

Providing a high-quality early care and education environment is a true team effort, and every single person on your team plays a vital role. From your leadership and teaching staff to the volunteers who walk through your doors, everyone shapes the daily experiences of the children in your care.

We created this guide to help you navigate how different staff members and volunteers are viewed across the various systems you work with. Inside, you'll find clear guidance on how roles are considered through the lenses of:

- Quality First
- Arizona Department of Health Services Child Care Licensing (ADHS)
- Arizona Department of Economic Security Child Care Administration (DES Certification)



### How to use this guide:





- Review the staff and volunteers working at your program to ensure you have the required information in each staff member's file, as required by your program's regulating body. This guide includes information pertaining to ADHS Child Care Licensing and DES Child Care Certification. If your program is regulated by a tribal or military authority, please contact your regulating body for guidance.
- Review your program's staff to ensure you have accurate and updated information about each staff member on the Quality First Extranet staffing tab and the [Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry](#).
- Consider the job expectations and employment qualifications your program requires for each role in your program, and how these are communicated to staff, families, and volunteers.
- Review the document to learn how Quality First, ADHS and DES will consider your staff members during site visits and assessments.





### Things to keep in mind:





- Each program's staffing patterns are unique, and the staff descriptions listed here may not fully reflect your program's practices. Some job titles, such as education coordinator, curriculum specialist, or creative director are not included in this list due to the variety of functions within these roles. Regardless of the job title, consider the *role* your staff members fill and where they fit best within the descriptions listed here. If you have questions, or you are unsure how your staff should be identified, please consult with your Quality First coordinator or coach, ADHS compliance officer or your DES surveyor.
- This guide is not meant to be used in isolation; please see the [Child Care Licensing Rules for Centers](#) and/or the [Child Care Licensing Rules for Group Homes](#), as applicable, for further information.





<p><b>Program staff role</b></p> <p><i>Homes</i></p>	<p><b>Environment Rating Scales- FCCERS</b></p> 	<p><b>CLASS System- CLASS-Pre-K CLASS-Toddler CLASS-Infant</b></p> 	<p><b>Quality First Staff Recognition Funds</b></p> 	<p><b>ADHS Licensing Requirements for DHS Small Group Homes</b></p> 	<p><b>DES Requirements for Certified Family Child Care Providers</b></p> 
<p><b>Family Child Care Provider-</b> This is the person responsible for the operations of a family child care program. Often, this is also the person providing care and supervision of children.</p> <p><i>May also be called caregiver, provider, or home care provider</i></p>	<p>Interactions between all caregivers and children in the classroom or care group <b>will be observed</b> during the ERS assessment. How their interactions affect scoring depends on specific tool requirements.</p>	<p>Interactions between family childcare providers and children <b>will be observed</b> during the CLASS assessment. The will primarily reflect the caregiver who is interacting with the majority of the children.</p>	<p>Family child care providers are eligible to receive a staff bonus with Quality First funds, in accordance with Quality First funding policies. They must be employed by the program at the time funds are given out to receive a bonus.</p> <p>Refer to the Quality First Participant Guide and the Staff Recognition Funds Agreement for more information.</p>	<p>Family Child Care Providers are counted in staff-to-child ratios if staff qualifications are met in accordance with R9-3-301-A.1.</p> <p>See <a href="#">Arizona Administrative Rules and Revised Statutes for Child Care Group Homes R9-3-301-A.4.b</a> for guidance on staff files and records.</p>	<p>Family child care providers are counted in adult-to-child ratios if all eligibility criteria are met in accordance with DES Child Care Administration rules and statutes.</p> <p>See <a href="#">Arizona Department of Economic Security website</a> for eligibility criteria and required documents.</p>





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<p><b>Family Child Care- Other Family Members</b></p> <p>In family child care settings, other family members may be present in the home. How these family members are considered depends on their role within the program.</p> <p><i>This may include spouses or other relatives who may live in the home.</i></p>	<p>Interactions between all caregivers and children in the classroom or care group <b>will be observed</b> during the ERS assessment. How their interactions affect scoring depends on specific tool requirements..</p>	<p>The observer focuses on the caregiver who is interacting with the majority of the children.</p>	<p>Other family members are only eligible to receive a staff bonus with Quality First funds if they are employed by the program and listed as a staff member on the extranet’s staffing tab. All other Quality First funding policies apply. Family members who are staff must be employed by the program at the time funds are given out to receive a bonus.</p> <p>Refer to the Quality First Participant Guide and the Staff Recognition Funds Agreement for more information.</p>	<p>See <a href="#">Arizona Administrative Rules and Revised Statutes for Child Care Group Homes R9-3-301-A.4.b</a> for guidance on recordkeeping for staff and residents.</p>	<p>Other family members who are age 13 or younger will be counted as children in the adult-to-child ratios. Adult family members living in the home must meet all requirements for a home provider, and all required documentation must be provided in accordance with DES Child Care Administrative Rules and Statutes.</p> <p>See <a href="#">Arizona Department of Economic Security website</a> for eligibility criteria and required documents.</p>





<p><b>Program staff role</b></p> <p><b>Centers</b></p>	<p><b>Environment Rating Scales-</b></p> <p><b>ECERS, ITERS</b></p> 	<p><b>CLASS System-</b></p> <p><b>CLASS-Pre-K</b></p> <p><b>CLASS-Toddler</b></p> <p><b>CLASS-Infant</b></p> 	<p><b>Quality First Staff Recognition Funds</b></p> 	<p><b>ADHS Licensing Requirements for DHS Child Care Centers</b></p> 
<p><b>Center Owner/Area Manager-</b> This person provides oversight and business administration of the program. This person may have an office off-site and typically spends less than half of their hours on-site at the program.</p> <p><i>May also be the program's business owner. May also be called regional manager, district manager, principal, or supervisor.</i></p>	<p>Interactions between all caregivers and children in the classroom or care group <b>will be observed</b> during the ERS assessment. How their interactions affect scoring depends on specific tool requirements.</p>	<p>Interactions between all caregivers and children <b>will be observed</b> during the CLASS assessment. The score will primarily reflect the caregiver who is interacting with the majority of the children.</p>	<p>A person who works as an owner/area manager who does not regularly work in the classroom with children is not eligible to receive a bonus using Quality First funds.</p>	<p>A facility director may be counted in staff-to-child ratios if staff qualifications are met in accordance with R9-5-401.1.</p> <p>See <a href="#">Arizona Administrative Code and Revised Statutes for Child Care Facilities R9-5-402</a> for guidance on staff files and records.</p>
<p><b>Director-</b> This is the primary person on site that is responsible for the planning and daily operations of the program.</p> <p><i>May also be called facility director, center director, site administrator, program administrator, coordinator, or principal.</i></p>	<p>Interactions between all caregivers and children in the classroom or care group <b>will be observed</b> during the ERS assessment. How their interactions affect scoring depends on specific tool requirements.</p>	<p>Interactions between all caregivers and children <b>will be observed</b> during the CLASS assessment. The score will primarily reflect the caregiver who is interacting with the majority of the children.</p>	<p>Directors are eligible to receive a staff bonus with Quality First funds, in accordance with Quality First funding policies. They must be employed by the program at the time funds are given out to receive a bonus.</p> <p>Refer to the Quality First Participant Guide and the Staff Recognition Funds Agreement for more information.</p>	<p>A facility director may be counted in staff-to-child ratios if staff qualifications are met in accordance with R9-5-401.1.</p> <p>See <a href="#">Arizona Administrative Code and Revised Statutes for Child Care Facilities R9-5-402</a> for guidance on staff files and records.</p>





<p><b>Program staff role</b> <b>Centers</b></p>	<p><b>Environment Rating Scales-</b> <b>ECERS, ITERS</b></p> 	<p><b>CLASS System-</b> <b>CLASS-Pre-K</b> <b>CLASS-Toddler</b> <b>CLASS-Infant</b></p> 	<p><b>Quality First Staff Recognition Funds</b></p> 	<p><b>ADHS Licensing Requirements for DHS Child Care Centers</b></p> 
<p><b>Assistant Director-</b> This person provides administration of the program and acts as the director’s designee in the director’s absence.</p> <p><i>May also be called facility director designee, office manager, or center assistant.</i></p>	<p>Interactions between all caregivers and children in the classroom or care group <b>will be observed</b> during the ERS assessment. How their interactions affect scoring depends on specific tool requirements.</p>	<p>Interactions between all caregivers and children <b>will be observed</b> during the CLASS assessment. The score will primarily reflect the caregiver who is interacting with the majority of the children.</p>	<p>Assistant Directors are eligible to receive a staff bonus with Quality First funds, in accordance with Quality First funding policies. They must be employed by the program at the time funds are given out to receive a bonus.</p> <p>Refer to the Quality First Participant Guide and the Staff Recognition Funds Agreement for more information.</p>	<p>A director’s designee may be counted in staff-to-child ratios if staff qualifications are met in accordance with R9-5-401.2</p> <p>See <a href="#">Arizona Administrative Code and Revised Statutes for Child Care Facilities R9-5-402</a> for guidance on staff files and records.</p>





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<p><b>Lead Teacher/ Caregiver-</b> This is the person primarily responsible for developing and implementing lesson plans, facilitating activities, documenting children’s developmental progress, and conducting parent-teacher conferences.</p> <p><i>May also be called teacher, primary teacher, co-teacher, co-lead, or guide.</i></p>	<p>Interactions between all caregivers and children in the classroom or care group <b>will be observed</b> during the ERS assessment. How their interactions affect scoring depends on specific tool requirements.</p> <p>At least one teacher (Lead Teacher, Assistant Teacher or substitute) needs to be present with the current group of children for 10 classroom days before ERS can take place.</p>	<p>Interactions between all caregivers and children <b>will be observed</b> during the CLASS assessment. The score will primarily reflect the caregiver who is interacting with the majority of the children.</p> <p>At least one teacher (Lead Teacher, Assistant Teacher or Substitute) needs to be present with the current group of children for 10 classroom days before a formal CLASS assessment can take place.</p>	<p>Teachers are eligible to receive a staff bonus with Quality First funds, in accordance with Quality First funding policies. They must be employed by the program at the time funds are given out to receive a bonus.</p> <p>Refer to section five of the Quality First Participant Guide and the Staff Recognition Funds Agreement for more information.</p>	<p>A child educator may be counted in staff-to-child ratios if staff qualifications are met in accordance with R9-5-401.3 and R9-5-101.116.</p> <p>See <a href="#">Arizona Administrative Code and Revised Statutes for Child Care Facilities R9-5-402</a> for guidance on staff files and records.</p>





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<p><b>Assistant Teacher/ Caregiver-</b> This person assists the lead teacher to provide care and supervision of children.</p> <p><i>May also be called instructional assistant, instructional aide, or floater. This may be a college student enrolled in ECE coursework earning practicum hours in an early learning classroom.</i></p>	<p>Interactions between all caregivers and children in the classroom or care group <b>will be observed</b> during the ERS assessment. How their interactions affect scoring depends on specific tool requirements.</p> <p>Interactions between assistant teachers and children <b>will be observed</b> during ERS assessment.</p>	<p>Interactions between all caregivers and children <b>will be observed</b> during the CLASS assessment. The score will primarily reflect the caregiver who is interacting with the majority of the children.</p> <p>At least one teacher (Lead Teacher or Assistant Teacher) needs to be present with the current group of children for 10 classroom days before a formal CLASS assessment can take place.</p>	<p>Assistant Teachers are eligible to receive a staff bonus with Quality First funds, in accordance with Quality First funding policies. They must be employed by the program at the time funds are given out to receive a bonus.</p> <p>Refer to section five of the Quality First Participant Guide and the Staff Recognition Funds Agreement for more information.</p>	<p>An assistant child educator may be counted in staff-to-child ratios if staff qualifications are met in accordance with R9-5-401.4 and R9-5-101.116.</p> <p><b>See <a href="#">Arizona Administrative Code and Revised Statutes for Child Care Facilities R9-5-402</a> for guidance on staff files and records.</b></p>

<p><b>Program staff role Centers</b></p>	<p><b>Environment Rating Scales- ECERS, ITERS</b></p> 	<p><b>CLASS System- CLASS-Pre-K CLASS-Toddler CLASS-Infant</b></p> 	<p><b>Quality First Staff Recognition Funds</b></p> 	<p><b>ADHS Licensing Requirements for DHS Child Care Centers</b></p> 
<p><b>Teacher/Caregiver Aide-</b> This is a person 16 years of age or older who works under the supervision of a lead teacher-caregiver.</p> <p><i>May also be called a student volunteer.</i></p>	<p>Interactions between all caregivers and children in the classroom or care group <b>will be observed</b> during the ERS assessment. How their interactions affect scoring depends on specific tool requirements.</p>	<p>Interactions between all caregivers and children <b>will be observed</b> during the CLASS assessment. The score will primarily reflect the caregiver who is interacting with the majority of the children.</p> <p>In order to complete a CLASS assessment, the regular classroom teacher must be present.</p>	<p>A teacher/caregiver aide is eligible to receive a staff bonus with Quality First funds, in accordance with Quality First funding policies. They must be employed by the program at the time funds are given out to receive a bonus.</p> <p>Refer to section five of the Quality First Participant Guide and the Staff Recognition Funds Agreement for more information.</p>	<p>A child educator aide may not be counted in staff-to-child ratios.</p> <p>See <a href="#">Arizona Administrative Code and Revised Statutes for Child Care Facilities R9-5-401.6</a> for guidance.</p>
<p><b>Substitute Teacher-</b> An individual who provides child care services in the absence of a teacher/caregiver.</p> <p><i>May also be called sub, temp staff, or teacher on-call.</i></p>	<p>Interactions between all caregivers and children in the classroom or care group <b>will be observed</b> during the ERS assessment. How their interactions affect scoring depends on specific tool requirements.</p> <p>The substitute teacher must be in the classroom for 10 classroom days for ERS to be completed.</p>	<p>Interactions between all caregivers and children <b>will be observed</b> during the CLASS assessment. The score will primarily reflect the caregiver who is interacting with the majority of the children.</p> <p>The substitute teacher must have worked in the classroom with the current group of children for 10 business days for CLASS to be completed.</p>	<p>A substitute teacher is eligible to receive a bonus using Quality First funds, in accordance with Quality First funding policies. They must be employed by the program at the time funds are given out to receive a bonus.</p> <p>Refer to section five of the Quality First Participant Guide and the Staff Recognition Funds Agreement for more information.</p>	<p>May be counted in staff-to-child ratios if staff qualifications are met in accordance with R9-5-401.</p> <p>See <a href="#">Arizona Administrative Code and Revised Statutes for Child Care Facilities R9-5-402</a> for guidance on staff files and records.</p>

<p><b>Program staff role Centers</b></p>	<p><b>Environment Rating Scales- ECERS, ITERS</b></p> 	<p><b>CLASS System- CLASS-Pre-K CLASS-Toddler CLASS-Infant</b></p> 	<p><b>Quality First Staff Recognition Funds</b></p> 	<p><b>ADHS Licensing Requirements for DHS Child Care Centers</b></p> 
<p><b>Volunteer Visitor-</b> A community member or parent who, under the supervision of staff, assists with classroom or program activities.</p> <p><i>May also be called a parent visitor or community volunteer.</i></p>	<p>Interactions between all caregivers and children in the classroom or care group <b>will be observed</b> during the ERS assessment. How their interactions affect scoring depends on specific tool requirements.</p>	<p>Interactions between all caregivers and children <b>will be observed</b> during the CLASS assessment. The score will primarily reflect the caregiver who is interacting with the majority of the children.</p>	<p>A volunteer visitor is not eligible to receive a bonus using Quality First funds.</p>	<p>May not be counted in staff-to-child ratios.</p>
<p><b>Volunteer Staff-</b> This person provides child care services without compensation.</p> <p><i>May also be called a cooperative preschool parent volunteer or student teacher.</i></p>	<p>Interactions between all caregivers and children in the classroom or care group <b>will be observed</b> during the ERS assessment. How their interactions affect scoring depends on specific tool requirements.</p>	<p>Interactions between all caregivers and children <b>will be observed</b> during the CLASS assessment. The score will primarily reflect the caregiver who is interacting with the majority of the children.</p>	<p>A volunteer staff member is not eligible to receive a bonus using Quality First funds.</p>	<p>May only be counted in staff-to-child ratios if they meet the criteria for director, teacher-caregiver, or assistant teacher-caregiver as outlined in R9-5-401.</p> <p><b>See <a href="#">Arizona Administrative Code and Revised Statutes for Child Care Facilities R9-5-402</a> for guidance on staff files and records.</b></p>

<p><b>Program staff role</b> <b>Centers</b></p>	<p><b>Environment Rating Scales-</b> <b>ECERS, ITERS</b></p> 	<p><b>CLASS System-</b> <b>CLASS-Pre-K</b> <b>CLASS-Toddler</b> <b>CLASS-Infant</b></p> 	<p><b>Quality First Staff Recognition Funds</b></p> 	<p><b>ADHS Licensing Requirements for DHS Child Care Centers</b></p> 
<p><b>Student Aide-</b> This is a student under 16 years of age who is participating in an educational, curriculum-based course of study, vocational education, or occupational development program and who, without pay, is present at a facility to receive instruction from and supervision by staff in the provision of childcare services.</p> <p><i>This may include high school students in a technical education program at a lab school.</i></p>	<p>Interactions between all caregivers and children in the classroom or care group <b>will be observed</b> during the ERS assessment. How their interactions affect scoring depends on specific tool requirements.</p>	<p>Interactions between all caregivers and children <b>will be observed</b> during the CLASS assessment. The score will primarily reflect the caregiver who is interacting with the majority of the children.</p>	<p>A student aide is not eligible to receive a bonus using Quality First funds.</p>	<p>A student aide may not be counted in staff-to-child ratios.</p> <p>See <a href="#">Arizona Administrative Code and Revised Statutes for Child Care Facilities R9-5-101.114</a> for guidance on staff files and records.</p>
<p><b>Other Support Staff-</b> This is a person who provides support to the operations of the child care program. <b>These individuals may assist with or support classroom operations in addition to their other duties.</b></p> <p><i>This may include cooks, van drivers, custodial staff, and others in a support role. This may also include staff who lead special or enrichment activities, such as a music teacher, art teacher or librarian.</i></p>	<p>Interactions between all caregivers and children in the classroom or care group <b>will be observed</b> during the ERS assessment. How their interactions affect scoring depends on specific tool requirements.</p>	<p>Interactions between all caregivers and children <b>will be observed</b> during the CLASS assessment. The score will primarily reflect the caregiver who is interacting with the majority of the children.</p>	<p>Support staff are eligible to receive a bonus using Quality First funds, in accordance with Quality First funding policies. They must be employed by the program at the time funds are given out to receive a bonus.</p> <p>Refer to section five of the Quality First Participant Guide and the Staff Recognition Funds Agreement for more information.</p>	<p>May only be counted in staff-to-child ratios if they meet the criteria for director, teacher-caregiver, or assistant teacher-caregiver as outlined in R9-5-401.</p> <p>See <a href="#">Arizona Administrative Code and Revised Statutes for Child Care Facilities R9-5-402</a> for guidance on staff files and records.</p>

<p><b>Program staff role</b> <b>Centers</b></p>	<p><b>Environment Rating Scales-</b> <b>ECERS, ITERS</b></p> 	<p><b>CLASS System-</b> <b>CLASS-Pre-K</b> <b>CLASS-Toddler</b> <b>CLASS-Infant</b></p> 	<p><b>Quality First Staff Recognition Funds</b></p> 	<p><b>ADHS Licensing Requirements for DHS Child Care Centers</b></p> 
<p><b>Contractor-</b> This is a person who facilitates activities but is not employed by the program.</p> <p><i>May also be called a gymnastics coach or soccer coach.</i></p>	<p>Unless this staff member is typically a part of the classroom staff and works with the children daily or almost daily, for a large part of the day, their interactions <b>will not be considered</b> during an ERS assessment, unless they are observed to interact negatively with children.</p>	<p>Interactions between all caregivers and children <b>will be observed</b> during the CLASS assessment. The score will primarily reflect the caregiver who is interacting with the majority of the children.</p>	<p>A contractor is not eligible to receive a bonus using Quality First funds.</p>	<p>May only be counted in staff-to-child ratios if they meet the criteria for director, teacher-caregiver, or assistant teacher-caregiver as outlined in R9-5-401.</p> <p>See <a href="#">Arizona Administrative Code and Revised Statutes for Child Care Facilities R9-5-402</a> for guidance on staff files and records.</p>
<p><b>Therapist-</b> This is a professional who provides individualized services to children in the program. Services are typically provided one-on-one or in very small groups based on a child’s identified special needs.</p> <p><i>This may include roles such as speech therapist, occupational therapist, and literacy specialist.</i></p>	<p>Interactions between all caregivers and children in the classroom or care group <b>will be observed</b> during the ERS assessment. How their interactions affect scoring depends on specific tool requirements.</p>	<p>Interactions between all caregivers and children <b>will be observed</b> during the CLASS assessment. The score will primarily reflect the caregiver who is interacting with the majority of the children.</p> <p>Therapists typically are not observed during CLASS assessments since they usually interact with one child or a small group of children.</p>	<p>A therapist is not eligible to receive a bonus using Quality First funds.</p>	<p>May be counted in staff-to-child ratios if they meet the criteria for director, teacher-caregiver, or assistant teacher-caregiver as outlined in R9-5-401.</p> <p>See <a href="#">Arizona Administrative Code and Revised Statutes for Child Care Facilities R9-5-402</a> for guidance on staff files and records.</p>

<p><b>Program staff role</b> <i>Centers and homes</i></p>	<p><b>Environment Rating Scales-</b> <i>ECERS, ITERS</i></p> 	<p><b>CLASS System-</b> CLASS-Pre-K CLASS-Toddler CLASS-Infant</p> 	<p><b>Quality First Staff Recognition Funds</b></p> 	<p><b>ADHS Licensing Requirements for DHS Child Care Centers</b></p> 
<p><b>Technical Assistance Professional-</b> An individual who provides on-site consultation, coaching, training, or technical assistance to early childhood programs and staff. This person is neither employed by the program nor volunteering to provide child care services at the program. Typically, this person is employed by a social service or government agency to provide professional support to the early childhood staff.</p> <p><i>This may include roles such as Quality First Coach, Mental Health Consultant, Inclusion Coach, Child Care Health Consultant, or Department of Education Early Childhood Specialist.</i></p>	<p>Because they are not program staff, technical assistance providers <b>are not observed</b> using the Environment Rating Scales Tools.</p>	<p>Because they are not program staff, technical assistance providers <b>are not observed</b> using the CLASS assessments.</p>	<p>A technical assistance professional is not eligible to receive a bonus using Quality First funds.</p>	<p>Because technical assistance providers are not providing direct child care services, they are not counted in staff-to-child ratios.</p>

## Additional Resources on Staffing in Early Care and Education Programs

Arizona's Program Guidelines for High-Quality Early Childhood Education: Birth through Kindergarten

<https://cms.azed.gov/home/GetDocumentFile?id=5879561caadebe0c98a80509>

Barhyte, D. (2018, September/October). Volunteer Management: Leadership Strategies for Success. *Child Care Exchange*.

<https://ccie-catalog.s3.amazonaws.com/library/5024342.pdf>

Yastishock, A. (2016, August/September). Miss Nelson is Missing! Preparing for a Substitute Teacher. *Teaching Young Children*, 9 (5)

<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/tyc/aug2016/miss-nelson-missing-preparing-substitute>

### If you have questions about the information in this guide, please contact:

For questions about the Arizona Department of Health Services licensing requirements, contact ADHS at 602-364-2539 or 1-800-615-8555

For questions regarding Quality First Assessment, contact Katie Romero, Quality First Assessment Program Manager at 602-633-8652 or [kromero@swhd.org](mailto:kromero@swhd.org).

For questions about Quality First, contact the First Things First Quality First Team at 602-771-5000 or [QualityFirst@FirstThingsFirst.org](mailto:QualityFirst@FirstThingsFirst.org).