

Change to Policy/Procedure Memo

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Policy: GNJK Rating Extensions

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Rationale: In preparation for the new rating process set to be implemented on April 1, 2025, which will enable the review of a program’s documentation and training to occur simultaneously with ERS observations, the existing policy on extensions has been re-evaluated. It was determined that modifications to the current extension policy are necessary to avoid conducting observations for programs that are, otherwise, unprepared for rating, and to prevent programs with incomplete documentation or training portfolios from remaining in the rating queue indefinitely.

Existing policy/procedure: Currently, extensions are issued only to programs with ERS scores that do not meet Star Rating 3 thresholds. Extensions are not issued for incomplete documentation or training, or if a program’s total average on any ERS tool is 2.5 or lower. Programs that lack sufficient evidence to meet GNJK Standards or training hours are asked to resubmit for rating when they are ready to move forward.

Change to policy/procedure: To ensure observations are not conducted unnecessarily, that programs are efficiently moved through the rating queue, and that each program is given the opportunity for a successful GNJK rating process, the following extension policy will be implemented beginning on April 1, 2025.

There will be three pathways for a program’s rating process to be extended:

Extension Type	Reason for Extension
Rating extension for documentation/training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Program is not able to meet 30 documentation points (Star Rating 3 threshold), and/or ● Program staff do not have the required formal curriculum training hours for at least Star Rating 3.
Rating extension for ERS scores	Program’s ERS scores do not meet Star 3 thresholds. (Extensions will not be issued to programs with a total average of 2.5 or lower on any ERS tool. Programs will be asked to resubmit for rating when at least a Star Rating 3 can be achieved.)
Rating extension for documentation/training <u>and</u> ERS scores	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Program’s ERS scores do not meet Star 3 thresholds, and ● Program is not able to meet 30 documentation points (Star Rating 3 threshold), and/or ● Program staff do not have the required formal curriculum training hours for at least Star Rating 3.

If a program’s rating process must be extended, the following guidance applies:

- **A one-time rating extension** will be issued, extending the program’s rating process.
- Programs that receive rating extensions will have **six months** to submit the necessary documentation or training evidence to meet Star 3, and/or to request new ERS observations for the age group (ECERS-3 or ITERS-3) for which the ERS scores did not meet Star Rating 3 thresholds.
- **If the program does not submit the necessary information or request ERS observations within six months**, the rating extension expires and the program must *resubmit for rating* (i.e., updated documentation and new ERS observations of a random selection of all classrooms) *when at least a Star Rating 3 can be achieved*.

- Programs with current GNJK Star Ratings that have been granted a rating extension and fail to successfully complete the re-rating process will have their existing rating expire.
- A Rating Summary Report will be sent to a program when a rating extension is issued, with recommendations for improvement.
- Programs that meet the rating thresholds for a Star Rating that is lower than the Star Rating they have requested will continue to receive the Star Rating that is earned. **Rating extensions will only be issued for programs that do not meet Star Rating 3 requirements.** *Note: DFD/Grow NJ Kids may issue an extension at their discretion on a case-by-case basis.*
- In some cases, the program or provider may also be asked to resubmit select time-sensitive documentation and/or evidence of training when observations are requested or documentation or training records are requested.