

Reflective Self-Study: Instructions for Family Child Care Homes



This document offers information to help Family Child Care Providers during the reflective self-study process. Specific information and suggestions are provided for each of the required steps for you to consider and use as fits with your program. The Reflective Self-Study should be completed before the start date of your Modified Assessment window.

What is the Reflective Self-Study, why is it needed now, and how is it different from the self-study FCCHs already have to do?

It is a close look at current practices for individuals who help care for children. Reflection and planning on how to improve practices to offer the highest quality possible to children and families are also parts of this self-study process. It is needed now as part of NC's Temporary Assessment Process and focuses on areas that cannot be observed by assessors due to the current health restrictions.

For the self-study starting at the 2 pt. level FCCH providers choose how and what to focus on related to their program and the FCCERS-R over a 3-month period. For the Reflective Self-Study starting at the 3 pt. level there are specific steps and worksheets that must be completed; it can occur in a 1-month period, but can be longer. Any activities completed for the Reflective Self-Study can be applied to the existing self-study requirement, but simply completing it in 1 month will not satisfy the current self-study requirement starting at the 2-pt. level. So, if you would like to begin the Reflective Self-Study earlier and let it extend over the 3-month period before your consultant submits the assessment request to NCRLAP that is fine, and it can count for both processes if the steps and forms described in the rest of this document are completed. Alternatively, you may want to engage in other self-study activities first, and build on these by completing the Reflective Self-Study once the assessment request is submitted.

Both self-study processes encourage FCCH providers to use the Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale, Revised Edition (FCCERS-R) to identify how current practices relate to the developmentally appropriate practices considered in the scale's requirements in specific areas. The Reflective Self-Study responses can be used to identify areas of strength and areas needing change. This can provide a foundation for goal-setting. Over time, continued use of such a process provides meaningful documentation of changes that occur to meet goals you set.

How do I get started on this process?

There is a free webinar for FCCH Providers about the Temporary Assessment Process, that includes specific information about the Reflective Self-Study. This is optional, but highly recommended before getting started, to help build understanding of the process and get tips for getting started on the worksheets. It is free of charge and completion earns one contact hour of training credit. Register and view anytime at ncrlap.org.

There is additional information in the remainder of this document, so read it entirely. There are other resources about the Temporary Assessment Process available at ncrlap.org. If your Modified Assessment is already scheduled, you will receive much of the available information in the scheduling packet as well.

I have an assistant or second provider in my FCCH, do they need to be involved?

That is your decision based on the specific role that person has in your program. Including others that work with the children is likely to be helpful in building a shared understanding of expectations and consistency in the practices that are used. Even if others are involved, you are the person who completes and signs the verification form, guaranteeing the process was fully completed.

Step 1: Week 1



Review information about the process and expectations, including the timeline. Make sure you have materials needed for this process including the FCCERS-R and all three worksheets. When this has occurred, document the date(s) on the Reflective Self-Study Verification Form.

Make sure you:

1. Read this document entirely.
2. Review available information about the process, such as an overview, why it is needed, and the timeline. Much of this information is included in this document and additional information can be found in various documents posted at ncrlap.org and included in your scheduling packet. Watching the webinar that was previously mentioned will also provide you with this information.
3. Have access to the Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale-Revised Edition (FCCERS-R) and it is the spiral bound revised edition published in 2007.
4. Have a copy of all three “Thinking More About” worksheets (Language/Interactions, Personal Care Routines, and Program Structure).
5. You may also want to check out information on the North Carolina Rated License Assessment Project (NCRLAP) website (ncrlap.org) that will also be helpful in learning more about the FCCERS-R or addressing questions as you move through the process.
 - Free webinar about the Temporary Assessment Process, including details about the Reflective Self-Study (earns 1 contact hour upon completion). ****Please note this is optional, but highly recommended. Information is included that will be helpful to providers when completing the worksheets, in addition to understanding more about the process.**
 - Free webinar for the FCCERS-R (earns 1 contact hour)
 - Additional resources, including documents and videos about various FCCERS-R topics.



Step 2: Weeks 1-4



Complete the three “Thinking More About” worksheets during Step 2 at a rate of approximately one per week. The total time to complete one worksheet is estimated to be around 2-4 hours. The worksheets may be easier or more difficult for different individuals, and you will determine your own pace, while still making sure to complete all of the worksheets before the Modified Assessment window begins.

Key points:

1. It is important to refer to the FCCERS-R along with the most recent NC Additional Notes, while completing the worksheets.
- We know that current health restrictions may alter some usual practices; therefore, report on what you are currently doing unless a question refers to pre-pandemic practices specifically.
- The purpose of the Reflective Self-Study is to build understanding of current practices; remember, this is not about a “right answer” but rather an honest reflection of what is done every day. The answers provided will not be evaluated by NCRLAP.
- At times questions can seem repetitive. This means the topic appears multiple times in the scale and are especially important.
- The Language and Interactions worksheet is a little longer and more complex. We suggest starting with the shorter Personal Care Routines worksheet to help become familiar with the process. The Program Structure worksheet is a little shorter and may be a nice way to wrap up the process.
- Since the worksheets are long and cover many topics, working in smaller increments of time rather than trying to complete a worksheet all at once is recommended. This also allows time to think about the topics between work sessions.
 - Working with a Technical Assistance Specialist from your local Partnership for Children or CCR&R, or another FCCH provider can also be beneficial when this is possible.

Step 3: Weeks 3-4



Review the completed “Thinking More About” worksheets again and think about goals and next steps for improving quality. The process of completing the self-study and the reflection at the end of each worksheet allows you to identify practices that may benefit from change. The worksheets can be used to identify and address changes that are quick and easy, plan for changes that may take more time, or recognize barriers that won’t allow for change. Making note of any questions you have will also be helpful at this time.

During this step, you will have a conversation with your DCDEE Child Care Consultant; they can help review your ideas and worksheets, answer questions, and plan further. They will contact you to schedule a time to talk; make sure to return their call to complete your self-study process.

Goal setting can then occur with short and/or long-term goals in mind. Beyond the space for writing included in each worksheet, you may already have forms for making action plans or goal setting that you would like to incorporate. Additionally, the local CCR&R or Partnership for Children may have ideas or forms that would be helpful to use over time.

To complete Step 3 make sure:

- All 3 worksheets are completed and available for the NCRLAP assessor to collect copies of or to scan when they arrive. These should all be completed prior to the assessment window starting date.
- To speak with your Child Care Consultant.
- To **complete** and **sign** the Reflective Self-study Verification Form and have available for the NCRLAP assessor when they arrive.

If there are any questions related to the completion of the self-study, please contact NCRLAP toll-free at (866) 362-7527 or by email at ncrlap@uncg.edu

After you have completed the Reflective Self-Study, you may decide to use the worksheets over time to encourage ongoing reflection about day-to-day practices. The worksheets are posted at ncrlap.org for easy download and can be used at any time. Additionally, there are other Thinking More About worksheets that could also be helpful for use over time. These are for the Space and Furnishings and Activities subscales and were not required for this process because these items are part of the Modified Assessment.