



Valley of the Sun
United Way



Quality First Scholarships Policies and Step-by-Step Procedures

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POLICIES

Role of Valley of the Sun United Way

VSUW is the recipient of a grant funded by First Things First (FTF), an Arizona voter initiative. As the grant administrator, VSUW provides administrative and programmatic oversight of Quality First Scholarships. We also develop training to assist Providers in reporting accurate information.

As part of our agreement, VSUW provides customer service to assist in communicating information to both Providers and families who are seeking any information about scholarships. The VSUW Quality First Scholarships Team can be contacted at:

Provider Hotline: (602) 240-6325

Parent Hotline: (602) 240-6324

Fax: (602) 240-6326

Email: regionalscholarships@vsuw.org

VSUW is available Monday – Friday from 8:00am-5:00pm. We respond to communications received outside of normal business hours on the following business day.

Contracting Process with Valley of the Sun United Way (VSUW)

The Provider renewal process: This occurs annually at the beginning of the fiscal year (July 1st – June 30th). In addition, Providers must complete the following requirements annually:

1. Submit a Current Fiscal Year Provider Agreement
2. Submit a Certificate of Liability Insurance (VSUW listed as an additional insured on the policy)
3. Attend an Annual Provider Training
4. Read Current Fiscal Year Policies and Procedures

Newly Enrolled Providers: Provided there are scholarships available, programs are eligible to receive Quality First Scholarships after their enrollment into Quality First if their current star rating meets regional funding standards. Scholarships will be allocated in an ongoing basis during the fiscal year. New enrollments will be contacted by VSUW if scholarships have been allocated to their site. They must submit the correct contracting documents to VSUW before they can begin utilizing their scholarships.

How your Scholarship Award and Rate is Determined

- A. The number of scholarships and payment rate for scholarships is determined by the size of your program and your Quality First star rating. If your program does not operate for twelve months out of the year, this amount will be prorated. Program services must be provided for a minimum of 9 months per year.

- B. Your program’s star rating as of April 1st determines your scholarship allotment for the entire fiscal year, July 1st – June 30th. If your program is in the Points Scale Assessment process, your estimated star rating as of April 1st, is used in determining your scholarship allotment.
- C. First Things First (FTF) determines your initial slot allotment, as well as slot reallocations throughout the fiscal year. Questions that you might have regarding slot allotments and reallocation should be directed to First Things First at gfscholarships@azftf.gov.
- D. Quality First Scholarships improve both access and affordability to high quality early care and education. Quality Assurance monitoring will be conducted to verify that an early care and education program meets the following eligibility criteria to receive Quality First Scholarships:
 - a. Program is enrolled in Quality First and does not decline an opportunity to participate.
 - b. After July 1, 2015, only programs that have achieved a Quality First rating of 3, 4 or 5 will be eligible for Quality First Scholarships unless the Regional Council has intentionally funded 2 star programs due to limited access in the region.
- E. The amount you will be reimbursed for a full time scholarship per child is noted below. A special needs reimbursement may be available for a preschool child aged 3-5 years old whose IEP reflects modifications that would require the child to be placed in an infant/toddler classroom. Please contact VSUW for more information regarding eligibility for a special needs reimbursement.

Annual Reimbursement Rates

Type	Age	2 star	3 – 5 star
Center			
	0 – 2 years	\$7,970.00	\$11,300.00
	3 – 5 years	\$6,000.00	\$7,300.00
Home			
	0 – 2 years	\$5,625.00	\$7,600.00
	3 – 5 years	\$4,875.00	\$6,200.00

Monthly, Full-Time Reimbursement Rates

Type	Age	2 star	3 – 5 star
Center			
	0 – 2 years	\$664.17	\$941.67
	3 – 5 years	\$500.00	\$608.33
Home			
	0 – 2 years	\$468.75	\$633.33
	3 – 5 years	\$406.25	\$516.67

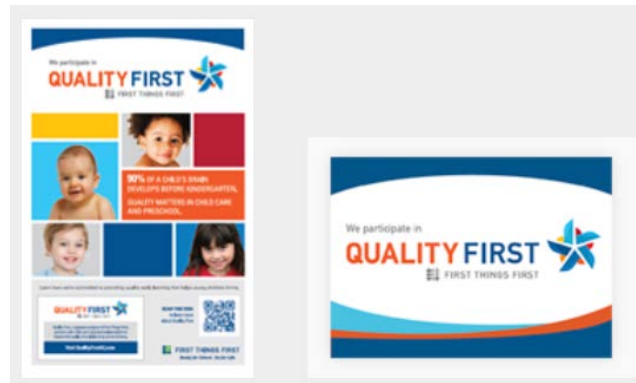
The total budget amount available for Quality First (QF) Scholarships is determined by FTF Regional Partnership Councils.

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- F. Some Regional Partnership Councils may approve additional funding for Restricted Scholarships. Scholarships may be funded for any child 0-5 or may be restricted for use by children ages 3-5. Slots that are restricted to ages 3-5 are not to be used for children outside of that age range. Scholarship allocations are determined based upon your star rating and your program's ability to use them.
- G. Reimbursement rates are determined by FTF and are calculated using a formula that includes Provider type, star rating, and age of child. This reimbursement rate is locked in for the entire fiscal year and will not change if your star rating changes during the fiscal year.
- H. Scholarships may accommodate families working non-traditional hours or families that are unemployed or stay-at-home parents. Providers serving families with needs outside of traditional hours will receive the same scholarship benefits as those with traditional hours, with adjustments made to daily rates based on traditional care equivalents (example: a child of a parent working three, 12-hour days will benefit from a full time scholarship similarly to a child of a parent who works five, 8-hour days).
- I. Splitting Scholarships is allowed. Full time scholarships may be split in to two part time scholarships. No further splitting of scholarships will be allowed.
 - a. Full day/full time services for children are defined as a minimum of 28 hours per week, which must equal a minimum of 112 hours per month.
 - b. Part day/part time services are defined as less than 28 hours per week, but a program must serve children for a minimum of 12 hours per week, which must equal between 48 to 111 hours per month, for a minimum of eight (8) days per month.

Recruiting Families to Receive Scholarships

Marketing of scholarships in order to recruit families and gain community awareness must follow guidelines and tools already approved by Quality First. Programs enrolled in Quality First are provided with a marketing toolkit, including signs and website graphics, to promote their participation in Quality First. These items are sure to catch the eyes of visiting parents and start conversations about quality early care and education and your participation in Quality First. The Quality First marketing toolkit includes talking points and key messages to make it easy for you and your staff to have these conversations and spread the word about the great things happening in your program. This toolkit is available on the Quality First extranet and will be sent directly to your program once your star rating has been determined.



Sample Marketing Toolkit Items

Scholarships can be advertised in the following ways:

- Currently enrolled and/or prospective families can spread the word about scholarships.
- If scholarships are available you may hold an open-house to overview the program.
- Written information may be included in your family handbook.
- Contact VSUW at regionalscholarships@vsuw.org.
- Contact Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) to let them know that you have scholarships available. They provide state-wide assistance to parents who are looking for child care options. Contact CCR&R at 1-800-308-9000, 602 244-2678 or www.arizonachildcare.org.
- Contact your local DES Office at <https://egov.azdes.gov/eol/EOLSearch.aspx>.
- Contact your local Head Start www.azheadstart.org.

All other scholarship advertising must be pre-approved by VSUW and FTF.

Public Information Sharing with First Things First

Certain family information is shared publicly in aggregate form. An individual person's information will not be shared publicly. Personal information contained on the family application will be reported to First Things First, reviewed in audits, shared with other state agencies for program compliance and used publicly in aggregate, both regionally and statewide. Parents must understand that Quality First Scholarship funding is temporary in nature. Completion of an application does not guarantee a Quality First Scholarship. These disclosures are incorporated into the Family Application.

Determining Child and Family Eligibility and Enrolling Children

- All families' Gross Annual Income must be equal to or less than 200% of the Federal Poverty Level listed in the current fiscal year Family Application. **Family eligibility for scholarships is determined by the child care Provider** and monitored by VSUW, except:
 - Navajo Nation, Arizona Off-Reservation Scholarship eligibility is determined and monitored by VSUW.

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- B. The Family Application specifies all required documents and must be precisely followed by the Provider to ensure family eligibility. Failure to properly qualify families may result in the Provider’s reimbursement from VSUW being withheld or rescinded by VSUW.
- C. Providers are required to requalify all families at the beginning of each fiscal year, regardless of the child’s scholarship enrollment date. Families must complete the current fiscal year Family Application and provide new supporting documents.
- D. **Documentation of family eligibility and attendance records must be maintained at the Provider’s home or center for five (5) years.** This documentation must include:
 - a. Completed Family Application for each year the child has been enrolled
 - b. Documentation of financial eligibility at or below the 200% Federal Poverty Level for family income and household size; or a public assistance letter, dated within the last 6 months that specifies household size and income
 - c. Documentation of US citizenship or legal residency of child(ren)
 - d. Documentation of birthdate of child
 - e. Attendance records
- E. All scholarships are limited to children from birth through age 5, and not yet in kindergarten. Children who turn 5 by September 1st of the program year are not eligible, as they are eligible for kindergarten. Restricted scholarships are limited to children ages 3-5 and not yet in kindergarten.
- F. Low income is defined as a family whose household income is at or below two hundred percent (200%) of the 2015 Federal Poverty Guidelines. If a family is found to be over 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines, the child(ren) will be removed from the scholarship program immediately. Reimbursement will be rescinded for the length of the child(ren)’s enrollment in the program. This is found most often during Fiscal Monitoring, but can be determined at any time.

Note: Low income is determined by the most recently published Federal Poverty Guidelines from The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) (<http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/14poverty.cfm>). These guidelines are outlined on the family application and updated on or before July 1st of each year, not on a calendar year basis.

Call VSUW Scholarships for assistance with qualifying families at **1-866-973-0012**.

Points to Remember when Qualifying Families and Determining Eligibility

VSUW and FTF have developed two Excel eligibility tools: **1. Determining Household Size Worksheet**, and **2. Income Qualification Worksheet**. These tools are posted in the reporting portal on the Policies and Procedures tab (<http://azftfscholarships.org/>). For those who do not have Excel, there is a **Manual Calculation** tool on the same website. VSUW recognizes that there are a number of unique situations that might still be unclear when using these eligibility tools. In these instances, please call VSUW at 1-866-973-0012 to help you with any eligibility questions.

- A. Families receiving a Department of Economic Security (DES) Child Care subsidy are not eligible for Quality First Scholarships. Those who qualify for a DES Child Care subsidy but are on a waiting list will qualify for a Quality First Scholarship while they are on the DES wait list, but they must accept the DES subsidy if/when offered. Declining the subsidy will result in the loss of any Quality First Scholarships a family receives. Household size and Gross Annual Income is still required. The Provider must report family size and income to VSUW. If the wait list letter does not specify this information, and DES will not provide it, the Provider must collect other acceptable verification documents listed in the FY15 Family Application.
- B. The maximum number of scholarships available to any family is two (2). A child may only receive a maximum of one scholarship. Children receiving scholarships must be United States citizens or be eligible for state and local benefits as outlined under 8 U.S.C. §§ 1611 & 1621 and set out in A.R.S. §§ 1-501 & 1-502.
- C. New families must complete the most current **Family Application** available. The Family Application is updated each year so any prior year applications will not be accepted. Before the start of each fiscal year, continuing families must be re-qualified using the most current Family Application.
- D. It is the intent of FTF that families, whenever possible, contribute toward the cost of child care and that any copayment or contribution not exceed ten percent (10%) of the family's gross monthly income. (***The family's gross annual income divided by 12 months = monthly income. Then, multiplied by .10 = 10%.***)
- E. Quality First Scholarships may not be used to replace or supplant other funding sources including, but not limited to, DES, Head Start, TANF or other public or private scholarship programs. Quality First Scholarship funding may be used to add classrooms or expand hours.

It is at your discretion, as the Provider, to determine how Quality First Scholarships will be distributed at your site. It is important to be consistent, document your method, and ensure that families understand the selection criteria when awarding Scholarships at your site.

Scholarship Utilization and Reallocation

- A. Providers must agree to maintain 100% enrollment of the number of scholarships allotted to the site. Providers must agree to fill all scholarship vacancies within 1 month (30 days).
- B. If a participating program falls under the 100% utilization rate for 2 calendar months in a row, the unused scholarships will likely be removed from the program for the remainder of the fiscal year and re-allocated to another program in the same region (prioritizing programs with a quality star rating of 3, 4 or 5).

Providers may indicate the total number of scholarships the program can fill by emailing FTF. When reallocation of scholarships occurs, this information will be considered. Questions about reallocation of Quality First Scholarships can be sent to FTF at gfscholarships@azftf.gov.

Monthly Reporting

- A. **Online reporting is mandatory.**

1. If internet access is not available in a Provider's geographic area, a written waiver must be granted by VSUW prior to reporting. Paper, faxed, or emailed reports will not be accepted without prior written approval from VSUW.
 2. To request a waiver, obtain preliminary approval by calling and explaining your circumstances then follow up with a written request. VSUW will respond to you in writing.
- B. Monthly reports are to be submitted through the designated online reporting portal (<http://azftfscholarships.org/>).
1. Providers **shall** complete a report for reimbursement within the **first 7 calendar days** of the month, including weekends and holidays, following the month in which services are provided.
 2. Reports may be saved or submitted; you can edit a saved report, but you must remember to submit it within the first 7 calendar days of the month or your report will be considered late.
 3. Late reports will result in payments being delayed until the next scheduled payment after submission.
 4. Providers will not be paid if a report is submitted more than 1 month (30 days) late. Providers will only be paid up to 1 month in arrears with the exception of the final report of the fiscal year, which must be submitted by July 7, 2016. Reports received after July 7, 2016 will not be accepted and services will not be reimbursed.
 5. Continued failure to complete timely and accurate reports may result in termination of VSUW's Agreement with the Provider.

Call the VSUW QF Scholarships Team for assistance with reporting at **1-866-973-0012**.

Payment

VSUW is responsible for Quality Assurance. We conduct a monthly review of data after reports are submitted by Providers. Providers will not be paid for more scholarships than they are awarded. Slots that are restricted to ages 3-5 cannot be used for underage children. Phone calls and emails will be exchanged with Providers to clarify data and make adjustments as necessary. A reconciliation report will be emailed listing the children who received services and reimbursement amounts. Please reference the **Payment Calendar** found in the Policies and Procedures tab online under Provider Resources. This is a printable calendar with the reporting dates and payment dates listed (payments are scheduled for the Friday of the third full week of the month). Providers may be paid by manual check or direct deposit, according to their preference. It is the Provider's responsibility to inform VSUW of all banking updates.

Child Attendance

In order to meet the goal of children entering school ready to learn, children receiving scholarships should be in attendance at least 85% of the time that they are scheduled to attend, and should be in attendance for at least 3 hours per day on the days the child is scheduled to attend. Excused absences may include illness, a pre-scheduled vacation, or family emergency.

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- A. VSUW will discuss chronic absenteeism issues with the Provider and offer talking points and written resources to assist Providers in speaking with families about the importance of attendance.
- B. Providers should talk with parents about chronic absenteeism and remind parents of the purpose of their scholarship and attendance requirements. Note your conversations in the child's file. The documentation may be as simple as the family signing that they have read one or several documents in English and/or Spanish titled "**Attendance Resources**" found in the reporting portal under the Policies and Procedures tab in Provider Resources. The first resource may be used in order to set attendance expectations when first enrolling families. You may choose a different method to handle chronic absences as long as you document your effort in the child's file. A full-time scholarship recipient may be reduced to a part-time scholarship if they are unable to meet the full-time hourly attendance requirements.
- C. The QF Scholarship Program encourages a succession of education, written warnings, and final notification that their scholarship may be awarded to another family due to continued absenteeism.
- D. VSUW will look for documentation of how you have handled chronic absences. Providers should use good judgment to determine whether an absence is excused or not.

VSUW is available to assist you in making decisions about terminating a scholarship due to chronic absenteeism. Individual circumstances such as documented illness may preclude termination.

Fiscal Monitoring Procedures

Fiscal Monitoring visits may be targeted or randomly selected. A minimum of 200 Providers receiving scholarships will receive Fiscal Monitoring every fiscal year. VSUW determines whether to conduct an on-site visit or mail in Fiscal Monitoring. Providers will receive one week notice and information to prepare for the visit.

- A. Providers must maintain copies of family eligibility documentation accessible for five years.
- B. If you cannot resolve any and/or all Observations, your payment may be affected.
- C. Providers with Observations can expect a follow up visit from a Fiscal Monitoring Specialist to ensure all issues have been fixed and procedures are being followed.
- D. Provider is required to fulfill the noted action necessary for any Observations within ten (10) business days of notification.
- E. Provider acknowledges that failure to respond to any Observations action requested or noted within ten (10) business days of notification will result in payments being delayed until the next scheduled payment or until all observations have been resolved.
- F. Provider acknowledges that failure to respond to any Observations within thirty (30) business days of notification will result in the recovery of overpayment by VSUW through the offset of the Provider's future payments. Any children for which eligibility has not been proven within thirty (30) business days of notification will be vacated from the FTF's Quality First Scholarships Program effective immediately.

- G. In the event of gross negligence or continued disregard of responsibilities, VSUW, in collaboration with FTF, reserves the right to terminate the Provider's agreement and future scholarships.

Termination/Loss of Scholarships

Providers may lose some or all of their slots for any of the following reasons. This is not intended to be an all-inclusive list.

- A. Providers may lose slots due to allocation or reallocation. It is the goal of QF to ensure that programs will not be required to attrition any children during the fiscal year. However, scholarship reduction may occur at the end of the fiscal year if necessary.
- B. If Providers choose to no longer participate in the Scholarship program or decline Quality First participation, scholarships will be removed from the program immediately. The program will be notified by VSUW via email.
- C. Prior to relocating, merging or selling a facility, the provider must contact gfscholarships@azftf.gov and their Quality First coach to determine the implications for their scholarships. Merging two centers will likely not result in merging scholarships.
- D. If a Provider does not have correct and complete documentation for more than 50% of reviewed families/children during fiscal monitoring, VSUW may select to terminate a Provider from the Scholarships program.
- E. Declining Quality First or being declined from Quality First.

If VSUW terminates a Provider's scholarships due to corrective actions, reimbursement will end immediately. Final reimbursement will be made during the following month's regular payment cycle. To appeal a decision, Providers should follow the Provider Complaint process outlined below.

Parent Complaint

Provider will be responsible for handling questions and issues which arise from parents.

If a parent calls VSUW with a complaint about a Provider, when appropriate, we will work with the Provider to clarify and attempt to find a resolution (In some cases we may contact FTF, the Quality First Coaching Agency, or the Child Care Health Consulting Team).

If a parent has a concern or complaint about a child's safety or well-being at another Provider's site or about someone at your site, they should be encouraged to contact the appropriate regulatory agency and then VSUW.

Arizona Department of Economic Security (Certify Providers who care for less than 4 children).

- Locate the DES office nearest you and ask for someone familiar with Child Care Certified Homes
<https://egov.azdes.gov/eol/EOLSearch.aspx>

Arizona Department of Health Services (License all other Providers).

Phoenix Office:

150 N 18th Avenue Suite 400
Phone: 602-364-2539
Fax: 602-364-4768
E-mail: dlsccclphx@azdhs.gov

Tucson Office:

400 W Congress Suite 100
Phone: 520-628-6541
Rural area codes: 800-615-8555
Fax: 520-628-6537
E-mail: dlscccltuc@azdhs.gov

Flagstaff Office:

1500 E Cedar Avenue Suite 22
Phone: 928-774-2707
Rural area codes: 800-615-8555
Fax: 928-774-2830
E-mail: dlsccclfig@azdhs.gov

Provider Complaint

Our Accounting Coordinators are trained professionals focused on providing quality service. We continue to strive to meet the needs of you, our customers. In the event you have a concern to share, please contact Viviana Gil, Accounting Manager – Customer Service, using the contact information below. It is our goal to rectify any complaint or dispute in a timely manner.

Please contact the following:

Viviana Gil
Accounting Manager – Customer Service
Valley of the Sun United Way
3200 East Camelback Road, Suite 375
Phoenix, AZ 85018
regionalscholarships@vsuw.org
602-240-6325 or call Toll Free 1-866-973-0012

Provider Dispute/Appeal Procedure: Providers may appeal any Scholarship decision in writing to VSUW. If the appeal is in response to Fiscal Monitoring, the written appeal must be received by VSUW within 7 business days from Provider’s receipt of Fiscal Monitoring findings. VSUW will review Provider’s appeal and will reply with a decision to the Provider within 10 business days. FTF will be notified of the appeal and resolution.

Changes to Policies or Procedures

The Quality First Scholarship Program is dynamic, and continuously improving. In an effort to improve processes and outcomes or to bring clarity, VSUW or FTF may amend these Policies and/or individual Procedures at any time. We will provide written notice to Providers via email and change the date in the document footer. Providers must not rely upon printed versions of Policy, Procedure, or Resource documents unless they have confirmed that the date posted online conforms to their printed copy.

No policy or procedure supersedes the signed Provider Agreement.

PROCEDURES

Extranet (Quality First Data Portal)

The Extranet is FTF's database for Quality First and is used by Providers to view your allotments at the beginning of each new fiscal year. If you are currently experiencing trouble accessing your extranet profile or having issues logging in and need password help, please send an email to extranet@azftf.gov.

To access the FTF Extranet, please click here or enter this webpage information into your internet search bar:

<https://extranet.azftf.gov/Extranet/Pages/default.aspx> **Tip:** there is no www in the address.

1. Click **Log In**.



2. **Log in window will pop up to enter Username and Password.**
 - a. **Username must include backslash (\); not a forward slash**
 - This is typically the first initial of first name and last name (e.g.: AZFTF\jsmith)
 - b. **Password is case sensitive;**
 - You will be emailed a temporary password, which you can change once logged in. Passwords must be minimum 8 characters and include at least one capital letter and one number.

New Enrollment/Registering as a Provider

Once your program is eligible to receive Quality First Scholarships, you will receive an email from VSUW with a link to the online provider registration. This communication from VSUW will also include enrollment instructions for Quality First programs.

- Read documents located in the Policies & Procedures tab in the reporting portal
- Qualify families using the Family Application for Fiscal Year 2016
- Watch training video

Successful completion of the online registration linked to the email will create a provider profile on the VSUW reporting portal. Along with the online registration, all Quality First programs wanting to receive Quality First Scholarships must return to VSUW:

- A completed and signed Fiscal Year 2016 Quality First Child Care Scholarship Provider Agreement
- A completed and signed IRS Form W-9

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- A completed and signed ACH Form
 - If requesting direct deposit, attach a voided check or bank institution letter to the ACH Form
- A Certificate of Liability Insurance listing VSUW as an Additional Insured

Once VSUW receives all of the documents mentioned above, you will receive a welcome notification including log in information for the VSUW reporting portal and reporting instructions to assist with monthly reporting. After receiving log in information, Providers must complete the following requirements:

- Read documents located in the Policies & Procedures tab in the reporting portal
- Qualify families using the Family Application for Fiscal Year 2016
- Attend annual Provider training or watch training video

Qualifying Families for Scholarships

A step by step procedure for **How to Qualify a Family** can be found online as a separate document in the Policies and Procedures tab of the reporting portal. An Income Qualification worksheet and Household Size worksheet can also be located in the Policies and Procedures tab.

Improperly qualifying families may result in payment being reimbursed for all months that a child who did not qualify is enrolled.

Monthly Reporting and Payment

Monthly Emails

Providers receive a monthly reporting reminder email noting when the reporting period will be open. The reporting period is open every month on the 1st calendar day at 12:00am through 11:59pm on the 7th day of the month. VSUW sends Providers a reporting reminder during the reporting period if they have not yet submitted their report for the current reporting month. If you receive this email and have submitted your report, please contact VSUW to verify that we have received your report.

Filing your Monthly Report

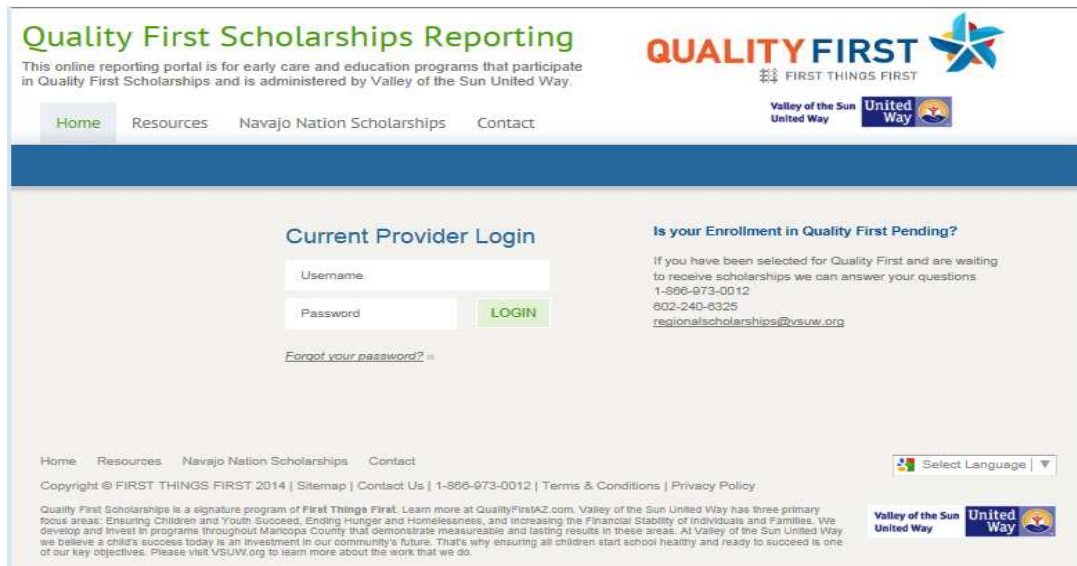
- Providers are required to submit monthly reports online at www.azftfscholarships.org (Tip: We recommend that you save the link, www.azftfscholarships.org, as a “Favorite” in your preferred internet browser for quick access to the reporting website.)
- The reporting period will open on the **1st day of the month**. Reports then **must** be submitted **within 7 calendar days** of the reporting period opening. If monthly reports are not submitted online during this time-frame, your report is considered late and **your payment will be delayed until the following monthly reimbursement cycle**.
- If you are reporting for multiple sites, please do not report for multiple sites at one time. Having multiple reporting windows open at the same time may cause technical errors in your report.
- When completing your monthly report, make sure **NOT** to click on your browser’s back arrow at the top left of your screen. If you need to go to a previous page please use the **Back** or **Cancel** button at the bottom of the reporting pages.
- Reports may now be “saved” and completed later. Be sure to submit all “saved” reports before the reporting portal closes to prevent a delay in payment.

To Log On:

1. Go to: www.azftfscholarships.org.
2. Type your user name and password in the **Current Provider Login** area on the home page, and then click **Login**.

Notes:

- If you have multiple sites, you will have individual login information for each site.
- If you forget your password, click **Forgot your password**
- Request a new one.



The screenshot shows the 'Quality First Scholarships Reporting' website. The main heading is 'Quality First Scholarships Reporting' with a sub-heading: 'This online reporting portal is for early care and education programs that participate in Quality First Scholarships and is administered by Valley of the Sun United Way.' The navigation menu includes 'Home', 'Resources', 'Navajo Nation Scholarships', and 'Contact'. The 'Current Provider Login' section contains a 'Username' field, a 'Password' field, and a green 'LOGIN' button. Below the password field is a link for 'Forgot your password?'. To the right, there is a section titled 'Is your Enrollment in Quality First Pending?' with contact information: '1-866-973-0012', '602-240-6325', and 'regionalscholarships@vvsuw.org'. The footer includes a 'Select Language' dropdown, copyright information for 2014, and a brief description of the program's focus areas.

To complete the monthly report:

1. After logging in, click the **Reporting** tab at the top of the page.
2. Click **New Report**.
3. **Reporting Period** – The value defaults to the current month.
4. Make sure you answer **ALL** of the questions.

Note: Un-submitted reports for prior months must be submitted first, in order, from the earliest month to the most recent.

New Scholarship Report

REPORTING PERIOD: *

Organization Name: Example Child Care Group

Contact Name: Sam Example (sam.example@email.com)

Street Address: 1515 E Osborn Rd, Phoenix, AZ 85016

Phone Number: 6021231234

of full-time Child Care Slots: Total Child Care: 12 (0 are restricted to ages 3-5) Navajo Nation: 0 Teen: 0

1. Has any of the above information changed? * Yes No

1a. If yes, please explain

2. Have there been any changes to your Licensure status in the past month, including new enforcement actions? * Yes No

2a. If yes, please explain

3. Do you currently have a waitlist of eligible children/families wanting to participate on the Scholarship Program? * Yes No

3a. If so, please tell us how many children you have currently on your waitlist?

4. How many new children started on the scholarship program during the month of December, 2014? *

5. How many children that were previously receiving a scholarship left during the month of December, 2014? *

6. How many days were you operational this month? *

7. Notes

- **Question 1** – The top of your report summarizes what VSUW has on record as your facility’s contact information. Please verify that this information is correct by answering question 1. If you answer ‘Yes’ to question 1, then you **must** include additional information in the box labeled 1a.
- **Question 2** – This question asks about any changes made to your Licensure status in the past month. If you answer ‘Yes’ to question 2, then you **must**

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include additional information in the box labeled 2a.

- **Question 3** – This question asks if you have any eligible children on your waitlist wanting to participate in the Scholarship Program. If you answer ‘Yes’ to this question, then you **must** update the total number of children on your waitlist every month in the box labeled 3a. This allows us to determine Providers with the most need for scholarships.
- **Questions 4 and 5** – These questions ask how many new families began receiving a scholarship during the reporting month and how many families previously receiving a scholarship left during the reporting month. Answers to questions 4 and 5 **must** be in numeric form only and should correlate to the “Date Child Enrolled” and “Date Child Vacated” in question 8.
- **Question 6** – This question asks how many days you were operational in the reporting month. Please enter the number of days your center/home was open and in operation during the reporting month.
- **Question 7** - This question asks for any additional notes that you may have for VSUW. Please provide any explanations or additional information that you would like to share with VSUW, i.e. reason for long term absences, reason for discrepancies in child data from previous month, etc.
- **Question 8** – This question asks for information relating to the children for whom you are requesting reimbursement. Complete the following for each child:
 - **Scholarship type** – Select the correct choice from the **Scholarship Type** list.
 - Scholarship types include Child Care and Navajo Nation.
 - You will only see choices for the scholarship types that have been allocated to your site.
 - If you feel a scholarship type is missing from your drop down, please contact VSUW.
 - **Child’s name** – Enter each child's name in the following format - [First Name, Last Name]. You can add hyphenated last names when necessary (exp. John Doe-Smith). Please make sure spelling is correct.
 - **Indication of Personal Statement Use** – Please indicate if you used a personal statement for income or household size when qualifying the family by selecting ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ from the dropdown menu.
 - **Child’s birthday** – Enter the child’s birthday in MM/DD/YYYY format. Please verify that you have entered the correct birthdate, as it determines the type of care (infant or toddler, preschooler) and reimbursement rate.
 - **Date child enrolled** – Enter the date the child enrolled in the Scholarships Program in MM/DD/YYYY format.

Note: Do not confuse this date with the date the child enrolled in your child care center.

◆ Scholarship Type *	◆ First Name *	◆ Last Name *	Did you use personal statement? *	Child's birthday *	Date child enrolled *
Child Care ▼	John	Smith	Yes ▼	6/10/2014	9/1/2014

- **Date child vacated** – If a child vacates your facility or dis-enrolls from the

Scholarship Program during the month; enter the date the child vacated in the MM/DD/YYYY format.

Notes:

- This date **must** correlate to the # days attended. For example, if a child vacated on the 5th operational day of the month and attended all five days, you would enter “5” for **# of days attended**.
 - Be aware that **# of days absent** will prepopulate based on the difference between **# of scheduled days** and **# of days attended**. If a child vacates your site in the middle of the month, the number entered for **# of scheduled days** should be adjusted down to prevent overbilling.
 - Please do **NOT** enter a future vacate date; you **must** wait until the child has left your program, and then you may enter the actual vacate date. Please make sure to vacate children in the reporting month of the actual vacate date. You **cannot** enter a prior month’s vacate date in a current month’s report for a child.
- **Vacate reason** – If a child leaves during the reporting month, you **must** provide a reason as to why from the **Vacate reason** list.

Date child vacated	Vacate reason
05/30/2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child aged out Chronic absenteeism Moved to a different center Moved out of the area Parent non-compliant with policies Illness Now on DES Subsidy No longer income eligible Provider lost slot Provider mistake/error

- **Type of care** – This field will default to the correct type (infant, toddler, or preschooler) based on the child’s birthdate. This field is locked and cannot be edited.

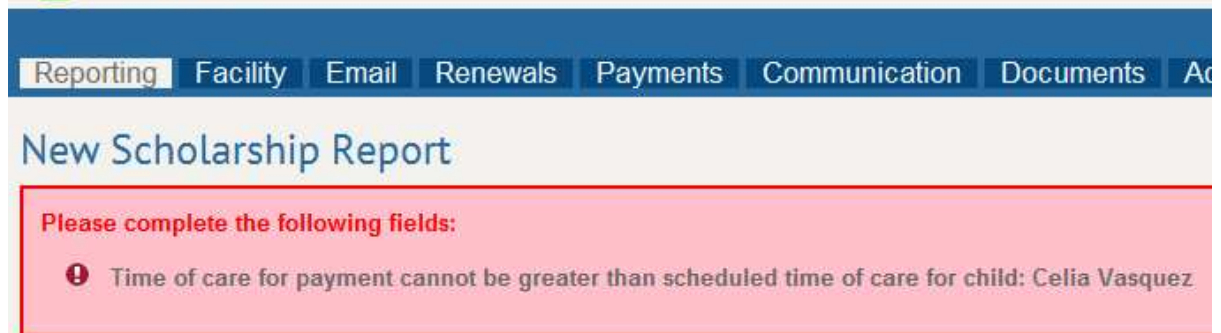
Type of care *

Preschooler ▼

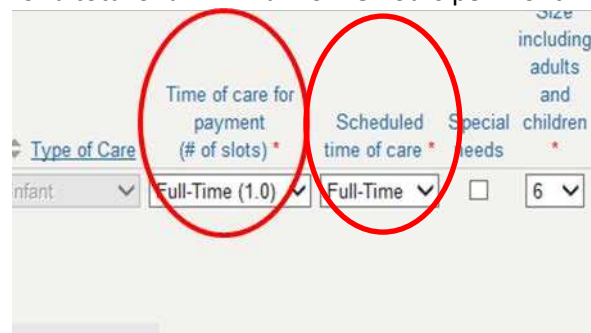
- **Time of care for payment (# of slots)** – This field reflects the Scholarship award (Full-Time or Part-Time) and determines the reimbursement amount. For example, for a child who attends the center Full-Time (28 hours or more per week, which must equal

112 hours or more per month) but is awarded a Part-Time scholarship, the Provider would select 'Part-Time' for the Time of Care for Payment and receive a Part-Time reimbursement. However, if a child attends the center Full-Time AND is awarded a Full-Time scholarship, then the Provider would select 'Full-Time' and receive a Full-Time reimbursement. A child who is scheduled to attend Part-Time (12 hours -27 hours per week, which must equal between 48 hours – 111 hours per month) is not eligible for a Full-Time reimbursement (See error message below). You may select 'None' from the dropdown menu if you do not wish to receive reimbursement for a child, i.e. child vacated at the beginning of the month.

 • test site





- **Scheduled time of care** - This field reflects the amount of time the child is scheduled to attend your site (Full-Time, Part-Time, or None). Full time students must be scheduled to attend a minimum of 28 hours per week for a total of a minimum of 112 per month and part time students must be scheduled to attend a minimum of 12 hours per week for a total of a minimum of 48 hours per month.



- **Special needs** – Check this field if the child has any special needs.
- **Family size including adults and children** – Select the number of family members in the household from the dropdown menu, as verified by the first page of the family's most recent income tax form or public assistance letter.
- **Rate for billable days** – Enter the amount you would normally invoice the child for the month, **regardless of whether or not he or she has received a scholarship** (your standard monthly rate for the child). Do **not** put your daily or weekly rate in this space and do **NOT** put your reimbursement rate in this space. Simply enter the amount that you would normally charge **ANY** family receiving services at your facility.
- **Family's gross annual income** – Enter the amount you used to qualify the family for the Scholarship Program as reflected in the parent/guardian income verification

- documents. **Note: Amount should be annual, not monthly, rounded to the nearest dollar, and should NOT include any special characters (\$) or decimal points (.00).**
- **Parent’s out of pocket costs** – Enter the amount the parent pays (copay) for child care at your facility that is **NOT** covered by the Scholarship Program. **Note: It is not a requirement that you charge a copay. The copay should not exceed 10% of the family’s monthly gross income. Do not include special characters in this field (\$).**
 - **# of scheduled days** – Select from the dropdown menu the number of days the child was scheduled to attend during the reporting month.
 - **# of days attended** – Enter the number of days the child was actually in attendance at your facility during the reporting month.
 - **# of absences** – This field will prepopulate based on the difference between the # of scheduled days and the # of days attended.
 - **# of monthly hours scheduled** – Enter the number of hours the child was scheduled to attend during the reporting month. Note: Do **NOT** enter attended hours.

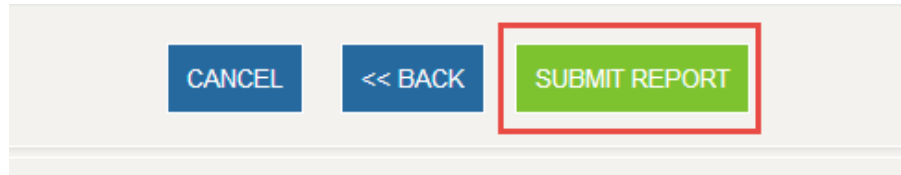
Special needs	Family Size including adults and children *	Rate for billable days * (dollars and cents)	Family's annual gross income * (nearest dollar no commas)	Parent's out of pocket costs * (dollars and cents)	# of scheduled days *	# of days attended *	# of absences *	# of monthly hours scheduled *
<input type="checkbox"/>	4 	700	35000	135	19 	2	17	154

- **X** – This function is only available for Administrative purposes and not available for provider use. This is **NOT** how you vacate or remove a child from the Scholarships Program.
- **ADD CHILD** - To add a new child, click **ADD CHILD** after the last child on your report. A blank line will appear after the last child on your report.

Click SAVE REPORT to save your work. You will be able to update and make changes to your saved report during the reporting cycle. Also, if you only click “SAVE REPORT” and do not come back to “SUBMIT REPORT” within the first 7 calendar days of the month it will be considered a late report. When you have entered/updated all of the children on your report, and have answered all of the questions, click **NEXT** at the bottom of the report to submit. A verification page will appear; **please review the report carefully**, making sure you have updated all of the information.

CANCEL
SAVE REPORT
NEXT >>

Click SUBMIT REPORT to submit your final report. Once your report is submitted, you may NOT make changes. Please call VSUW to assist you with any necessary changes.



Useful Tips for Reporting your Scholarships

Here are a few reporting tips useful for Providers:

Tip #1 – Submit your report early in the reporting period in case you experience technical difficulties while submitting your report. VSUW is only available for technical assistance Monday through Friday from 8:00am-5:00pm. If you are unable to submit your report due to technical difficulties and VSUW is not available to help you troubleshoot, there may be a delay in your payment.

Tip #2 – Review your report before submitting to ensure all information is accurate. After you have submitted your report, log out of your profile and log back in to confirm that your report was successfully submitted.

Tip #3 – If you have multiple sites in the scholarship program, please report each site one at a time. Do not have two centers open in the reporting portal at the same time. Reporting multiple sites at the same time could cause an error in your reporting or transpose your records resulting in children being listed at the wrong facility.

Tip #4 – If you have a child with a high number of absences during the reporting month, you can let us know why they were absent by explaining in the “NOTES” section in the report. You can also enter any other information you feel would be helpful for us to know when completing our Quality Assurance checks. This may eliminate any calls to your site regarding your report.

Monthly Payment

Reimbursements are paid on a monthly basis for the reported attendance of scholarship recipients. Providers will not be reimbursed if they do not submit a monthly report. This applies to all Providers and all scholarship types.

- Payments are issued to Providers via paper checks or direct deposit.
- Payments are issued by VSUW to Providers before the end of the month following the services. Payments are processed on the Friday of the **third full week** of the month. Go to the Policies and Procedures tab in the reporting portal. Click on Payment Calendar for a printable **FY16 Reporting and Payment Calendar**.
- For direct deposit, Providers must fill out an ACH form and provide a copy of a voided check. This authorization is to remain in full force and effect until the Provider has received written notification from either party of its termination in such time and in such manner to afford

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agency and depository a reasonable opportunity to act on it. If there are any changes to banking information, it is the responsibility of the Provider to promptly inform VSUW.

Banking Updates/Changes

Banking updates may take up to 30 days to process.

You have two options to update your information:

Option 1: Fill out a new **ACH form** posted online in the Policies and Procedures tab and submit a voided check for the new banking account to VSUW.

1. Go to Forms and print out the form or request one via Email regionalscholarships@vsuw.org.
2. Fax the ACH form to 602-240-6326 or Email it to regionalscholarships@vsuw.org

Option 2: Update your banking information online.

1. Log in to your reporting account.
2. Click the **Account Settings** tab.
3. Click the payment method you prefer, and then click SAVE CHANGES.

How do you prefer to receive your payment? *

ACH (Direct Deposit)
 Manual Check (Mailed)


SAVE CHANGES

4. If you chose **ACH (Direct Deposit)**, you will need to provide two documents:
 - a. ACH Authorization Form
 - 1)Click the link to download the ACH form.
 - 2)Complete the ACH form.
 - 3)Fax the ACH form to VSUW at 602-240-6326 or Email it to regionalscholarships@vsuw.org
 - b. Voided Check (scan copy to a pdf)

How do you prefer to receive your payment? * ACH (Direct Deposit) Manual Check (Mailed)

To continue with Direct Deposit, we are required two items from you:

- ACH Authorization Form**
 - Use the following link to download and print the ACH Authorization form:

[ACH Authorization Form](#) 
 - Once you have printed, filled out, signed, dated, and scanned in the ACH Authorization form, please use the box below to attach it to this application.
- Voided Check**
 - Scan in a voided check for the account you will be using for payment transfers and use the box below to attach it to this application.

Can't scan in documents?
We highly suggest that you upload your documents online; however if you need to send supporting documents via mail or fax they should be sent to:

Valley of the Sun United Way – Scholarship Program
1515 E. Osborn Rd.
Phoenix, AZ 85014
Fax: 602-240-6326
Email: regionalscholarships@vsuw.org

Your Documents:		Add New Document:					
<p>VSUW SIGNED PACC-SM 123.pdf (782877 bytes)</p> <p>123_ach.pdf (78680 bytes)</p> <p>123_coi.pdf (238080 bytes)</p> <p>123_pa.pdf (122503 bytes)</p> <p>FY15-123-PA.KC.pdf (121494 bytes)</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Select files</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Add files to the upload queue and click the start button.</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr style="background-color: #f2f2f2;"> <th style="width: 70%;">Filename</th> <th style="width: 10%;">Status</th> <th style="width: 20%;">Size</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td colspan="3" style="height: 40px;"></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">0% 0 kb</p> </div>	Filename	Status	Size			
Filename	Status	Size					

SAVE CHANGES

- In the **Add New Document** section, click **Add Files**, and then select the scanned ACH Authorization Form and the scanned voided check.
- Click **Start Upload**.
- Once the files are uploaded, click **SAVE CHANGES**.

Late Reporting

- Late reports **must be submitted online by the provider**. Faxed or emailed reports will **NOT** be accepted.
- Late reports will result in your payment being delayed until the next scheduled payment after submission. No special checks or payments will be issued for late reports.
- Late reports will go into an approval queue and VSUW staff will review the report.
- If approved, reimbursement will be included in the next month's payment cycle. VSUW staff will contact you if they have any questions.
- Providers may only submit late reports for up to 1 month late.
- Providers will not be paid if the report is filed more than one month late.
- Adjustments to past reports CANNOT be done online and must receive written approval from VSUW staff.

To submit a late report:

- Go to www.AZFTFScholarships.org.
- Type your user name and password in the **Current Provider Login** area on the **Home** page and then click **Login**.

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- If you have multiple sites for your programs, you will have multiple usernames and passwords.
 - If you forget your password, click '**Forgot your password?**' to receive a new one.
3. Click the **Reporting** tab at the top of the page.
 4. Click **New Report**.
 5. From the dropdown menu at the top of the reporting page, choose the month of the late report you would like to submit.
Note: If the month is not listed, then you are no longer able to submit a report for that month.
 6. Follow the reporting instructions in "**Filing Your Monthly Report**" to complete the report, and then click Submit.
 7. Once you have submitted all late reports, you may complete and submit your reimbursement report for the current month.

Requesting Payment Adjustment

When VSUW sends you a reconciliation report after a deposit, we recommend that you review the report to verify that the total payment amount matches your bank deposit or check. If the total does not match, then there may have been an adjustment from a prior month included in your current payment. Please review the reconciliation report to verify that the following fields are correct:

- 1) Child Name
- 2) Scholarship Type
- 3) Payment Amount
- 4) Type of Care

Requesting an Adjustment

If you find an error, please contact VSUW at **602-240-6325** or regionalscholarships@vsuw.org to request an adjustment. You may request adjustments for reports up to one (1) month in arrears. Adjustments for a prior month must be submitted no later than 11:59pm on the 7th day of the current reporting month in order to be eligible to be processed. Any adjustments past one (1) month will not be accepted unless prompted by a fiscal monitoring site visit or the interim reporting solution for FY16.

Receiving an Adjustment Reimbursement

After an adjustment that effects your payment is processed by the VSUW Scholarship Team, you will receive a credit or debit to the next scholarship reporting reimbursement. Please note that if you are submitting an adjustment after QA has been completed, your adjustment reimbursement will not be made until in the following scholarship payment. The Accounting Coordinator assisting you will be able to determine the payment month when your adjustment reimbursement will be paid. After the monthly payment is processed, you will receive a separate adjustment notice from VSUW that explains the amount of the adjustment, the adjustment reason, and an amended reconciliation report for the adjustment month.

Fiscal Monitoring

Your fiscal monitoring will serve as an opportunity to review program guidelines and address any questions you may have come across while qualifying families. With the ultimate goal being 100% program compliance, your fiscal monitoring will also be an opportunity to address any errors made during the qualification process and collect any missing or incomplete documentation.

Who gets selected?

- Onsite fiscal monitoring - minimum of 200 providers with proportional regional representation across the state
- Providers can be selected randomly
- Targeted Selections
 - Will be identified using the following criteria:
 - High number of personal statements
 - Family/community complaints
 - Reporting errors
 - Consistent late reporting
 - Monetary findings from FY15

Process We Follow

During the fiscal monitoring, all documentation required for participation in the Quality First (QF) Scholarships program, will be reviewed.

- Selected Providers will be contacted one week prior to set a date and time for the site visit.
- During the Fiscal Monitoring visit a minimum of 10 scholarship recipient files will be reviewed. If provider does not have 10 or more children receiving QF scholarships, then 100% of their scholarship recipient files will be reviewed. If provider has 10 or more children receiving QF scholarships and any of the files reviewed have one or more Findings or Observations, 100% of scholarship recipient files will be reviewed for two randomly selected months. If issues are found, 100% of files for all months within the fiscal year will be reviewed.
- Copies of documents will be made available upon request from the fiscal monitoring specialist.

Review of Required Documentation

- Completed FY16 Family Application
- Documentation of legal residency and age
- Family qualification by income and household size
- Attendance records for two months match what was reported

- Time of care matches what was reported
 - Full Time (28 hours or more per week, which must equal 112 hours or more per month)
 - Part Time (12 hours or more per week, which must equal between 48 hours – 111 hours per month)

Children attending less than 12 hours per week are not eligible for scholarships

Common Errors Found

Verbal Warnings are matters of concern that need to be addressed, but typically do not affect payment.

The most common **Verbal Warnings** are:

- Misspelled Name
- Incorrect Date of Birth (**Note:** Will be considered a Finding if the error changes reimbursement rate)
- Sign-In/Out Sheets do not match Reported Attendance (**Note:** Will be considered a Finding if errors changes the time of care reimbursement rate)
- Reported Household Size does not match records on file (Note: Will be considered a Finding if the family no longer qualifies based on the household size according to records on file)
- Family Application completed after enrollment date

Observations are matters of concern that need to be addressed and will require a monetary adjustment if corrective action is not taken to ensure compliance.

Findings are fiscal issues unable to be resolved and result in the Provider reimbursing VSUW for previously paid funds. It is not the goal of fiscal monitoring visits to recoup paid funds, but to ensure that the families on scholarship are truly eligible.

Tip: Collect ALL income documentation prior to child's enrollment date. As the Provider, you are responsible for collecting the correct documentation for all children enrolled; it is much easier to collect information prior to the child's enrollment as opposed to after. The most common deductions are the result of a Provider being unable to collect documentation from a child that has since vacated.

Conducting a Self-Audit

We encourage you to use FY16 Family Application checklist on page 5 to perform a self-audit to ensure that you have all the required documentation collected prior to the monitoring visit.

After the fiscal monitoring visit

Following the monitoring, providers will receive a summary report detailing any issues. Failure to resolve Observations within 10 business days could result in future payments being withheld. Failure to respond to any Observations within thirty (30) business days of notification will result in the recovery of overpayment by VSUW through the offset of the Provider's future payments.

Any children for which eligibility has not been proven within thirty (30) business days of notification will be vacated from the FTF's Quality First Scholarships Program effective immediately.

Follow Up Visits

If you had Findings during your visit you may expect that VSUW will follow up with you to ensure you have gained understanding about how to qualify families and the record keeping that is necessary in order to achieve the quality. Quality is important to ensuring the credibility of the program state-wide.

We are here as a resource for you. If there is anything about the program you do not understand, please ask us.

Special Scholarships

Receiving a Navajo Nation, Arizona Off-Reservation Scholarship

Scholarships are available for children of Navajo Nation, Arizona residents who are temporarily residing off the Navajo Nation to achieve an education. This scholarship type is granted to the family and may be used at the Quality First (QF) participating site of their choice. Once the site has been selected by the parent, the Provider will receive an award notification directly from VSUW. All families are requalified by VSUW at the beginning of the fiscal year.

Family Requirements:

- Child must be between the ages of birth through 5, not yet in kindergarten.
- Families must reside in Arizona and maintain a permanent residence on the Navajo Nation.
- One parent must enroll in a minimum of 1 course at an accredited college or university each session courses are offered.
- Complete the QF Navajo Nation Family application and proof of residency form with a chapter official signature.
- Provide proof of U.S. Citizenship for the child.
- Household income must be at or below 200% of the 2015 Federal Poverty Level.
- Only two scholarships allowed per family.

Parents Applying for a Navajo Nation Scholarship

Those interested in applying for a QF Navajo Nation, Arizona Off-Reservation Scholarship MUST apply directly with VSUW.

To apply for a scholarship:

1. Download the following form at <http://www.azftfscholarships.org/scholarship-types/>
 - a. **FY16 Navajo Nation, Arizona Off-Reservation Family Application**
2. Submit completed forms and supporting documents to VSUW via email at regionalscholarships@vsuw.org or by faxing to 602-240-6326.

3. If you have questions, contact **602-240-6324**, **1-866-973-0012** or by email at regionalscholarships@vsuw.org

Eligibility is determined and maintained by VSUW. VSUW will review the application and contact the applicant with a determination. Scholarships are awarded on a first come, first served basis.

Children with Special Needs

Children with special needs are defined as children with an Individualized Education Program (IEP), Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), or other professionally diagnosed educational disability; or a child with a 504 plan; or individual health plan (IHP), by a medical professional. Early childhood inclusion in high quality early care and education programs focuses on access, participation and support for all children.

Applying for a Special Needs Reimbursement

If you have a child attending your center that has a diagnosed special need, you may be eligible to receive a special needs reimbursement rate. If approved, a special need child (3-5) may be paid infant/toddler (0-2) age rate. Children with special needs typically have one, or several, of the following pieces of documentation:

- Individualized Education Program (IEP),
- Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP),
- 504 Individual Health Plan (IHP),
- Other professionally diagnosed educational disability verifying that the child requires special attention.

These scholarship payment exceptions are made only with prior approval by VSUW and QF. If you have a child you believe to be eligible, please call 602-240-6325, or email regionalscholarships@vsuw.org.

Frequently Asked Questions for Children with Special Needs

Can a child who is already receiving services IEP/IFSP also receive a QF Scholarship?

- IEP/IFSP children who are already receiving services are eligible to receive a scholarship in addition to the services that were already provided to them (i.e. if they were getting partial day services through another source, they could also access a scholarship).

What assistance is there for children with special needs who do not meet the 200% of FPL guideline?

- Parents might find resources here: <https://www.azdes.gov/AzEIP/Resources/>
- Raising Special Kids is a non-profit organization of families helping families of children with the full range of disabilities and special health needs in Arizona. As Arizona's Parent Training and Information Center, Raising Special Kids provides families with information, training, and assistance in understanding their parental rights and responsibilities under Part C of IDEA. Services and programs are provided at no cost to families.

Raising Special Kids

5025 E. Washington St. #204

Phoenix, AZ 85034

(602) 242-4366 or (800) 237-3007

Email at info@raisingspecialkids.org. <http://www.raisingspecialkids.org/>

Center Closure/Consolidation

Transfer of scholarships:

- In cases of consolidation, it is unlikely your scholarships will transfer, but you may request an exception from FTF.
- In case of closure, scholarships are forfeited.

In cases of either closure or consolidation:

1. Contact VSUW immediately. Confirmation will be sent via email and scholarships will be reimbursed through the date in which you choose to decline.
2. Contact your licensing agency.
3. Contact your Quality First Coach.
4. Provide parents with childcare resources.

New Ownership

1. Scholarships are not guaranteed to transfer.
2. Provide VSUW with the ownership effective date and the new owner's contact information.
3. Contact your licensing agency.
4. Contact your Quality First coach to inform them of the changes. The Coaching agency along with the QF Coaching and Incentives team will assess the transition and determine the continuation of the program. If the program is required to re-enroll with Quality First, the scholarships will not transition.
5. VSUW will confirm enrollment eligibility using the program's extranet profile. An enrollment packet will be sent to the new owner with instructions on what is needed to ensure scholarships are paid to new owner. VSUW may request the previous owner to confirm the last reimbursable month. **Note: Banking updates will only be made after the QF extranet profile has been updated to reflect the new owner.**

Dis-enrollment

Providers may decline scholarships, become dis-enrolled or terminated due to their star rating, failure to follow procedures, or for other reasons. When this happens, follow the procedure below. As programs are dis-enrolled in Quality First, First Things First will provide this information to VSUW via e-mail or vice versa.

1. The scholarships at these programs will be terminated on the date the program was dis-enrolled.
2. Contract termination notification to these programs will be sent by VSUW within 5 business days of notification and will include, but is not limited to information about:
 - a. The contract end date that includes the last date that the program can request reimbursement for scholarships (the date that the program became ineligible).

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- b. Options for families who will be losing scholarships at the site.
- c. The due date for the program to submit their final report to the successful applicant. Reporting after this date is not possible and will not be reimbursed.

Losing, Declining, and Gaining Scholarships

How to Decline Some or All of Your Scholarships

Centers may decline the use of some of their scholarships or decline to continue participating in the scholarship program.

If you cannot use some or all of the scholarships allotted to you, please let us know. Most Providers have a waiting list and they are eager for more scholarships. Returning some of your scholarships to be used by other families does not affect your standing with First Things First or Quality First.

Quality First Scholarships may not be used to replace or supplant other funding sources including, but not limited to, DES, Head Start, TANF or other public or private scholarship programs. If your program is already funded by another source, we encourage you to consider increasing your hours or adding additional classrooms instead of declining participation in the Quality First Scholarships program.

If you want to decline scholarships:

- Contact VSUW immediately and confirmation will be sent to you via email.
- VSUW will contact Quality First so that your scholarships may be reallocated.

Losing Unused Scholarships and Reallocation

If a participating program underutilizes the scholarships allotted to them for 2 calendar months in a row, the unused scholarships will be removed by FTF from the program for the remainder of the fiscal year and re-allocated to another program in the same region (prioritizing programs by quality rating, size and scholarship usage). Reallocation occurs in an ongoing basis throughout the fiscal year.

- Programs who have increased their star rating between April 1st and the reallocation timeline will receive reallocated slots based on their increased star rating.
- Providers who lose scholarships through reallocation will be awarded scholarships as determined by their program size and star rating upon the new fiscal year. The new fiscal year award will not be based on the scholarship usage in the previous fiscal year.
- FTF will contact all programs not using 100% of their awarded scholarships to notify them of the reallocation of their unused scholarships.

Gaining Temporary Scholarships

Reallocated scholarships are temporary and short term. They last only through the end of the fiscal year and will be counted in the average usage for determining scholarships in the following fiscal year and considered in the continuity of care. Families and Providers receiving these short term reallocated scholarships will sign a letter acknowledging the end date of the scholarship.

Making Attrition Decisions

It is the goal of Quality First to ensure that programs will not be required to attrition any children during the fiscal year. VSUW recognizes the difficult decisions Providers have to make when deciding which children should be removed from the Scholarships program.

When making attrition decisions, please use these guidelines:

- Consider dividing some full-time scholarships into part-time scholarships, keeping in mind that you do not want to lose slots because families cannot afford additional costs
- Consider keeping families with the highest need on the Scholarships program.
- Consider continuity of care. Children who recently enrolled may have less continuity in their care than a child who has been in your program for several years, ongoing services to one child is a good thing.
- Consider inclusion of children with special needs. A child with special needs benefits from participating in a quality programs.

Assisting Parents and Families

Loss of a Scholarship

- Child Care Scholarships are not transferrable to other Providers (excluding Navajo Nation, Arizona Off-Reservation Scholarships).
- Notify families as soon as possible so that they can begin looking for alternatives.
- There may be Head Start openings available. Families can find the programs closest to them by going to their website at www.azheadstart.org or by contacting them at 480-557-9607.
- Families can call Child Care Resource and Referral for assistance in finding other child care options at 1-800-308-9000 or 602 244-2678 or www.arizonachildcare.org.

Locating Other Quality First Scholarship Sites

- Go to <http://qualityfirstaz.com/search/>
- Search for a child care provider by entering a zip code. A map and a list of Quality First Providers including their addresses and phone numbers will appear.
- Parents can choose to expand the mileage radius within 5-50 miles from their zip code to locate more centers.
- Parents will need to contact each provider to see if they have any scholarships currently available.
- Once a Parent locates a scholarship opening, they will need to apply directly with the provider. If sites don't currently have openings, Parents can ask to be placed on the waiting list to be notified should openings come available. A parent can be on multiple waiting lists at one time.

Note: Not all Quality First Providers participate in the Quality First Scholarship Program.

Additional Resources

- Contact Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) for assistance in finding scholarships as well as other child care options including Quality First Scholarships at 1-800-308-9000, 602 244-2678 or www.arizonachildcare.org.
- Parents may contact VSUW at: 602-240-6324, 1-866-973-0012, or by email regionalscholarships@vsuw.org.