradictory standards.

# What providers think...

- Technical assistance was most useful when directors had good relationships with those providing it, and when the TA providers coordinated with assessors, licensing inspectors, and others.



# What do you think?

- What has been your experience with QRIS? As a licensor? As a program director? As a TA provider?
- How has your state managed the QRIS/Licensing relationship?
- What advice or questions do you have for other states?

# Resources on Licensing and QRIS

- [CLASP: Charting Progress for Babies in Child Care, Expand Monitoring and Technical Assistance](#)
- [CLASP: Incorporating Cultural Competence in QRIS](#)
- [NAEYC: Quality Benchmark for Cultural Competence Project tool](#)
- [OPRE Quality Rating Systems Assessment Projects and Compendium](#)

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