



Frequently Asked Questions

➤ **What is the Ohio Professional Registry?**

The Registry is an online professional development tool for Ohio's early childhood and afterschool professionals. The Registry allows the Professional to track his/her experience, education, credentials and training as they advance in your career.

➤ **Who should use the Ohio Professional Registry?**

The Registry has a wide variety of potential uses and is open to anyone whose work supports the early childhood and afterschool fields in the state of Ohio. Signing up is free and easy.

Professionals working in a Step Up To Quality rated program must be a part of the Registry. A Registry profile is also required for instructors and trainers in the field who would like special approvals for their training sessions (i.e. Step Up To Quality, ODE Approved PD, or ODH Help Me Grow, which is now Ohio Approved (OA)).

➤ **How can I sign up for the Ohio Professional Registry?**

The Professional may sign up for the Registry on the Ohio Professional Registry website at www.occrra.org. Simply click the **"Create a Profile"** button on the top right side of the screen. Fill in the requested information. An email will be sent to the email entered. Follow the prompt to verify email. Your Ohio Professional Identification Number or OPIN will be assigned. Please keep with your user name and password.

➤ **What is the Career Pathways Model?**

The Career Pathways Model integrates the many ways early childhood and afterschool professionals gain knowledge and skills in their field. The model assigns points for formal education, training, credentials and work experience in early childhood and afterschool settings. The Registry uses the Career Pathways Model to calculate a total score based on the information entered and verified in your Registry profile.

➤ **Who manages the Ohio Professional Registry?**

The Registry is managed by the Ohio Child Care Resource & Referral Association (OCCRRA). OCCRRA provides staff, development, and other resources for the Registry. OCCRRA's website also hosts the Registry. More information about OCCRRA can be found at www.occrra.org.

Registry Profile

➤ **What is an OPIN?**

The Professional's OPIN is an assigned eight-digit Ohio Professional Identification Number that is unique to each Professional in the Registry. All Professionals are automatically assigned an OPIN upon completion of the application process and this number never changes. If the Professional wishes, they may use the OPIN number instead of the username to log into his/her profile – the two are interchangeable. **The OPIN does not serve as your password.**

- **What is username?**
The username is assigned to you when you create your profile. You may use your username to sign in to your profile.
- **Who enters information in my Registry profile?**
You will enter your own information into your Registry profile. **The Registry profile belongs to you and is for your professional profile**, it is not intended for the program to own the profile. Professionals must have a unique (personal) email address when signing up for a Registry profile. Email addresses may not be shared with other Professionals.
- **How do I enter information in my Registry profile?**
Sign in at www.occrra.org with your OPIN number, username or unique e-mail address and password. Choose “Edit Registry Profile”. Using the buttons on the right of the accordion, select “add.” Enter the required fields. For education, certificates and credentials and training/conference, the system will require you to upload a file.
IMPORTANT: Files uploaded to the Ohio Professional Registry must be in a .pdf format. Click “Save” and repeat this process for all documents you are adding to your record.
- **What information should I enter in my Registry profile?**
How much information to enter in your Professional Registry profile is up to the individual Professional, and may depend on how the Professional is using the Registry. If the Professional is trying to add to his/her Career Pathways score make sure you have entered all of your education information, any credentials currently held, and a full and accurate employment history.

In addition to education, credentials, and employment, professionals in Step Up To Quality programs need to should be sure their specialized training information from the preceding three years is entered. If the Professional has taken trainings through the online training registration system, they will not need to manually enter them. The system automatically enters these training in the PDTrack section of your profile.

Other training completed by the professional may be entered in their profile including health and safety training such as First Aid and CPR. Please note that only trainings with appropriate documents submitted will be verified.
- **What is my Career Pathways level?**
Career Pathways level is shown at the top of the Registry profile page, next to the Professionals name. Please keep in mind that the Career Pathways level is based only on the verified points. You can find

Technology

- **What if I forgot my username and/or password?**
Go to www.occrra.org and click the “Forgot username?” or “Forgot password?” link below the sign box. Follow the instructions.

➤ **What if I don't have a computer?**

If the Professional doesn't have access to a computer at home or at work, contact your local public library. Most libraries have computers with Internet access that you may use for free. *If you are unfamiliar with computers, notify your local Resource and Referral person to assist you with the process of creating or entering information into the Registry Profile.*

➤ **What if I don't have an email address?**

There are a wide variety of free, web-based email addresses available. A "web-based" email address means that you should be able to access your email from any computer that is connected to Internet – at home, work, a friend's house, or the library. Two of the common providers of these email addresses are Google's Gmail (mail.google.com) or Microsoft's Hotmail (www.hotmail.com). It should only take a couple of minutes to set up a new email account.

➤ **What if I do not have a scanner, how can I submit .pdf documents for verification?**

If the Professional doesn't have access to a scanner at home or at work, the Registry suggests contacting your local public library or local [Resource & Referral Agency](#). If the Professional has access to a smartphone, there are many apps that can be found in the Apple Store or Google Play to create PDFs of the documents.

➤ **What is the recommended Internet browser for use with the Registry?**

Mozilla Firefox is the recommended Internet browser for use with the Registry website. It is a free browser that is easily available for download. Although Internet Explorer is also supported by the website, Mozilla Firefox users tend to have a better overall experience on our website. To learn more about Mozilla Firefox or to download it, visit www.firefox.com. The link is also available on login.occrra.org, after clicking "Having Difficulties?" on the very bottom of the page.

➤ **I got a pop-up saying I'm using an unsupported browser. What does that mean?**

This means the Professional is using an Internet browser other than the most recent versions of Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, or Google Chrome. The Professional may experience loss of functionality on the Ohio Professional Registry website until downloading a supported browser.

TIPS for technical issues:

- Check to make sure your settings allow JavaScript and cookies.
- Run System Update on your Windows or Mac computer.
- Try using a different computer. Check with your local public library. Most have computers available for public use.
- Delete your internet temporary files and cookies.
- Refresh your browser by either clicking on the Refresh button or **pressing F5 on your keyboard.**
- Check your virus, anti-spam or firewall software settings to make sure they're not interfering with the site.

Verification

➤ **What information needs to be verified?**

In order to count in the total Career Pathways Level, education, training, and credential documents must be verified by Registry staff.

➤ **What Coursework should be entered?**

For the Care and Education of Children Coursework section, keep in mind the guidelines:

Points are awarded for college coursework if:

1. The professional received a passing grade of “C” or better
2. The course is from an accredited institution
3. The course has specific application to the care and education of children age birth through fourteen years
4. The course has a concentration in one or more of the following subject areas:
 - Growth and development of children
 - Assessment and instructional methods
 - Content-specific courses that directly support instruction
 - Children with special needs
 - Developmentally appropriate equipment and classroom arrangement
 - Working with parents and families
 - Nutrition
 - Community health, pediatrics or social services resources for children and families
 - Planning child care, recreational, or educational programs and activities for children
 - Developmentally appropriate child guidance and management techniques
 - Administration of child care, educational and recreational activities
 - Ethics and professionalism in child care

➤ **What documents are required for verification?**

Detailed guidelines are available in the “Required Documentation for Verification”, available for download at www.occrra.org. However, the following documents are generally required for verification:

- For basic education, a copy of a high school diploma or GED
- ⊖ Homeschool graduation verification requires a letter from the school district the graduate resided in stating the student met all requirements for high school graduation. This letter needs to be on letterhead and signed by a school official-
- For advanced education, a copy of an official transcript from an accredited college or university showing earned hours, coursework and degrees earned (if multiple institutions were attended, a copy of an official transcript is required from each – transferred hours cannot be verified)
- For training information, a copy of a completed ODJFS or ODE in-service form
- For credentials, a copy of the face of your current credential is required.

➤ **What is the process to submit verification documents?**

Documents are uploaded directly into the professional’s profile. PDF files are the only supported type of file accepted by the Registry. Scan and save the documents at .pdf files on your computer.

➤ **What is an “accredited” college or university?**

In order to be verified, the college or university must be accredited by an agency recognized by the United States Department of Education. Accreditation organizations verify that certain standards and practices are being followed at the college or university and help ensure the equivalency of

course credits and degrees awarded at different institutions. Accreditation status is determined using the following resources:

- United States Department of Education, Office of Post Secondary Education - <http://www.ope.ed.gov/accreditation>
- Council for Higher Education Accreditation - <http://www.chea.org/search/search.asp>
- Accrediting Institute for Independent Colleges and Schools - <http://www.acics.org/>
- Distance Education and Training Council - <http://www.detc.org/accred.html>

➤ **What are the requirements to review international education documents?**

In order to verify any international education documents, they must be reviewed and **evaluated** by an international education and credential evaluation service. A copy of this evaluation should be sent to the Ohio Professional Registry for verification. **Verification cannot be completed based on a translation alone.**

For review of international secondary education (high school), please send one of the following:

- An evaluation stating your education is equivalent to a high-school level education in the United States.
- A copy of the employee record chart which shows verification by state licensing of a high school level education.
- A copy of an official transcript from a US college or university notating high school completion with a date and name of high school.

For review of post-secondary education (college/university), please send one of the following:

- An evaluation stating quarter/semester hour US equivalent. If a degree was earned, the assessment should also include the level of US degree it equals, as well as the major area of study.

Information about selecting an international credential and evaluation service can be found here:

- **NAFSA: Association of International Educators** http://www.nafsa.org/Find_Resources/Supporting_International_Students_And_Scholars/Network_Resources/International_Enrollment_Management/A_Guide_to_Selecting_a_Foreign_Credentials_Evaluation_Service/
- **NACES: National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES®)**
A list of members of the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services can be found here: <http://www.naces.org/members.htm>.
- Additional references include:
AACRAO International Education Services <http://ies.aacrao.org/>

➤ **What are the requirements to review homeschool graduation?**

Submit a letter from the school district which the student resides in stating course requirements for a high school diploma have been met. This letter must be on letterhead and signed by a school official.

- **I am attempting to be named Administrator of a program and ODJFS Licensing needs my employment verified. What do I do?**

If you are attempting to meet state licensing requirements and you have been told you need to meet a Career Pathways level 3 with verified employment to be named Administrator by the state, please review the following:

Employment history may be verified with one or more of the following types of documents:

- Employee Record Chart signed by the Licensing Specialist
- Notarized JFS Form signed by the administration of the licensed facility where the individual worked
- Statement from CDJFS certifying the individual was a Type B provider

Scan and email one or more of the above documents to registry@occr.org for assistance.

Organization Dashboard

- **What is the Organization Dashboard?**

The Organization Dashboard provides the ability for the Administrator to view program reports from one central, convenient location – The Administrator Registry Profile. End dates of employment for former employees can also be added to remove former employees from the Current Employee list.

- **What reports can be created from the Organization Dashboard?**

With the Organization Dashboard, you can:

- See which employees have profiles in the Registry through the current employee record
- Enter termination dates for employees who have left the program, to move to the former employee record
- Edit position titles and age groups for an accurate and up-to-date record
- View and print reports (Summary report, ODJFS Specialized report, Detailed Reports) showing staff's completed specialized trainings or ODJFS required trainings such as First Aid, CPR, Communicable Diseases, and Child Abuse Prevention
- Count on the security of your program's information. Access to the Organization Dashboard is password-protected, granted only to the administrator listed on the current license, and to persons with administrative rights as designated by the owner

- **Who has access to the Organization Dashboard?**

The administrator listed on the ODJFS or ODE license for that organization can access the Organization Dashboard. In addition to the named administrator, persons with administrative rights as designated by the owner, can be given access to the Dashboard.

Please note that the access to the dashboard is for persons with a complete profile. If the person does not have a profile, they will not have access.

Step Up To Quality

- **How is the Registry's role with Step Up To Quality?**

The Registry partners with the Step Up To Quality program to help verify staff qualifications at Step Up To Quality rated programs. Several benchmarks for Step Up To Quality can be met with a certain Career Pathways level. For more information, visit earlychildhoodohio.org

- **Are employees in a Step Up To Quality rated program required to have a Registry profile?**
Administrators, lead teachers, and assistant teachers at Step Up To Quality rated programs (or programs that will be registering for SUTQ) must have Registry profiles. The information from the Registry Profiles for administrators, lead teachers, and assistant teachers is used in determining the staff education and qualification and professional development domains are met for the program's step level.
- **How should a Registry profile be prepared for a Step Up To Quality verification visit?**
In the months leading up to a Step Up To Quality verification visit, the administrator should make sure all employees are assigned to their organization dashboard, that education has been verified and that the required professional development training hours are up to date.

Education information must be verified in the Registry prior to a Step Up To Quality verification visit. Please contact Registry@ocrra.org with questions about education verification and training hours to assist the program in the desk review process.

- **How can a administrator use the Registry to prepare for a Step Up To Quality verification visit?**
For administrators, the Organization Dashboard is a great tool to use in preparation for a visit. The Dashboard allows administrators to view basic information for all staff members and to verify their hire dates, position titles, and age groups. From the Dashboard, administrators can mark employees who have left the program. The Organization Dashboard also provides program reports showing the Career Pathways and education levels for all staff, as well as the past two years of specialized training information for each staff member. These are the same reports that the Step Up To Quality state Licensing Specialists will review prior to the verification visit.
- **How long before a Step Up To Quality visit should documents for verification be submitted to the registry?**
To ensure that there are no scheduling difficulties in the verification process, it is best to submit verification documents at least four months prior to the date of the program's expected visit. Education and credential documents are the first priority when submitting.
- **Where should I direct questions about the Step Up To Quality registration, specialized training, PD plans, curriculum, or other Step Up To Quality requirements?**
Visit www.earlychildhoodohio.org to access Program Standards, Guidance Document, Rules and Forms, including other resources available for programs.

For additional information, please review the User Guides available in [OPR Resources](#).