BEST BEGINNINGS STARS TO QUALITY

GETTING READY FOR A PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION SCALE (PAS) ASSESSMENT

The Program Administration Scale (2nd Edition), also known as the PAS, is designed to support child care centers in developing strong leadership and management practices.

PAS Training

To achieve STAR 1, you will complete the Program Administration Scale course. This course is an introduction to the Program Administration Scale assessment tool. You will learn how the tool is used during an assessment, how to do a self-assessment using the tool, and how to use the results of the assessment for program improvement strategies. You will complete a PAS self-assessment to achieve STAR 1.

Preparing for a Formal PAS Assessment

When you submit for STAR 3 and above, a formal PAS assessment will be conducted. PAS assessments will occur every 3 years after the initial assessment at which a STAR 3 or higher is achieved. Once a program moves up a level from STAR 3, a new assessment will be conducted. A former PAS score can be used to submit for a new STAR level if the former PAS assessment occurred within the calendar year and only if there have not been any significant program or staff changes.

The PAS assessment consists of the following:

- A tour of the facility
- An interview with the on-site administrator, either on the phone or in person
- Review of program documentation

The PAS Assessment takes approximately 3 hours. The time required for documentation review and tour can vary depending on the facility. The assessor will be reviewing documentation alone; you do not sit with the assessor and guide them through the documentation or ask questions during the documentation review. Documentation needs to be available and on-site before the documentation review begins. The assessor will not leave the center with any of the documentation from the document review. The document review and interview should occur in a quiet location in the center. If the documentation is not provided before the assessor leaves then it does not count towards the assessment. All documentation must be available as a hard copy.

Prior to receiving the assessment, review the STARS Center Standards, STARS Guidance Document and Procedures, scale book, and the Author's Notes and Montana Notes for the Program Administration Scale. The Montana Notes for all Items are additional notes only and are meant to clarify the indicators in the book.

Organizing Documentation*

Organizing documentation is an important part of a PAS assessment. So, where do you begin? At first, organizing your paperwork can seem like a daunting task; however, the four tips below will help you get your papers in order and make the task more manageable.

1. **Use the Documents for Review Resource** – The Documents for Review Resource is available to help you stay organized.
   Example: The Documents for Review Resource for both the PAS and the BAS is organized by item. There is a page for each item that includes the indicators strands, and the theme of that strand, criteria needed to receive credit, and a list of possible types of documentation that might include the necessary information.
2. **Create file folders or dividers** – Label one file folder or divider for each item. Place the file folders in a box, or dividers in a binder, in numerical order. PAS File Folder Labels are available on the STARS website.
3. **Label, highlight, or flag documents** – Put the item and indicator number on the document, highlight the text that applies to the indicator, or put a Post-It Note with the item and indicator number near the text that applies to the indicator, and place it in the corresponding file folder.
   Example: For the PAS, if you have a copy of your budget, with line item breakdowns, you would put it in the file folder labeled, Item 12: Budget Planning, and label the document Item 12, 3.2 and 5.2, because it meets the documentation requirements for all of these indicators.
4. **Determine how to organize documentation that applies to several items** – There is some documentation that might be needed as evidence for several items—such as an employee handbook or a parent handbook.
   Example: Your employee handbook might include information about a new employee orientation needed for Item 1 in the PAS as well as information about employee benefits needed for Item 5 in the PAS. You don't need to have a copy of the entire handbook in each item folder that requires a part of it for documentation. Simply copy and highlight the page from the handbook that documents what is needed for that item, label with the item and indicator number, and place it in the file folder. Have one original copy of the handbook available for assessors to use, if needed.

Having a place to put documents as you go through the scale books will help you feel less overwhelmed. Try to organize one item at a time, and before you know it, you'll have a system in place and the task will be complete.

For other helpful resources, visit the McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership.

Questions? Contact your STARS Consultant

**McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership*