

APPEALS PROCEDURE

POLICY STATEMENT

The Appeals Procedure will be implemented by First Things First when a Quality First participant has requested the right to appeal a Star Rating or enrollment termination. Star Rating and enrollment termination are the only two appealable actions in the Quality First program. The Appeals Process includes three steps indicated below:

- Review of Appeal
- Administrative Hearing
- Board Approval

REVIEW OF APPEAL

1. The Review of Appeal is intended to resolve the appeal at First Things First before moving forward with an administrative hearing.
2. A participant may submit a Request for Appeal within **60 days** of being notified of a Star Rating or enrollment termination. The Request for Appeal must be submitted in writing to the Quality First Director using the Request for Appeal form (attached) and sent by electronic or postal mail to:

Director of Quality First
First Things First
Central Avenue, Suite 800
Phoenix, Arizona 85012
Email: qualityfirst@azftf.gov
Fax: (602) 274-6351

3. Upon receipt of the Request for Appeal, the Quality First Director and Senior Director for Early Learning, Chief Program Officer (CPO), and/or Chief Executive Officer (CEO) will review the Request for Appeal and provide a written response, which includes a scheduled meeting date, to the participant within **14 days** of the receipt of the request.
4. Upon receipt of the Request for Appeal, First Things First Leadership designee(s) and Quality First Director will review the following as applicable:
 - Relevant Quality First policy and/or procedure in the Quality First Implementation Guide
 - Assessment Reports
 - Quality Improvement Plans
 - Documentation of previous meetings/discussions, activity logs and written correspondence
 - Corrective Action Plans

5. The Quality First Director and Senior Director for Early Learning, CPO, and/or CEO will meet with the participant and provide a decision on the Request for Appeal.

ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING

1. If attempts to resolve the appeal as above are not achieved, the participant may contact the Office of Administrative Hearings to request an administrative hearing with an Administrative Law Judge. Written requests must be submitted by postal mail to:

Office of Administrative Hearings
1400 West Washington Suite 101
Phoenix, Arizona 85007
Office (602) 542-9826 Fax (602) 542-9827
Website: www.azoah.com

2. If a participant proceeds with an administrative hearing, all Quality First services and benefits, including incentives, coaching, assessment and consultation services, will be placed on hold until a decision is rendered.
 - a. If a participant has a current T.E.A.C.H. scholar/employee, that person will be able to continue receiving the scholarship for the remainder of their current contract.
 - b. If an employee has been deemed eligible for an award through FTF Professional REWARDS, that award will remain valid for the timeframe for which it was awarded.

BOARD APPROVAL

Once a recommendation decision is rendered by the Office of Administrative Hearings, the First Things First Board will review the decision and take action to accept, reject or modify the recommendation. The Quality First Director will notify the participant of the final Board decision in writing.

