

## Meeting Connecticut's Accreditation Requirement for State Funded Early Childhood Programs through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

A program receiving state funding is allowed three years from the date funding is received to meet the state's accreditation requirements. This means that the program must achieve NAEYC Accreditation or Head Start approval prior to the third anniversary of funding.

This document offers guidance to non-accredited state funded programs on how to meet the NAEYC Accreditation requirement within the three year time period detailed in *General Policy 15-07*. The sources described below originate at the Office of Early Childhood's Accreditation Facilitation Project (AFP) or NAEYC.

### During the first year of funding:

- Consult the [AFP website](#) for resources including [Action Planning for NAEYC Accreditation](#) which offers guidance on exploring the NAEYC Standards and Criteria, finding resources and technical assistance, and engaging partners in your program improvement process.
- Log on to The Online Resource Center Headquarters, [TORCH](#) for access to NAEYC's tools, criteria guidance, and other helpful resources.
- Access training provided through the [AFP](#) to develop your understanding of the NAEYC Accreditation process and to support program improvement.
- Enter staff's qualifications information in the [Early Childhood Professional Registry](#) to assess program staff's educational qualifications in relation to [NAEYC's Candidacy requirements](#) to determine need for coursework or training.
- Plan a [timeline](#) for your self-study and self-assessment processes. Consult NAEYC's [guidance on submission dates](#) to inform your choice of candidacy due date. It is important at this phase of the process that you know your candidacy due date. To choose a date:
  - Identify your funding start date. For example, September 2015.
  - Add three years, the outer-most limit of time to reach Accreditation. In our example, September, 2018.
  - Subtract nine months, the amount of time NAEYC needs to review and respond to your candidacy materials; provide a visit, and render an Accreditation decision. In our example, January, 2018.
  - Choose a candidacy date that falls BEFORE the date in your answer to item 3! In our example, the program should choose a candidacy date of September 2017, or may choose a candidacy date of May 2017, to ensure that a decision is rendered by September 2018, the third anniversary of receipt of funding.
- Complete Step 1 of the NAEYC Accreditation process by [enrolling](#) in the self-study process.

**During the second year of funding:**

- Move to Step 2 of the NAEYC Accreditation process, [application](#). This notifies NAEYC of your intent to seek Accreditation and your chosen candidacy date.
- Apply to the [AFP](#) (licensed programs only) for individualized assistance.
- Begin to prepare your evidence by developing portfolios and implementing surveys as available on [TORCH](#) (see Resource Library folders for Tools for Self-Study and Tools for Self-Assessment)
- Move to Step 3 of the NAEYC Accreditation process: submit your [candidacy materials](#) to NAEYC by your selected candidacy date.
  - Download your Candidacy Calculator Report to substitute for specific pages in the NAEYC materials.

**During the third year of funding:**

- Consult the NAEYC website for [Pre-Visit Protocol](#) and the [Site Visit Protocol](#) to assist you in preparing for your visit.
- Submit [staffing changes](#) to NAEYC as applicable as you wait for your visit.
- Maintain your [program record](#) on the NAEYC website.
- Continue to use NAEYC's tools and other program evaluation tools to guide improvement.
- Receive your NAEYC Accreditation decision.
- Celebrate your accomplishments!

**For questions:**

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