

PSAM

Provider Self-Assessment and Mentoring Services

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is PSAM?

PSAM stands for Provider Self-Assessment and Mentoring. This is a provider driven service that the Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) offers with funding from the Department of Human Services and with the support of Assessment, Licensing, Project TOPSTAR, UT-SWORPS and TECTA.

2. Who is eligible for PSAM Services?

Every DHS licensed child care provider.

3. How will providers be informed of PSAM Services?

After a provider has received their licensing packet, a CCR&R specialist will be calling to talk about the availability of PSAM services.

If a provider expresses interest in participating in PSAM, as part of a partnership effort, the CCR&R specialist will send an email to DHS licensing, DHS assessment, and UTSWORPS to notify each agency of a provider's desire to participate. In addition, an appointment will be made with the director or family child care provider and a CCR&R specialist to answer any questions and to arrange for the signing of a PSAM services provider agreement.

4. What are the main components of PSAM services?

- In-depth training on the *Environment Rating Scales* and the self-assessment process.
- Assistance in understanding the assessment results
- Opportunities to meet with peers for support and team building
- Training hours for Targeted Technical Assistance
- Individualized help on-site to improve program quality
- Purchasing Grants for participants who have at least one child enrolled in the child care certificate program and are in good standing with DHS

5. When can a provider start PSAM?

Any DHS licensed child care provider can begin PSAM Services who has received their licensing packet containing their assessment results.

PSAM Services start when a provider agreement is signed by the provider and the CCR&R specialist.

6. Describe the self assessment process:

Center Self-Assessment for PSAM purposes involves the center director and the CCR&R specialist using the ITERS-R, ECERS-R, or SACERS to:

- observe selected classroom(s)
- score items independently (the CCR&R specialist will score **all** scale items; the director will score to the extent of their comfort level and/or level of understanding of the scale)
- arrive at the appropriate score for each item together, based on the scale criteria

NOTE: The center director may get approval (within the Provider Agreement process) to designate another person provided he/she has the authorization to implement any substantive program changes to impact overall quality based on the PSAM process.

Family and Group home Self-Assessment for PSAM purposes involves a family or group child care provider and a CCR&R specialist using the FDCRS and additional documentation methods to:

- Observe the program
- Score items (The CCR&R specialist will score all scale items; the provider will score agreed upon items using additional documentation methods, based on the best method for each item.)
- Arrive at the appropriate score for each item together, based on the scale criteria

Additional Documentation Method Options:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Journaling • Video taping • Audio taping • FCC PSAM Observation/Documentation Self-Assessment Checklist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer observation • Parent feedback • Collection of forms indicating practice (schedule, menus, etc.)
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7. How long will it take for a provider to be ready to do a self-assessment?

This process is provider-driven and depends on the experience and comfort level of the provider. However, the self-assessment should take place as close to mid-licensing year as possible.

8. What other support is available to the provider while learning to self-assess?

Support in the form of training, technical assistance, or mentoring may be available through Infant/Toddler Specialists, DHS licensing, TECTA, or TOPSTAR.

9. If a provider initially says they do not want PSAM services can they change their mind and later start PSAM services?

A provider can later change his or her mind and start PSAM services. However, if a provider does not sign a provider agreement and begin PSAM services within two months from the time of the initial CCR&R phone call then the provider will not be eligible to apply for a PSAM Purchasing Grant until the following licensing year. In addition, the ability to get the most out of PSAM services, including doing a mid-licensing year assessment, will be compromised. In order to get the most out of PSAM services, providers should start PSAM services as soon as possible after receiving their licensing packet containing their Assessment Results Report.

10. What kind of tasks will be completed during the first PSAM meetings?

- A provider agreement will be discussed and signed
- The program's Assessment Results Report will be reviewed
- Program priorities will be set
- A plan of action will be determined
- A timeline will be established

11. If an owner or director oversees more than one DHS licensed agency, can each agency still take part in PSAM services?

Yes. If an owner or director oversees multiple sites, they would need to enter into a separate agreement for each site they desire to participate. The owner, director or an appropriate designee at each site, who has the ability to implement recommendations, will need to be available to work with the CCR&R Specialist to complete PSAM services.

12. Are there any specialized trainings for a provider who is receiving PSAM services?

Any of the trainings on the TN-CCPT calendar will be helpful. However, there are certain trainings that will highlight skills needed to foster program improvement. Topics of interest may include observation, self-assessment, scale knowledge, scoring, and PSAM Basics and Center-Based or Family Child Care Self-Assessment.

13. How long does it take a provider to complete the PSAM services requirements?

Completing all PSAM service components will typically require five (5) or more visits with the CCR&R specialist. The length of time and frequency of each visit will vary by provider and depend on a number of factors including the schedule of the CCR&R specialist and the schedule of each provider.

14. How will the CCR&R specialists help providers that are interested in applying for PSAM Purchasing Grants?

If a provider that is actively participating in PSAM services is interested in applying for a PSAM Purchasing Grant the CCR&R specialist has the following responsibilities:

- Verify that the provider has at least one child enrolled who is receiving services through the Child Care Certificate program;
- Confirm that the provider is in good standing with DHS Child Care Programs (Licensing, Child Care Certificate, Child and Adult Care Food Program);
- Determine with the provider what products are needed related to the ERS assessment results;
- Give guidance as needed in completing the purchasing grant application;
- Review the provider product choices;
- Help the provider incorporate purchased materials into the program.

15. How will providers that complete PSAM services be recognized?

After completing the components of the PSAM provider agreement and, if applicable, completing the requirements surrounding a PSAM Purchasing Grant, the director or family child care provider will be recognized with a PSAM lapel pin, a "Certificate of Completion", and recognition on the CCR&R and TN Star Quality websites.

