Iowa Family Support Credential

Program

Guide

Dear Family Support Program,

Congratulations on your journey to earn the Iowa Family Support Credential.

The Iowa Family Support Credential is formal recognition from the state of Iowa that you are operating a quality family support program. Funders, community members and participants can all be assured that your program has been rigorously reviewed and found to be in full adherence to all quality standards.

You will work closely in the next two to three years to develop policies and procedures that align with the Iowa Family Support Standards. You and your staff will work over the next couple of years to implement those policies and procedures into daily practice.

The peer review is an external evaluation process to verify that your program is in adherence to the Iowa Family Support Standards. This guide will provide you with more information and help you have a clear understanding about both the credentialing and peer review process.

Congratulations again on achieving this critical milestone!

Sincerely,

Janet

Janet N. Horras, Iowa Home Visitation Program Director

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*In cases where the IFSTAN coordinator is also the program specialist, the director of service quality will complete the actions.

Procedure Name:	**Overview of Credentialing Process**
Applicable to:	Programs, Peer Reviewers, Program Specialists
Effective Date:	March 2008
Date(s) of revision:	May 2011; March 2014; June 2014
Other References:	Tool FF; Iowa Family Support Credential Application; Peer Review Application; SEQIP; Peer Review Request Form; Extension Request; Peer Review Report; Addendum

Purpose: Improve the quality and consistency of family support services provided in the state of Iowa.

From Tool FF:

1) By July 1, 2013, 25 percent of state funds expended for home visiting programs are for evidence based or promising program models.
2) By July 1, 2014, 50 percent of state funds expended for home visiting programs are for evidenced-based or promising program models.
3) By July 1, 2015, 75 percent of state funds expended for home visiting programs are for evidence based or promising program models.
4) By July 1, 2016, 90 percent of state funds expended for home visiting programs are for evidence-based or promising program models. The remaining 10 percent of funds may be used for innovative program models that do not yet meet the definition of evidence-based or promising programs.

What programs are eligible to participate? The credentialing process was designed for family support programs that do not have access to outside evaluation and are not currently credentialed through a national process. Both in-home family support programs and group-based parent education programs are eligible to apply, among any other family support programs.

Who's eligible to be a peer reviewer? Peer reviewers must successfully complete an application and peer review training prior to any assignments. Peer reviewers cannot have any conflicts of interest with the program they are evaluating. Peer reviewers cannot offer technical assistance during the course of the peer review.

Process:

First Step: The program submits an application and supporting materials to participate to the IFSTAN coordinator. Applications can be found online or acquired by emailing ifstanprogram@lsiowa.org.

Second Step: Once the program is accepted into the process, they will be assigned a program specialist. In the event that an assignment cannot be made, the program may be placed on a waiting list and notified of placement on the list. Programs will be removed and assigned to a program specialist in the order of placement. The program specialist will help the program initially self-evaluate in relation to the family support standards using the Self-Evaluation and Quality Improvement Plan (SEQIP) within three months of the first face-to-face meeting. The program, with the support of the program specialist, will then be responsible for developing and implementing a quality improvement plan to address any standards that are not met. The program specialist will also provide technical assistance to the program to assist in meeting the standards. Together, the program specialist and the program will identify any training needs the program may have. **The program specialist's role will vary in intensity; however, the goal will be two face to face visits per year, based upon the program specialist and program's discretion.**

Third Step: The program has up to three years with a potential one year extension of signing the Memorandum of Understanding to request peer review. The program and the program specialist will inform the IFSTAN coordinator that the program is ready for the peer review portion of credentialing. This is communicated via the Peer Review Request Form filled out by the program specialist and program. This form is emailed along with a letter of recommendation by the program specialist. The program will then be ready to submit the Self-Assessment and Supporting Materials (SAM) and "Box" for each peer reviewer. The lead peer reviewer will request the SAM and "Box" from the program.

The program is now ready for the onsite portion of the peer review. A letter will go to the program and peer reviewers who were assigned.

Fourth Step: The onsite review varies from two to five days, depending on the specific agency's circumstances. The peer review consists of interviews, observations of home visits and / or groups, and document reviews. The onsite review concludes with an oral exit report that outlines the Strengths and Opportunities for Growth of the program and organization.

Fifth Step: The lead peer reviewer submits the Peer Review Report to the IFSTAN coordinator* within two weeks of the conclusion of the site visit. The written report contains ratings for each standard. Ratings of three or four require the peer review team to provide written rational for each first and second order standard. If the report contains 20% or more standards out of adherence, the program will be placed on probationary status and will be required to follow a post-peer review timeline that includes technical assistance, evidence of practice, and a fidelity peer review. If a fidelity review is warranted, the peer reviewers will have completed the contractual obligation.

Sixth Step: No later than the end of week 14 of the post-peer review process, the program will submit the Corrective Action Plan that will contain additional documentation demonstrating how the program is meeting the standard(s) that the peer review team found out of adherence. The additional documentation will be reviewed by the assigned peer review team and the IFSTAN coordinator*. It may take several attempts before the peer review team is confident that the program is adhering to the standard(s). Because of this, it is in the program's interest to complete and submit the Corrective Action Plan as soon as possible.

Seventh Step: **IF** the additional documentation and Addendum is approved by the IFSTAN coordinator*, the program will be awarded the Iowa Family Support Credential. Notification will come via email from the community health consultant. The credential will be valid for five years.

IF the additional documentation is not in adherence within the timeline, the program will be required to wait one year before reapplying and beginning the credentialing process over again.

Procedure Name:	**Program Specialist Assignments**
Applicable to:	Programs, Program Specialists
Effective Date:	March 2014
Date(s) of revision:	June 2014
Other References:	Program Specialists Geographic Map

Requirements for Program Specialists:

Program specialists are Lutheran Services in Iowa employees. Program specialists shall hold a bachelor's degree or higher in social work, human services, education, or health-related field. In addition, program specialists must have experience working in a family support field and complete the Iowa Family Support Technical Assistance Training prior to working with programs.

Assignments for Program Specialists:

Programs will be assigned according to geographic area of program specialist unless there is a conflict of interest. Geographic areas are fluid, depending upon where the program specialists live.

Program specialists must disclose any of the following:

- Past employment or consultation work with an assigned organization
- Past affiliation (professional or personal) with a staff member of an assigned organization

A wait list should be avoided and will only be utilized if all program specialists are at capacity.

Procedure Name:	**IFSTAN Tools**
Applicable to:	Programs, Peer Reviewers, Program Specialists
Effective Date:	March 2014
Date(s) of revision:	June 2014, September 2014
Other References:	

14.04 Waiver: To be filled out by programs when the supervisor does not meet the qualifications listed in standard 14.04.
Program/peer reviewers/program specialists

Body of Evidence: Designed to assist in determining how to show evidence of first and second-order standards.
Program/peer reviewers/program specialists

Body of Evidence Checklist: Derived from the Body of Evidence, designed to assist in review of "Box" to assist in ensuring all applicable evidence is included.
Program/peer reviewers/program specialists

Body of Evidence - Subcontracting: Designed to assist in determining how to show evidence of individual standards when a program uses subcontractors.
Program/peer reviewers/program specialists

Code of Conduct: Peer reviewers will sign this document after agreeing to the peer review assignment. Programs will receive signed copies via the lead peer reviewer and may share these with any individuals with questions on how IFSTAN adheres to confidentiality and maintaining a code of conduct with peer reviewers.
Program/peer reviewers

Community Partners Roster: An Excel spreadsheet for program to provide peer reviewers with needed information about community partners to help in the selection of participants to be included in the interview panel.
Program/peer reviewers/program specialists

Confidentiality Agreement: Peer reviewers will sign this document after agreeing to the peer review assignment. Programs will receive signed copies via the lead peer reviewer for both peers and may share with any individuals with questions on how IFSTAN adheres to confidentiality and maintaining a code of conduct with peer reviewers.
Program/peer reviewers

Corrective Action Plan: Programs will complete this document following receipt of the Peer Review Report in the event they are found out of adherence for any standards. The program will address any unsubstantiated first order or second-order standards that were out of adherence and state what they are doing to now ensure adherence to the standard. Once completed, this plan will be submitted to the IFSTAN coordinator* who will submit it to the peer reviewers.
Program/peer reviewers/program specialists

Definitions for IFSTAN: This list contains acronyms frequently used and descriptions of administrative roles in the IFSTAN program.
Program/peer reviewers/program specialists

Definitions for Iowa Family Support Credentialing: This list contains words and phrases found in the Iowa Family Support Standards and definitions. This tool also references the standards where these words/phrases are found.
Program/peer reviewers/program specialists

Emergency Contact Form: To be completed by the peer reviewers and program, then sent to the IFSTAN coordinator prior to the peer review. Everyone should keep a copy of this in case of emergencies that may occur before or during the peer review. Numbers should include how to get ahold of someone after normal business hours.
Program/peer reviewers

Feedback Tool for the Peer Review Team: Feedback survey used by IFSTAN coordinator for programs to provide feedback with regards to the peer review team.
Program/peer reviewers

File Review Checklist: Lists requirements from the standards that may be found in participant files. Specific checklists are available for both in-home visitation and group-based programming. Program specialists will utilize this during a mock review. Peer reviewers will utilize this tool during the peer review.
Program/peer reviewers/program specialists

Interview Invitation Template: A template to be used by the program to send to individuals to be invited to interview panels during the peer review. The program can modify this document to meet the needs of the different panels.
Program/program specialists

Interview Questions: These tools list the type of questions that may be asked during peer review.   These serve as a guide for both the peer reviewers to be used during the peer review and the program specialist for the mock review process. The program may share these with the various groups that will be participating in interviews during the peer review. It should be stressed that these are not the exact questions which will be asked during the peer review, but instead a guide to give programs an idea of the type of questions that may be asked. Questions during the peer review will be guided by what the peer review team is/is not finding in the SAM and "Box".
Program/peer reviewers/program specialists

Iowa Family Support Standards: The standards, based on COA standards, are designed to accommodate a variety of family support programs for families and children, including, but not limited to: (1) home visiting programs that deliver support services in families' homes; (2) early intervention programs for children who have or are at risk for developmental delays; and (3) group-based parent education programs.

Program/peer reviewers/program specialist

Linking Standards: Designed to assist programs in creating or adapting policies to meet the standards. This document divides all standards to fit in one of 15 categories.
Program/program specialists

Mock Review Report Template: This document will be filled out by the program specialists and submitted to the program post mock review.
Program/program specialists

Observation Form: Lists requirements noted in the standards that may be observed during either a group-based parent education class or a home visit. Specific forms are available for both types of programs. Items not found during a class or home visit are not an indication that the program is not meeting the standard, simply that they were not observed during that particular time.
Peer reviewers

Participant Roster: An Excel spreadsheet for the program to provide peer reviewers with needed information about each participant to help in the selection of participant files to be reviewed onsite.
Program/peer reviewers

Peer Review Report: This document will be filled out by the peer reviewers and submitted to the IFSTAN coordinator* post-peer review. This becomes a public document. The IFSTAN coordinator* will review the report and then send it to the program.
Program/peer reviewers

Peer Review Report Addendum: Peer reviewers will complete a report addendum following receipt of the program's Corrective Action Plan. In the Addendum, the peer reviewers will reevaluate the program's adherence, taking into account the corrective actions that have been taken.
Program/peer reviewers

Peer Review Request Form: This form will be filled out by the program, with the assistance of the program specialist, to request peer review. This form will then be emailed to the program specialist who will attach a letter confirming the program's readiness for peer review and email both to the IFSTAN coordinator and the program.
Program/peer reviewers/program specialists

Peer Review Schedule: Example schedules have been made for two, three, and four day peer reviews for both home visitation and group parent education programs, along with combination or multiple programs. Peer reviewers will only customize schedules when necessary to meet the needs for each peer review.
Program/peer reviewer

Personnel Records Checklist: Lists requirements from the standards that may be found in personnel records. Program specialists will utilize this during a mock review. Peer reviewers will utilize this tool during the peer review.
Peer reviewers/program specialists

Preliminary Peer Review Report: Used by peer reviewers pre-peer review to rate programs in or out of adherence.
Peer reviewers

Rating Indicator Sheet: Used to guide the rating of program's adherence to the Iowa Family Support Standards. Programs can utilize this tool as they give themselves an initial rating when they begin the credentialing process and update as they continue to meet the standards. The peer reviewers will rate programs during the peer review according to these indicators.
Program/peer reviewers/program specialists

Request for Extension Checklist: Checklist to be used by the program and the program specialist to ensure that the program is meeting all of the required elements of an extension request.

Self-Assessment and Materials (SAM): The SEQIP is converted into the SAM by the IFSTAN program specialist when the program has demonstrated that they are ready to request peer review and will be shared with the peer review team.
Program/peer reviewers/program specialists

Self-Evaluation and Quality Improvement Plan (SEQIP): An Excel document designed for the program to use as a working tool to compile information while receiving technical assistance. This tool will be shared between the program, the program specialist, and IFSTAN staff.
Program/program specialists

Supervision Checklist: Lists requirements from the standards that may be found in supervision records. Program specialists will utilize this during a mock review. Peer reviewers will utilize this tool during the peer review.
Peer reviewers/program specialists

Training Log: Lists all training requirements and the standard that references them. Programs may utilize this tool to ensure and document that all required trainings are met. Peer reviewers will utilize this tool when reviewing personnel records to ensure that staff meets the training requirements set by the standards.
Program/peer reviewers/program specialists

Withdrawal Form: In the event that a program wishes to withdraw from the process, the agency will fill out a form and collect signatures from the program specialist, executive director and/or board chair. This form will be provided to the IFSTAN coordinator and community health consultant.
Program/program specialists

Procedure Name:	**Memorandum of Understanding**
Applicable to:	Programs, Program Specialists
Effective Date:	March 2008
Date(s) of revision:	May 2011; March 2014; May 2014
Other References:	MOU, SEQIP; Involuntary Withdrawal Form

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will be completed and signed by the program specialist as well as someone on behalf of the program. The MOU will be completed and signed at the first face-to-face meeting with the program and be sent to the IFSTAN coordinator.

The MOU states that the program participating in the credentialing process will work together with the assigned program specialist during a time span of up to three years, with a maximum one year extension.

Programs are allotted 40 hours of technical assistance per fiscal year (July 1st-June 30th), during the duration of credentialing process.

The program will make adequate progress, allocating time each month to work toward adherence to the standards. **The program is responsible for initiating contact with the program specialist each month to provide an update on progress.**

The program will utilize the Self-Evaluation and Quality Improvement Plan (SEQIP) throughout the duration of time working toward program's credential. The SEQIP will be developed within the first three months of signing the MOU, be updated in an ongoing manner, and submitted at a minimum of quarterly to the program specialist.

While working with the program specialist, the program will develop a timeline toward achieving the credential. The program will be responsible for following the timeline.

The program will meet with the assigned program specialist in a face-to-face meeting **with the goal of two face to face visits per year, based upon the program specialist and program's discretion**.

The program is responsible to contact the IFSTAN coordinator if they wish to withdraw from the process or be assigned a new program specialist.

If the program does not make adequate progress as described above, the program will receive a warning from the IFSTAN coordinator. If the program does not respond to the warning within 30 days, the program will be involuntarily withdrawn from the IFSTAN program and must wait one year to reapply.

Procedure Name:	**Tracking Program Time**
Applicable to:	Programs, Program Specialists
Effective Date:	March 2008
Date(s) of revision:	May 2011; March 2014; May 2014
Other References:	MOU; Subcontractor Credentialing; Request Additional Time Form; Caseload Roster Spreadsheet

Programs are awarded 40 hours of technical assistance per fiscal year.

If an agency is credentialing multiple programs, **each** program receives 20 hours of technical assistance for the program standards, along with 20 hours of technical assistance for the organizational standards.

Multi-agencies who are credentialing together will receive 20 hours of program standard technical assistance and 20 additional technical assistance hours for each agency being credentialed.

The program specialist will discuss with program and ask the IFSTAN coordinator for more time if an additional 10 hours is needed.   The IFSTAN coordinator will either approve or deny this request based on information received.

Drive time by the program specialist is not included in a program's allotted 40 hours for technical assistance.

The program is responsible to make contact with the program specialist at a minimum monthly per signed MOU and meet face-to-face based on the program specialist's and program's discretion. This should include any updates to the SEQIP, policy changes that need to be reviewed, and any other updates.

If the program specialist has not heard from the program, contact should be made to the program by the program specialist to inquire about updates, etc.

The program specialist records any time used, to the nearest 15 minutes (reviewing materials, phone calls, face-to-face meetings, emails, etc.)

Procedure Name:	**SEQIP and SAM**
Applicable to:	Programs, Program Specialists
Effective Date:	March 2008
Date(s) of revision:	May 2011; March 2014; June 2014
Other References:	SEQIP; SAM; Body of Evidence

SEQIP -- Self Evaluation and Quality Improvement Plan:

The SEQIP is a tool the program will use when receiving technical assistance. The SEQIP is a companion tool that reflects the 138 first and second order standards. Standards 1-15 are program standards and 16-32 are generally organizational standards. Some standards may be relevant on both a program and agency level. Each second-order standard or unsubstantiated first order standard needs to be reflected in policy/procedure.

Depending on the program type, a SEQIP with pre-determined NA standards will be used by the program. All NA's should be confirmed with the program specialist. Each program being credentialed within the agency needs its own SEQIP. The document is compiled and shared between program and IFSTAN staff. This phase should be completed within the first three months of signing the MOU and submitted to the IFSTAN coordinator by the program specialist. This will be updated on a quarterly basis.

SAM -- Self-Assessment and Materials:

The SAM is a tool used when the program has demonstrated readiness to request for peer review and the SEQIP is converted to be shared with peer reviews.

The SEQIP/SAM tool is an Excel document with the following features:

- The first tab is the title page with tips for collaborating when sharing the document with programs and the program specialist
- There is one Iowa Family Support Credential Standard per numbered tab so the program specialist and programs can focus on one standard or set of standards, at any given time
    - **Each tab contains a summary of the corresponding standards but NOT the entire standard**
    - The SEQIP/SAM tool is designed to be a companion piece for tracking information and is not intended to replace the standards document
- The final tab is a summary worksheet that will automatically transfer the initial rating on the other worksheets and allow for updates and comments to be made each quarter
- The document has been protected to safeguard formatting and information as it is shared between the program and IFSTAN staff

- For any assistance with the format of the SEQIP, e-mail the program specialist
- This format will not change in any way until it is converted to the SAM
- The program will send the SEQIP to the program specialist who will convert it into the SAM
- The document is formatted to print each worksheet on one page (longer standards may print on two) and a program can choose to either print certain sheets or the entire workbook
- The program will not alter the format of the SEQIP at any time and will need to submit the SEQIP in the original format to be converted into the SAM

Procedure Name:	**Extension Request Checklist**
Applicable to:	Programs, Program Specialists
Effective Date:	May 2011
Date(s) of revision:	July 2013; June 2014
Other References:	Extension Request Checklist

Instructions: This checklist is to be used by the program and the program specialist to ensure that the program is meeting all of the required elements of the request for an extension.

NOTE:

- Programs must submit the request at least 6 months prior to the date of original request if needed
- Programs must be adhering to a minimum of 60% of the standards to be eligible for the extension
- Programs going through the renewal process are NOT eligible for extensions

Check off each item to ensure the request meets all of the requirements:

_____ 12 point font is used

_____ Length of the request is six pages or less

_____ Request is signed by the contact person for the program

_____ Request is signed by the program specialist indicating that they are in complete agreement with the accuracy of the information contained within the request

_____ Program has followed the instructions for completing the request

_____ Program specialist feels that the program has a plan in place that will be successful in getting the program ready for the peer review at the end of the 12 month extension. The program specialist **CANNOT** sign requests for programs when the opinion is held that the program will not be ready at the end of the 12 month extension.

_____ Request summarizes why there is a need *(helpful hint: program needs to take ownership)*

_____ Request must clearly state how the program will use the additional time to prepare and be ready for the peer review

_____ Request must demonstrate how effectively the program has used the technical assistance provided thus far

_____ Request must provide a detailed plan for the additional 12 months which provides:

_____Detailed timeline for the 12 months

_____Detailed activities must be included in the timeline

_____The plan must demonstrate that if it is followed, the program will be ready for the peer review at the end of the 12 months. In other words, the plan must give a detailed listing of activities with timelines that will ensure that the program is ready for the peer review at the end of the twelve months.

_____Request addresses all elements used for evaluating the request for the extension:

_____Barriers outside of the control of the program such as:

_____Change in program specialist (can mark N/A)

_____Changes in key program personnel (can mark N/A)

_____Other influences such as, but not limited to, major health concerns of key program personnel or their immediate family members (can mark N/A)

_____Ability of the program to be ready for the peer review if granted a 12 month extension

_____Can the program's plan be realistically achieved in 12 months?

_____Must be in adherence to a minimum of 60% (or 19) of the standards at the time the request is made. *Helpful hint:* *the request must state this clearly and identify which standards the program is in adherence to at the time of the request and the programs plan with timeline should include the remaining standards and when the program will achieve adherence to the standards. Keep in mind that any new changes in practice should be in place for at least three months prior to the peer review.*

_____Demonstrated cooperation with the program specialist over the previous 36 months *Helpful hint:* *gaps in no contact with the program specialist should be explained. State will be looking at the hours billed per program and if it looks like a program is not taking advantage of the program specialist services they should be prepared to explain why. Owning up to putting credentialing on the shelf for a few months is better for the program than making up excuses.*

_____Demonstrated consistent work toward adherence to the standards over the previous months except for the barriers noted that were outside of the control of the program *Helpful hint:* *A change in program specialist does not lessen the responsibility of the program to continue to work toward adherence to the standards. Other agency duties and responsibilities that are part of the normal work environment are not an excuse for not working on adherence to the standards. It is better to frame it in what program has accomplished instead of all of the reasons why program hasn't had time to work on credentialing.*

_____Request received at least six months prior to when the TA expires

Send request to: **State Visitation Program Manager**

Procedure Name:	**Mock Review**
Applicable to:	Programs, Program Specialists
Effective Date:	May 2011
Date(s) of revision:	July 2013; June 2014
Other References:	Mock Interview Questions; Mock Preliminary Review Report; Peer Review Schedule Procedure

Initial visit:
- Review Program Guide
- Review Iowa Family Support Standards
- The first draft of the self-evaluation (SEQIP) is introduced and completed within three months of service to include a plan for quality improvement that includes specific activities and timelines.
- Review Body of Evidence with program staff to discuss how program will develop evidence to show adherence to the standards.
- Review Rating Indicators to rate standards on SEQIP.
- MOU is reviewed and signed.
- Tool FF reviewed
- Linking Standards document reviewed along with Policy and Procedure Tip Sheets.
- Review participant files, training logs, personnel records, and supervisory records with the program. All family support professional staff will bring one participant file to meeting.

Ongoing 3-30 months:
- The self-evaluation (SEQIP) and listing of documentation will continue to be worked on and reviewed
- Work to finalize both program and agency policy and procedures and ensure these are in adherence to the Iowa Family Support Standards
- Create a list of acronyms used by the program
- Consult procedure on working with multiple programs and multi-agencies, as needed

6, 12, 18, 24 months:
- A review of participant files, training logs, personnel records, and supervisory records will be completed to monitor for continued improvement towards compliance
- Review the screening tool, assessments used, service plan, participant rights and responsibilities, participant grievance, release of information, and participant access to case records against applicable standards
- Review the Training Log. This is not required to be used by the program, but is strongly recommended. This log may help the program supervisor ensure that all Iowa Family Support Standards applicable trainings are documented and updated as necessary

- Compare supervision policy and procedure against records looking for consistent scheduling of supervision time and needed documentation
- Program specialist will share notes with the program supervisor

30 months:
A mock review will be completed on participant files, training logs, personnel records, and supervisory records, in addition to the self-evaluation and "Box" of evidence.

- Assigned program specialist and another program specialist will conduct this mock review to check for adherence to the standards and make any last minute recommendations
  - The assigned program specialist will work with the program to pick a random assortment of files, just as would be done in the onsite review
- The mock review of the self-evaluation (SEQIP) and "Box" will take an entire day to complete
  - The program specialists will use the Mock Review Report template to provide feedback
  - Notes may include what should be added, highlighted or flagged for peers to easily identify what the peer reviewers should be looking at for adherence
  - Identify what narrative or documentation could be strengthened
- Program specialist will debrief with the program supervisor at the conclusion of the review

36 months / day of request:
A mock review will be completed on participant files, training logs, personnel records, and supervisory records.
The day of the peer review request, the program specialist will review to ensure that the program has continued adhering to the standards in both policy and practice. **The program specialist will not submit their recommendation for peer review if the program has not adhered to the standards for the three months leading up to the peer review request.**
Staff meeting to prepare for the onsite review will happen the day the request form is completed and should include:
- Review sample schedule for the onsite visit
  - Discuss the typical schedule and explain the purpose behind each meeting, observation, and interview
  - The specifics for the peer review will be worked out between program and lead peer reviewer
- Review Home Visit and / or Group Parent Education Observation Checklist(s)
- Discuss areas program specialist may still have concerns
- Utilize the mock interview questions as needed
- Confirm that practice changes have been implemented
- Confirm policy and procedure changes have been made
- Ensure a closed, secure meeting room for peer review, invitations to groups, and staff time expectations, etc.
- Program receives confirmation to make second copy of the box of evidence
- Program completes Request for Peer Review Form
- Program specialist sends program's Request for Peer Review Form and letter of recommendation to the IFSTAN coordinator and program

Procedure Name:	**Mock Review for Renewal Programs**
Applicable to:	Programs, Program Specialists
Effective Date:	March 2015
Date(s) of revision:	
Other References:	Mock Interview Questions; Mock Preliminary Review Report; Peer Review Schedule Procedure

Initial visit:
- Review Program Guide
- Review Iowa Family Support Standards
- The first draft of the self-evaluation (SEQIP) is introduced and completed within three months of service to include a plan for quality improvement that includes specific activities and timelines.
- Review Body of Evidence with program staff to discuss how program will develop evidence to show adherence to the standards.
- Review Rating Indicators to rate standards on SEQIP.
- MOU is reviewed and signed.
- Linking Standards document reviewed along with Policy and Procedure Tip Sheets.
- Review participant files, training logs, personnel records, and supervisory records with the program. All family support professional staff will bring one participant file to meeting.

Ongoing 1-6 months:
- The self-evaluation (SEQIP) and listing of documentation will continue to be worked on and reviewed
- Send existing and new policies and procedures to program specialist to review for adherence to the Iowa Family Support Standards.
- Create or update current list of acronyms used by the program
- Consult procedure on working with multiple programs and multi-agencies, as needed

6 months:
A mock review will be completed on participant files, training logs, personnel records, and supervisory records, in addition to the self-evaluation and "Box" of evidence.
- Assigned program specialist and another program specialist will conduct this mock review to check for adherence to the standards and make any last minute recommendations
  - The assigned program specialist will work with the program to pick a random assortment of files, just as would be done in the onsite review
- The mock review of the self-evaluation (SEQIP) and "Box" will take an entire day to complete
  - The program specialists will use the Mock Review Report template to provide feedback

- o   Notes may include what should be added, highlighted or flagged for peers to easily identify what the peer reviewers should be looking at for adherence
    - o   Identify what narrative or documentation could be strengthened
- Program specialist will debrief with the program supervisor at the conclusion of the review

12 months / day of request:
A mock review will be completed on participant files, training logs, personnel records, and supervisory records.
The day of the peer review request, the program specialist will review to ensure that the program has continued adhering to the standards in both policy and practice. **The program specialist will not submit their recommendation for peer review if the program has not adhered to the standards for the three months leading up to the peer review request.**
Staff meeting to prepare for the onsite review will happen the day the request form is completed and should include:

- Review sample schedule for the onsite visit
    - o   Discuss the typical schedule and explain the purpose behind each meeting, observation, and interview
    - o   The specifics for the peer review will be worked out between program and lead peer reviewer
- Review Home Visit and / or Group Parent Education Observation Checklist(s)
- Discuss areas program specialist may still have concerns
- Utilize the mock interview questions as needed
- Confirm that practice changes have been implemented
- Confirm policy and procedure changes have been made
- Ensure a closed, secure meeting room for peer review, invitations to groups, and staff time expectations, etc.
- Program receives confirmation to make second copy of the box of evidence
- Program completes Request for Peer Review Form
- Program specialist sends program's Request for Peer Review Form and letter of recommendation to the IFSTAN coordinator and program

Procedure Name:	**Request Peer Review**
Applicable to:	Programs, Program Specialists
Effective Date:	March 2008; May 2011 March 2014; June 2014
Date(s) of revision:	
Other References:	Peer Review Request Form

Once a program has completed the Self-Assessment and Materials (SAM) and "Box", it is reviewed by assigned program specialist. All changes and updates should be approved at least three months prior to a program's request for peer review date in order to ensure consistent practice change before the request.   Based on the program's completed policies and procedures and evidence in "Box", the program will request for peer review after the final mock review. When the program specialist agrees that the program is ready, both the program specialist and program will complete the Peer Review Request Form. The completed form and a letter of recommendation from the program specialist will be sent by email to the IFSTAN coordinator.

The program is responsible for selecting a date for their peer review to take place. Request for peer review must be made a **minimum of 12 weeks prior to the anticipated date of peer review.** All boxes required for the peer reviewers must be completed within one week of the peer review request. Any request with less than 12 weeks will require evaluation by IFSTAN coordinator. The program is responsible for locating a neutral site for the review to take place. This is typically off-site from the program to ensure that all persons participating in the interviews feel that confidentiality will be maintained. The site must be secure and not subject to interruptions. If the program is a group parent education program, there must be groups scheduled during the peer review for observation. The group should not take place on the last day of the peer review.

The organization's executive director, human resource director, and fiscal director are mandatory participants in the program management interview. In smaller organizations, these functions may be filled by one or two persons with overlapping responsibilities.

The program should make arrangements to submit their SAM with pre-site evidence "Box" directly to the peer reviewers. There will be no peer reviews scheduled from mid-November to mid-March.

All program policies and procedures must be in practice for a minimum of three months prior to the request for peer review.

Once the program has requested peer review, the IFSTAN coordinator will send the program a form to provide feedback on the program specialist's performance during the technical assistance process. This information will be discussed with the program specialist as part of the IFSTAN coordinator's ongoing quality improvement.

Procedure Name:	**Peer Reviewer Assignments**
Applicable to:	Programs, Peer Reviewers
Effective Date:	March 2014
Date(s) of revision:	
Other References:	IFSTAN Code of Conduct and Confidentiality Agreement

Requirements for peer reviewers:

All persons providing peer review services have completed an application and successfully completed peer reviewer training. To be selected for a peer review assignment, peer reviewers must have a bachelor's degree in health, human services, or education and must be well-versed in the family support field. In addition, all peer reviewers must agree to follow and sign the Code of Conduct and Confidentiality Agreement and must self-disclose any conflict of interest to the IFSTAN coordinator. **Peer reviewers will not have any contact with the program post-peer review and will not work or reside in the program's service delivery area.**

Requirements for lead peer reviewers:

Must meet all the requirements of peer reviewers **AND**

- Must have completed three peer reviews prior to assignment of lead peer reviewer
- Lead peer reviewers will have no negative feedback from a program within the past year

Roles of lead peer reviewer will include the coordinating of peer review, submission of final Peer Review Report, and leading communication with the program regarding logistics both before and during the peer review.

All peer reviewers will be re-certified on an annual basis.

Assignments for peer reviewers:

One date for peer review will be given to the IFSTAN coordinator from the program that would work for the agency. The program specialist should discuss with the program the availability of groups and home visits during the peer review process.

Peer reviewers will be selected based on availability, conflict of interest, time between reviews, and previous lead peer reviewer roles. Best practice is for peer reviewers to have ample time in between peer reviews. IFSTAN will try to ensure peer reviewers will have two months after a peer review before assignment to a new peer review. IFSTAN will utilize peer reviewer location maps to help ensure assignments are not within peer reviewers residence or service delivery counties.

Peer reviewers will sign and date the Code of Conduct, Confidentiality Agreement, and contract for each peer review assignment.

Procedure Name:	**Code of Conduct and Confidentiality Agreement**
Applicable to:	Programs, Peer Reviewers, Program Specialists
Effective Date:	March 2008
Date(s) of revision:	May 2011; March 2014; June 2014
Other References:	Code of Conduct and Confidentiality Agreement

Peer reviewers will sign the Code of Conduct and Confidentiality Agreement after agreeing to the assignment of a peer review. The documents will be accessed on SharePoint by the peer reviewers.

The lead peer reviewer will send the program both the signed Code of Conduct and Confidentiality Agreement from each assigned peer reviewer and cc the IFSTAN coordinator. Programs may share this with any individuals who have questions on how IFSTAN adheres to confidentiality and maintaining a code of conduct with peer reviewers.

Additional information:

As LSI employees, program specialists do not sign either the IFSTAN Code of Conduct or IFSTAN Confidentiality Agreement, but do sign the LSI Employee Handbook that outlines work standards, ethics, and guidelines.

Program specialists will sign any confidentiality documents the program may have which require authorization to review participant files and organizational information.

Procedure Name:	**Peer Review Process**
Applicable to:	Programs, Peer Reviewers, Program Specialists
Effective Date:	March 2008
Date(s) of revision:	May 2011; July 2013; May 2014; June 2014
Other References:	Emergency Contact Form; Caseload Roster; Peer Review Schedule; Community Partner Roster; Home Visitation Peer Review Case File Checklist; Parent Education Peer Review Case File Checklist; Supervision Checklist; Personnel Records Checklist

Pre-site:

The program must supply to the lead peer reviewer a Caseload Roster that includes family initials or family ID/case number, worker name, enrollment date, geographic area, any developmental delays identified, and exit date. On the Caseload Roster, the program should include families that have exited the program in the six-months prior to the peer review. Within one week prior to the peer review date, peer reviewers will randomly select files to be reviewed and inform the program.

Using the Community Partner Roster the program must submit a list of community partners for selection for the interview panel to the lead peer reviewer. The roster includes other family support programs operating in the area, major sources of referrals **to** the program, major sources of referrals **from** the program, and community collaborators such as, but not limited to, center-based early childhood programs, physicians, area education agency, schools, community action program(s), Head Start programs, maternal child health programs and public health programs. It should be noted that it would be a rare exception to have the program going through the credentialing process assign someone from the same organization to the community partner roster. This should be discussed with the lead peer reviewer prior to the peer review.

The program and the lead peer reviewer will work together for delivery of the SAM and "Box" to all peer reviewers no less than 10-12 weeks prior to the peer review.

The program specialist will work with the program to ensure that there is a secure and enclosed private room for the peer reviewers to work while onsite.

Peer reviewers:

The lead peer reviewer is responsible for timely communication with the program:

- Email the program that the "Box" was received

- Confirm address of where the peer review will take place
- Work with the program contact to set agenda at a **minimum of six weeks** in advance to accommodate everyone who will be participating
- Notify the program the number of families to be invited to participant panel interview (it is suggested that at least six to eight families be invited with the intent that three to five will show up)
- Select participant files to be reviewed
- May request clarification for any evidence they are not finding prior to the peer review
- Email both peer reviewers signed Code of Conduct and Confidentiality Agreements to the program and cc the IFSTAN coordinator
- Complete Emergency Contact Form and email to program and IFSTAN coordinator

The peer reviewers will:

- Be responsible for their own travel arrangements and evening meals
- Work with program to clarify breakfast arrangements
- Schedule delivery of the "Box" at least 10-12 weeks before the peer review date
- Complete a thorough review of the SAM and evidence prior to the peer review
- Tentatively rate each of the standards and develop questions for the interview panels based on the content of the SAM and "Box"

Onsite:

Once onsite, the program shall carefully review one file with the peer review team to orient the review team to the file organization. The program will not be present during the "hard copy" file review; however, the program will be available at all times during the peer review if the peer reviewers have any questions. For RedCAP file review, program staff must be present.

The peer review team will review a randomized selection of a **minimum of 10%** of the program's files from up to six months prior to the peer review date. The selection will ensure a representation of files from each worker, each geographic area served, participants that are newly enrolled, participants that have recently exited program, and participants that have been served for a lengthier period of time to show recent practice change. At the discretion of the peer review team, additional files for review may be selected prior to or during the peer review. The lead peer reviewer will work with the program for access to electronic participant records, as necessary.

The peer reviewers shall safeguard the participant files and not leave files unattended or in an unlocked room. Peer reviewers shall not take the participant files out of the review location. Peer reviewers may mark files with flags but cannot leave any permanent marks on the files. The file review may carry over into subsequent days of the peer review. The peer reviewers will work with the program to ensure the safety of the participant files during off hours. The program is responsible to adhere to all confidentiality policies during peer review.

The box will be left with the program post-peer review. If a peer reviewer needs to copy any information they will coordinate with the program prior to leaving the site and shred all documents upon approval of Peer Review Report.

Procedure Name:	**Peer Review Process for Renewal Programs**
Applicable to:	Programs, Peer Reviewers, Program Specialists
Effective Date:	March 2015
Date(s) of revision:	
Other References:	Emergency Contact Form; Caseload Roster; Peer Review Schedule; Community Partner Roster; Home Visitation Peer Review Case File Checklist; Parent Education Peer Review Case File Checklist; Supervision Checklist; Personnel Records Checklist

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The program must supply to the lead peer reviewer a Caseload Roster that includes family initials or family ID/case number, worker name, enrollment date, geographic area, any developmental delays identified, and exit date. On the Caseload Roster, the program should include families that have exited the program in the six-months prior to the peer review. Within one week prior to the peer review date, peer reviewers will randomly select files to be reviewed and inform the program.

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The program and the lead peer reviewer will work together for delivery of the SAM and "Box" to all peer reviewers no less than 8-10 weeks prior to the peer review.

The program specialist will work with the program to ensure that there is a secure and enclosed private room for the peer reviewers to work while onsite.

Peer reviewers:

The lead peer reviewer is responsible for timely communication with the program:

- Email the program that the "Box" was received

- Confirm address of where the peer review will take place
- Work with the program contact to set agenda at a **minimum of six weeks** in advance to accommodate everyone who will be participating
- Notify the program the number of families to be invited to participant panel interview (it is suggested that at least six to eight families be invited with the intent that three to five will show up)
- Select participant files to be reviewed
- May request clarification for any evidence they are not finding prior to the peer review
- Email both peer reviewers signed Code of Conduct and Confidentiality Agreements to the program and cc the IFSTAN coordinator
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Onsite:

Once onsite, the program shall carefully review one file with the peer review team to orient the review team to the file organization. The program will not be present during the "hard copy" file review; however, the program will be available at all times during the peer review if the peer reviewers have any questions. For RedCAP file review, program staff must be present.

The peer review team will review a randomized selection of a **minimum of 10%** of the program's files from up to six months prior to the peer review date. The selection will ensure a representation of files from each worker, each geographic area served, participants that are newly enrolled, participants that have recently exited program, and participants that have been served for a lengthier period of time to show recent practice change. At the discretion of the peer review team, additional files for review may be selected prior to or during the peer review. The lead peer reviewer will work with the program for access to electronic participant records, as necessary.

The peer reviewers shall safeguard the participant files and not leave files unattended or in an unlocked room. Peer reviewers shall not take the participant files out of the review location. Peer reviewers may mark files with flags but cannot leave any permanent marks on the files. The file review may carry over into subsequent days of the peer review. The peer reviewers will work with the program to ensure the safety of the participant files during off hours. The program is responsible to adhere to all confidentiality policies during peer review.

The box will be left with the program post-peer review. If a peer reviewer needs to copy any information they will coordinate with the program prior to leaving the site and shred all documents upon approval of Peer Review Report.

Interview Invitation Template

INSERT DATE

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY/STATE/ZIP

Dear INSERT NAME,

We are pleased to inform you that the state of Iowa has announced that INSERT PROGRAM NAME operated by INSERT AGENCY NAME is ready to participate in a peer review of our program. Our program will earn the Iowa Family Support Credential, if as a result of the peer review, we are found to be in substantial adherence to the Iowa Family Support Standards.

The Iowa Family Support Credential is awarded to family support and parent education programs that have fully integrated evidence based practices into their programming and throughout their organization. The Iowa Family Support Standards are based on the most up to date research regarding best practice in the family support field. Adherence to the standards indicates that the program is providing high quality services that will result in positive outcomes for young children and their families.

Our peer review will be conducted by trained peers on INSERT DATE to validate our program's adherence to the standards. We need your participation in a panel interview on INSERT DATE AND TIME to assist our program in earning the honored distinction of being credentialed by the state of Iowa. We selected you to participate in the panel interview because INSERT REASON. We know how busy you are but please give serious consideration to participating and assisting the INSERT PROGRAM OR ORGANIZATION NAME. Please let INSERT YOUR NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION know of your availability by INSERT DEADLINE FOR RESPONDING.

Thank you for considering this request!

Sincerely,

INSERT YOUR NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Procedure Name:	**Peer Review Schedule**
Applicable to:	Programs, Peer Reviewers, Program Specialists
Effective Date:	March 2008
Date(s) of revision:	May 2011; March 2014; June 2014
Other References:	Onsite Peer Review Schedule for Home Visitation and Group-based Parent Education

The program specialist will discuss the typical schedule with the program prior to peer review and explain the purpose behind each meeting, observation, and interview.

The lead peer reviewer works with the program at a minimum of six weeks in advance to set the schedule for peer review.

Entrance and Exit Meetings:

The peer review team will lead the entrance meeting. The meeting is held to explain the purpose of the Iowa Family Support Credentialing program and to provide an overview of the peer review process. It is a mechanism for staff and community members to ask questions about the process.

The peer review team will lead the exit meeting. Individual ratings will not be given during this meeting. The peer reviewers will provide an oral report that outlines the Strengths and any Opportunities for Growth that the program or organization may have.

Participant File Review:

The peer review team will review a randomized selection of a **minimum of 10% of the program's files** from up to six-months prior to the peer review date**.** At the discretion of the peer review team, additional files may be selected for review prior to or during the peer review. The lead peer reviewer will work with the program for access to electronic participant records, as necessary. For larger programs, the peer reviewers will have the discretion of adjusting the percentage of files to be reviewed.

Observations:

Home Visitation Programs: Each peer reviewer will observe one home visit. Peer reviewers will have a home observation checklist to note observations that are related to adherence to the standards. The program will be responsible for determining the participants that will be observed on a home visit. For programs with only one home visitor, only one peer reviewer will observe the home visit.

Group-Based Parent Education Programs: Programs will arrange the peer review around a group-based parent education opportunity. The peer reviewers will have an observation checklist to note observations that are related to adherence to the standards.

Other Documentation:

The program is responsible for providing access to all training logs, personnel and supervisory records to the peer review team. Supervisory records include items such as documentation of one-on-one meetings with staff. Documentation should include such things as date, time, purpose, content, and results. Supervisory records also include items such as team meetings and participant staffing. These may be documented by meeting agendas, meeting notes, etc. **Please inform the lead peer reviewer if personnel records are not available on site and travel may be necessary to review the personnel files.**

Interview Panels:

The program is responsible for inviting representatives for each interview panel as communicated by the lead peer reviewer; ensuring invited participant knows the date, time, and location of the interview. Invitations should be made at least four weeks in advance of the peer review. The program then should follow up with confirmations at least three weeks prior to the review. Reminders should occur in the week leading up to the peer review.

Funders Interview: The interview should try to have at least three representatives present. If the program has multiple funding sources, best practice is to include representatives from each.

Program Management Interview: The organization's executive director, human resource director, and fiscal director are mandatory participants. In smaller organizations, the functions may be filled by one or two persons with overlapping responsibilities. The person that has overall responsibility for the program (may or may not be program supervisor) must also be included in the interview.

Community Partners Interview: Community partners, referral sources and other early childhood programs are possible participants for the interview. The lead peer reviewer and the program will work together to identify potential interviewees. The lead peer reviewer will randomly select the invitees utilizing the Community Partners Roster. **It should be noted that community partner interviews should not include those from within the organization being credentialed. Please speak with the lead peer reviewer for an exception.**

Program Participant Panel: The lead peer reviewer will work with the program to identify a panel of participants. Childcare may or may not be provided by the program during the interview. Some programs have assisted families with transportation to participate in the interview. Children may attend the interview with parents; however, there will not be any activities provided by the peer review team for the children during the interview.

Program Supervisor Interview: The program supervisor will participate.

Family Support Professional Interview: All direct service staff will participate in a group interview.

Program Board of Director's Interview: Best practice is to include a minimum of three board members for a group interview.

Meals:

The Early Childhood Iowa (ECI) area board, ECI area director or the program is responsible for lunch each day of the peer review. The lead peer reviewer will coordinate with the program if the ECI or program should provide breakfast subsequent days of the peer review.

Procedure Name:	**Peer Review Schedule for Renewal Programs**
Applicable to:	Programs, Peer Reviewers, Program Specialists
Effective Date:	March 2015
Date(s) of revision:	
Other References:	Onsite Peer Review Schedule for Home Visitation and Group-based Parent Education

The program specialist will discuss the typical schedule with the program prior to peer review and explain the purpose behind each meeting, observation, and interview.

The lead peer reviewer works with the program at a minimum of six weeks in advance to set the schedule for peer review.

Entrance and Exit Meetings:

The peer review team will lead the entrance meeting. The meeting is held to explain the purpose of the Iowa Family Support Credentialing program and to provide an overview of the peer review process. It is a mechanism for staff and community members to ask questions about the process.

The peer review team will lead the exit meeting. Individual ratings will not be given during this meeting. The peer reviewers will provide an oral report that outlines the Strengths and any Opportunities for Growth that the program or organization may have.

Participant File Review:

The peer review team will review a randomized selection of a **minimum of 10% of the program's files** from up to six-months prior to the peer review date. At the discretion of the peer review team, additional files may be selected for review prior to or during the peer review. The lead peer reviewer will work with the program for access to electronic participant records, as necessary. For larger programs, the peer reviewers will have the discretion of adjusting the percentage of files to be reviewed.

Observations:

Home Visitation Programs: Each peer reviewer will observe one home visit. Peer reviewers will have a home observation checklist to note observations that are related to adherence to the standards. The program will be responsible for determining the participants that will be observed on a home visit. For programs with only one home visitor, only one peer reviewer will observe the home visit.

Group-Based Parent Education Programs: Programs will arrange the peer review around a group-based parent education opportunity. The peer reviewers will have an observation checklist to note observations that are related to adherence to the standards.

Other Documentation:

The program is responsible for providing access to all training logs, personnel and supervisory records to the peer review team. Supervisory records include items such as documentation of one-on-one meetings with staff. Documentation should include such things as date, time, purpose, content, and results. Supervisory records also include items such as team meetings and participant staffing. These may be documented by meeting agendas, meeting notes, etc. **Please inform the lead peer reviewer if personnel records are not available on site and travel may be necessary to review the personnel files.**

Interview Panels:

The program is responsible for inviting representatives for each interview panel as communicated by the lead peer reviewer; ensuring invited participant knows the date, time, and location of the interview. Invitations should be made at least four weeks in advance of the peer review. The program then should follow up with confirmations at least three weeks prior to the review. Reminders should occur in the week leading up to the peer review. The interview panels will be held at peer reviewer's discretion.

Funders Interview: The interview should try to have at least three representatives present. If the program has multiple funding sources, best practice is to include representatives from each.

Program Management Interview: The organization's executive director, human resource director, and fiscal director are mandatory participants. In smaller organizations, the functions may be filled by one or two persons with overlapping responsibilities. The person that has overall responsibility for the program (may or may not be program supervisor) must also be included in the interview.

Community Partners Interview: Community partners, referral sources and other early childhood programs are possible participants for the interview. The lead peer reviewer and the program will work together to identify potential interviewees. The lead peer reviewer will randomly select the invitees utilizing the Community Partners Roster. **It should be noted that community partner interviews should not include those from within the organization being credentialed. Please speak with the lead peer reviewer for an exception.**

Program Participant Panel: The lead peer reviewer will work with the program to identify a panel of participants. Childcare may or may not be provided by the program during the interview. Some programs have assisted families with transportation to participate in the interview. Children may attend the interview with parents; however, there will not be any activities provided by the peer review team for the children during the interview.

Program Supervisor Interview: The program supervisor will participate.

Family Support Professional Interview: All direct service staff will participate in a group interview.

Program Board of Director's Interview: Best practice is to include a minimum of three board members for a group interview.

Meals:

The Early Childhood Iowa (ECI) area board, ECI area director or the program is responsible for lunch each day of the peer review. The lead peer reviewer will coordinate with the program if the ECI or program should provide breakfast subsequent days of the peer review.

Procedure Name:	**Entrance Meeting**
Applicable to:	Programs, Peer Reviewers, Program Specialists
Effective Date:	March 2008
Date(s) of revision:	May 2011; March 2014
Other References:	

The program is responsible for invitations regarding the entrance meeting, which is open to the public. It is common to invite the Early Childhood Iowa (ECI) area director and area board members, other funders, all staff working in the program participating in the peer review process, and key personnel in the agency. Others that may be invited include state legislators and other persons in the community.

The peer review team will lead the entrance meeting and both peers will introduce themselves. The meeting is held to explain the purpose of the Iowa Family Support Credentialing Program and to provide an overview of the peer review process. The entrance meeting is a mechanism for staff and community members to ask questions about the process.

Procedure Name:	**Exit Meeting**
Applicable to:	Programs, Peer Reviewers, Program Specialists
Effective Date:	March 2008
Date(s) of revision:	May 2011; March 2014
Other References:	

The program is responsible for invitations regarding the exit meeting, which is open to the public. The peer review team will lead the exit meeting. The peer reviewers will not provide individual rating for any standards during this meeting. The peer review team will provide an oral report that outlines the Strengths and any Opportunities for Growth that the program or organization may have. The peer review team will ask the organization to provide additional strengths after sharing the list. The peer review team will then explain the next steps in the process and thank everyone for attending.

The exit meeting is not the time for debate on any items or comments that the peer reviewers share. Any items found to be in dispute may be addressed by the program during the post peer review process.

Procedure Name:	**Timeline of Peer Review Report**
Applicable to:	Programs, Peer Reviewers, Program Specialists
Effective Date:	March 2008
Date(s) of revision:	May 2011; March 2014; June 2014
Other References:	Peer Review Report; Addendum; Corrective Action Plan

Post Peer Review Process

The program will not contact the peer review team after the conclusion of the exit meeting. The IFSTAN coordinator* serves as a liaison between the program and peer review team. All communication regarding the Peer Review Report should be directed to the IFSTAN coordinator*.

During the post-review period, programs may be in contact with the program specialist. Programs may also request of the IFSTAN coordinator a new program specialist to work with them during this time. There will not be a cap on the time allotted for technical assistance post peer review.

The following timeline begins the day after the peer review exit meeting.

Week 1-2   Peer reviewers collaborate to write Peer Review Report and submit to the IFSTAN coordinator*

Week 3   IFSTAN coordinator* reviews the Peer Review Report, provides feedback and approve

Week 4   Peer reviewers have one week to address all comments and suggestions on the Peer Review Report before submitting the final version without mark-ups to the IFSTAN coordinator*

Week 5   IFSTAN coordinator* will send to the program the Peer Review Report (this takes into account going back and forth) within one week

Week 6-14   Programs collect evidence and write Corrective Action Plan and submits to the IFSTAN coordinator* by the end of Week 14. Programs are encouraged to submit additional evidence regarding any standards rated a three or four as soon as possible. It may take several attempts before the peer review team is confident that the program is now meeting the standard(s). **IF** the additional documentation is not found to be sufficient, the program will need to reapply and begin the credentialing process all over again. (The program will need to wait one year before reapplying).

Week 15   The IFSTAN coordinator* forwards the program's information to the peer reviewers. Peer reviewers review the Corrective Action Plan and return the Addendum within one week of the

final evidence submitted by programs meeting adherence of identified standards rated three or four.

Week 16   IFSTAN coordinator* will review the Addendum within one week

Week 17   IFSTAN coordinator* will send Addendum to the peer review team for feedback with one week to respond

Week 18   IFSTAN coordinator* reviews final Peer Review Report and Addendum and sends to community health consultant

Week 19   Community health consultant will then review the final report and send congratulatory credential email announcement to program

The Addendum will be used to provide feedback to the program based on the Corrective Action Plan and any additional documents received from the program on standards that were out of adherence (three or four ratings) at review.

Peer reviewers will not have contact with the program once the on-site peer review has been completed.

Written Peer Review Reports are public documents and are made available upon request from the community health consultant. Written reports will not contain any information that could potentially identify program participants, interview panelists, or direct program staff. **All tools used during the peer review will be submitted to the IFSTAN coordinator* along with the Peer Review Report**. All preliminary reports and personal notes of the peer reviewers are considered working documents and will be shredded upon the notification of program credential.

Once the program has received word of the awarded credential, the IFSTAN coordinator will email the program a survey to provide feedback for both the peer review team. The feedback provided will help in the ongoing evaluation of the peer review process and will be shared with both the peer review team.

Once the program has received word of the awarded credential, the IFSTAN coordinator will email the program a survey to provide feedback on the peer review team. The feedback provided will help in the ongoing evaluation of the peer review process and will be shared with the peer review team. The IFSTAN program coordinator will email the program to verify the wording for a credential plaque and certificate to be received at the program's celebration.

Procedure Name:	**Celebration**
Applicable to:	Programs, Program Specialists
Effective Date:	March 2008
Date(s) of revision:	May 2011; March 2014
Other References:	Congratulations Letter; Peer Review Addendum; Peer Review Report; Sample Press Release

Once the program has received official notification from the community health consultant that the program has been found to be in compliance with the Iowa Family Support Standards, the program will want to begin planning a celebration. The program has achieved a tremendous goal and should take time to celebrate the achievements.

Who to invite to the celebration?

Program Staff	All of the staff involved with the family support program should be invited to participate. Program staff has worked very hard to achieve the credentialing goal and this is one way of recognizing the staff's hard work. Many organizations also include past staff as well.
Agency/Organization Leadership	This is a way for the agency leadership to recognize the hard work of the program staff. Agency leadership can also use this as an opportunity to tie the work of the program into the overall mission of the agency/organization.
Governing Board, Community Partners, Program Participants, Funders	Think of all the people that participated in the peer review process who played a role in the program's earning the credential. This is a way to thank everyone and also announce the agency's credential.
Elected Officials	This includes local elected officials such as mayors, members of the board of supervisors, city council, etc. It also includes state representatives and senators. State representatives and senators are the persons that provide funding that makes the credentialing process possible. If elected officials cannot attend, an invitation helps inform of the agency's achievement.

Other Community Leaders	Think of others in the community that may be interested in attending such as the chamber of commerce or economic development organization. Use the celebration as a way of informing community leaders about the program and organization.
Program Specialist/Coordinator	The assigned program specialist is also celebrating the program's achievement. It is a very nice way to thank the program specialist for the involvement and provide closure to the process.
Media	Local newspapers, radio stations, etc. The agency can use the press release provided about earning the credential and also follow up with an invitation to the celebration. If the organization has a newsletter, invite the person that is responsible for the newsletter to attend. Make sure to have someone in attendance designated to take photographs.

Should refreshments be served?

Serving some type of refreshments is a nice way to get people to mingle and relax to have informal conversations, encourage attendance, and puts people in a celebratory mood. Refreshments can be as simple as beverages and cookies or could be as elaborate as a meal.

Who should speak during the formal program and what should be talked about?

The agency can have a master/mistress of ceremonies that welcomes everyone and introduces each speaker. Sometimes this is the Early Childhood Iowa area director and other times it is the organization's program manager or executive director.   Be sure to recognize any elected officials in attendance that will not be addressing the group or any other dignitaries or groups in attendance.

The organization's executive director should say a few words of congratulations to the program staff. This is a good opportunity to recognize how the program assists the organization to accomplish the mission. Another topic to mention is the importance of quality programming to the organization.

The Early Childhood Iowa area director or the chair of the ECI area board could also offer a few words of congratulations.   It could be mentioned how the program fits in the community plan and assists to reach the area ECI goals.

The community health consultant or designee will also want to speak and will need about ten to fifteen minutes. The speech will provide some background information about the credential, the process that the program completed to earn the credential and will culminate with having the program staff come forward to receive the credential.

The program supervisor should be prepared to say a few words after the credential is presented. The supervisor can speak specifically about the ups and downs in the process to earn the credential, articulate how the process has been beneficial to the program, organization, and program participants.

Where should the celebration take place?

If space is available, it is nice to have the celebration at the agency's offices. If that is not possible, it may be held in an available community room such as the local library or a community church.

What is the role of the Early Childhood Iowa area board?

It is a good idea to invite your local ECI board members to attend the celebration. The board chair or the local director may be asked to speak at the celebration.

The ECI area board may sponsor the celebration by providing funding to cover the costs of the refreshments for the celebration.

How does the community know about the program's achievement?

The best way is to have the media in attendance at the celebration. If the media cannot attend, provide the media with the press release and photos and do a follow up interview after the celebration.

Procedure Name:	**Renewal Process**
Applicable to:	Programs, Program Specialists
Effective Date:	March 2008
Date(s) of revision:	May 2011; March 2014
Other References:	Renewal letter; Program Application

All renewal programs will be required to submit an application and support documents updating IFSTAN on their program and agency information. The program does not need to re-submit three letters of support.

IFSTAN coordinator will contact program at the two and a half year anniversary to check in with how the program is adhering to the standards and then again at 45th month of credential to discuss the appropriate pathway:
- Arrangement for in depth program technical assistance and two site/mock reviews
- Arrangement of two site/mock reviews conducted for quality assurance and feedback only
- Arrangement of two site/mock reviews and limited technical assistance

It is important to note that programs that are going through renewal are **NOT** eligible for an extension request.

Procedure Name:	**Appeal / Grievance Statement**
Applicable to:	Programs, Peer Reviewers, Program Specialists
Effective Date:	September 2012
Date(s) of revision:	September 2013; September 2014
Other References:	

I. **Purpose:**
   To provide steps by which grievances can be resolved.

II. **Definitions:**
   Grievance: A written complaint or concern related to actions or policies of the program or its staff.
   Appeal: A written request to correct or amend information or policies of the program or its staff.

III. **Access:**
   1. The grievance policy will be available in written form from the Iowa Family Support Credential Program (IFSTAN), Iowa Department of Public Health, or Early Childhood Iowa.
   2. A copy of the grievance policy will be given to the consumer, program, or the public upon request and can also be found in the IFSTAN Program Guide.

IV. **Procedures:**
   Grievances and/or appeals should be submitted in writing and state the concern, names of staff/personnel who received information about the concern, the date the grievance/appeal was submitted, and who the information is being submitted to.
   1. When a grievance/appeal occurs, the complaint should be responded to in writing by the IFSTAN coordinator or administrator(s) responsible for the program within 30 days of receipt.
   2. IFSTAN coordinator receiving the complaint should report the complaint to the director of early childhood services and the director of service quality.
   3. Upon consultation, the IFSTAN coordinator will respond to the grievance/appeal in writing within 30 days and a copy will be provided to the grievant/appellant.
   4. If the complainant is not satisfied with action taken in response to the issue presented, an appeal may be written to the Quality Standards Workgroup within 30 days.
   5. All appeals will be reviewed at the quarterly Quality Standards Workgroup meeting in response to the problem. A special meeting may be arranged if the situation is warranted.
   6. A written response to the appeal will be made within 30 days.
   7. If the Quality Standards Workgroup cannot make a final decision, all grievances/appeals will be referred to Early Childhood Iowa Board within 30 days.
   8. Ruling of the Early Childhood Iowa Board will be final and the result of the ruling will be provided in writing within 30 days of the decision.

Procedure Name:	**Probationary Status for Programs**
Applicable to:	Programs, Peer Reviewers, Program Specialists
Effective Date:	July 2013
Date(s) of revision	September 2013; March 2014
Other References:	Peer Review Report; Addendum

The Iowa Family Support Technical Assistance Network (IFSTAN) understands the time and commitment agencies give to become ready for credentialing. In most cases, the probationary status is not applicable.

Probationary status is to ensure the fidelity of the Iowa Family Support Credentialing (IFSC) process. Agencies will be placed on probationary status when found to be 20% or greater out of adherence to the IFSC standards.

Once the peer review has been concluded and the Peer Review Report has been finalized, for programs who have found to be 20% or greater out of adherence, the agency will be placed on probationary status. The probationary status will be no longer than six months or until the fidelity review is completed. The program will be required to work with a different program specialist during this time period. The program specialist will work with the program for one month to implement changes to policies and procedures, supporting documents and with any practice change during the final months. The program will have three months to show recent practice change before a fidelity peer review will be held.

A fidelity peer review is a one day review conducted by IFSTAN staff for programs on probationary status. The fidelity peer review will be conducted to show policy and procedure changes, along with recent practice changes for standards that were rated out of adherence. During the fidelity review, only standards that were rated out of adherence during the initial peer review will be reviewed. Reviews will be conducted on files and supporting documentation, which shows recent practice change of those standards out of adherence.. Interviews will be conducted with program staff to demonstrate how programs are adhering to recent practice change. The file review will include 10% of the total open files, closed files as necessary and may or may not be the same files that were originally reviewed during the peer review.

At the conclusion of the fidelity peer review, the agency will receive a written report within two weeks. This report will show the program is either still out of adherence to the standards in policy and practice or is in adherence and meets standards by adopting policies and recent practice change.

If, after the fidelity peer review, the agency has demonstrated adherence to the standards, the program will receive the Iowa Family Support Credential.

The agency will continue on the original timeline for renewal.

The final report will state the probationary status was given to the program.

If, after the fidelity peer review, the program is still out of adherence to the standards in policy and practice, the program will withdraw and reapply for the credentialing after one year.

Procedure Name:	**Program Withdrawal**
Applicable to:	Programs, Peer Reviewers, Program Specialists
Effective Date:	March 2008
Date(s) of revision:	May 2011; March 2014; June 2014
Other References:	IFSTAN Program Withdrawal Form

Voluntary Withdrawal:

To voluntarily withdraw from the credentialing process, the program will complete the Program Withdrawal Form. This form can be obtained from the program specialist or by contacting the IFSTAN program coordinator.

The program's executive director and/or board chair will be asked to sign the Withdrawal Form.

When completed, the Withdrawal Form will be sent to the IFSTAN coordinator.

Involuntary Withdrawal:

In the case that a program does not respond to communication within 30 days, the program will be issued a written warning from the IFSTAN coordinator. If the program does not respond within 30 days to the warning, the program will be involuntarily withdrawn.

Once withdrawn, either voluntarily or involuntarily, the program must wait one year to reapply for IFSTAN credentialing process.

Procedure Name:	**Subcontractor, Multi-Program, Multi-Agency Credentialing**
Applicable to:	Programs, Peer Reviewers, Program Specialists
Effective Date:	March 2014; June 2014
Date(s) of revision:	
Other Reference:	Body of Evidence- Subcontracting

Subcontracting Programs:

When a program uses subcontractors, the following steps are taken:

- The program applying for credential will assume leadership role during process
    - The program may invite subcontracting supervisor(s) to meet with the program specialist if this is appropriate to meet program needs
    - No additional technical assistance hours are assigned for subcontracting agencies
- The program must ensure that all subcontracting agencies and individuals are in adherence to Iowa Family Support Standards
    - Programs need to assure adherence through **site visits, contracts, file reviews, supervision reviews, Policy and Procedure Manual, and training records**
    - The program should keep documents for subcontracting staff **(training logs and modified personnel records)** to ensure adherence to standards
- During the peer review process, peer reviewers will review contracts to ensure the program is holding all subcontractors accountable to all Iowa Family Support Standards. Organizational standards apply to the lead or contracting organization. Peer reviewers will evaluate adherence to the organizational standards of the lead agency, not its subcontractors. However, the lead organization's contract with the subcontractor should clearly outline similar standards of operation. The peer review team will review subcontract language to demonstrate adherence to program and organizational standards.
    - Peer reviewers will need to see evidence for program standards (1-15) based on **training logs, personnel records, and supervision records**
    - Peer reviewers will need to see evidence for agency standards (16-32) based upon contract compliance, interviews, contracting agency's procedures on how they hold subcontractors accountable **(chart reviews, site visits reviews, supervision records, contract, etc.)**
- The contracting agency must ensure that the subcontracting agency holds programs/staff accountable to standards; however, the peer reviewers will not review **specific budgets, polices, procedures, etc**. of the subcontracting agency. This will be evidenced through the contract. The contracting agency will

need to show evidence that the subcontracting agency is adhering to standards in relationship to the programs seeking credential

- The credential will be awarded to the contractor and the subcontracting agency will be acknowledged that the specific program was credentialed through the contracted agency
- Programs receive 40 hours of technical assistance per fiscal year

Multi-Agency Credentialing:

Agencies who work together for credentialing will be assigned the same program specialist.

Technical assistance hours for program standards (1-15) will be allotted 20 hours total for all agencies. Each agency will work together to adopt program policies and procedures that will meet standards.

Technical assistance for organizational standards (16-32) will be allotted 20 hours to each agency. Each agency will need to show adherence to standards.

Depending on the number of agencies, the number of peer reviewers assigned and/or number of days for peer review may be increased.

Multi-Program Credentialing:

An agency that wishes to credential multiple programs will be assigned one program specialist and receive 20 hours of technical assistance per program going through credential.

Agencies will receive another 20 hours of technical assistance for organizational standards.

Each program within the same agency will receive a credential.

Depending on the number of programs, the number of peer reviewers assigned and/or number of days for peer review may be increased.

Procedure Name:	**Alternate Credential (Crosswalk)**
Applicable to:	Applicants to Iowa Family Support Credentialing Process
Effective Date:	November, 2008
Date(s) of revision:	March 2014; April 2014
Other References:	Crosswalk
Location:	

Eligibility for Alternate Process: Programs must abide by a comparable set of standards *and* have an external evaluation/review completed, at a minimum, every five years. The external review must demonstrate adherence to the program standards.

If programs are accredited through the Council on Accreditation (COA), the program will not need to submit a Crosswalk as the Iowa Family Support Standards are already aligned with COA.

Healthy Families America and Food and Nutrition Programs through Iowa State University Extension have completed a Crosswalk.

The program model must submit to the IFSTAN coordinator a crosswalk of program's standards with the Iowa Family Support Standards. Typically, the person submitting the Crosswalk is at the state level that has program oversight and is submitting on behalf of the program model.

The IFSTAN coordinator will complete the technical review on all submissions to ensure completeness.

The IFSTAN coordinator will appoint a crosswalk review team of two members from the Quality Standards Workgroup to closely review the Crosswalk to ensure that there is alignment with every Iowa Family Support Standard. The crosswalk team will review the submitted Crosswalk independently and then review the results as a team. The crosswalk team will be responsible for all communication with the program regarding changes and revisions to the submitted Crosswalk. Once the crosswalk team determines that all standards are aligned, the team will forward the Crosswalk to the Quality Standards Workgroup.

The program will then submit the most recent review from the review body (Healthy Families America, Head Start, RIP, etc.) to the IFSTAN coordinator. IFSTAN coordinator will present Crosswalk and most recent outside review to the Quality Standards Workgroup.

The IFSTAN coordinator will carefully review the submitted materials to ensure that the outside accrediting body found the program to have met each of the applicable standards that align with the Iowa Family Support Standards. If there is anything that is questionable, the IFSTAN coordinator will ask the Quality Standards Workgroup for assistance. The program may be asked to submit additional supporting evidence.

If the Quality Standards Workgroup has any concerns that the standards are not completely adhered to, the group can decide to deny the request for the program to earn the Iowa Family Support Credential by the alternate method and may refer the program to the traditional method.

If the standards are being met, the program will be awarded an Iowa Family Support Credential.