



Procedure for Removal of Pennsylvania Quality Assurance System (PQAS) Approval

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1. Purpose

- 1.1 To identify instructors who are not providing high quality professional development, who are violating NAEYC Code of Ethics, who are abusing/misusing their PQAS approval and/or other actions which are contrary to PQAS expectations.
- 1.2 To remove those instructors who repeatedly violate the terms of PQAS approval.

2. Scope

This protocol is to be used by Regional Key and Pennsylvania Key staff when a complaint indicating violation of PQAS expectations is received.

3. Prerequisite

- 3.1 Instructor's PQAS file
- 3.2 PQAS Complaint Form
- 3.3 PQAS Corrective Action Plan, if applicable
- 3.4 Supporting documentation for complaint

4. Responsibilities

- 4.1 Sponsoring Organization/Department – will evaluate their PQAS instructors for quality performance using the instructor evaluation form, and will monitor complaints and participant evaluations. If evaluation is not satisfactory or serious and/or frequent complaints received, the Regional Key will be notified.
- 4.2 Regional Keys - will review poor evaluations and complaints brought to their attention regarding instructors not meeting the high quality and rigor expected of PQAS instructors. They will respond according to this protocol. PA Key will be notified.
- 4.3 PA Key – will review concerns brought to their attention by the Regional Keys and also act on concerns received directly by first contacting the Regional Key where the instructor offers professional development for fact finding. They will respond according to this protocol.

5. Procedure

- 5.1 Regional Key or Pennsylvania Key receives complaint, investigates claim and documents concerns on the PQAS Complaint form.
- 5.2 If Complaint is identified as valid (see definition of valid complaint) or infraction is identified as one warranting immediate removal of PQAS approval (see specific actions which are identified in the definition), process continues as described below.
- 5.3 There are infractions which rise to the level of immediate removal including falsifying records, criminal activity, forging documents, and other behaviors that seriously bring into question the instructor's professionalism and/or competence in performing the work.
- 5.4 First incident – contact PDO or instructor and share verbal concerns about undesirable behavior. PQAS Complaint Form completed, concerns documented, and form placed in instructor's file at the Pennsylvania Key.
- 5.5 Second incident – corrective action plan is required and PQAS Complaint Form completed and placed in instructor's file. Action plan is kept by Regional Key for follow up and tracking. At the completion of the corrective action plan, a letter is sent to instructor restating the first two incidents and the consequences of a third incident.
- 5.6 If action plan is not followed, the Regional Key and PA Key will gather facts and decide next action to be taken.
- 5.7 Third incident – PQAS Complaint Form completed and instructor loses PQAS approval for a period of time to be determined by the PQAS Review Committee.
- 5.8 A PQAS Instructor may have no more than 1 Action Plan every 5 years. This limitation may be waived at the discretion of the Review Committee.
- 5.9 PQAS Removal Notification, including the Appeal Process, will be sent via Certified Mail/Return Receipt Requested
- 5.10 PQAS Instructors will have two weeks from the date on the PQAS Removal letter to submit an appeal request. If this request is not received in the allotted time, PQAS number will be made inactive on the PA Keys PD Calendar and scheduled events removed.
- 5.11 PA Key will track PQAS Instructors' records of disciplinary action and/or PQAS removal.
- 5.12 List of removed Instructors will include the first and last name of the instructor, birth date, email address, PQAS number and telephone number.
 - 5.12.1 List of removed instructors will be shared with the PA Key and Regional Keys
 - 5.12.2 The list of removed Instructors will be kept on the PA Keys intranet for Regional Keys to access as needed

6. References

- 6.1 Pennsylvania Quality Assurance (PQAS) Procedures and Applications. These are available online at www.pakeys.org.

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- 6.2 Professional Development Calendar online workshop. Provides a step by step instruction for posting events to the calendar. Can be accessed by logging on to the intranet at www.pakeys.org.
- 6.3 Instructor Evaluation Form can be found on www.pakeys.org
- 6.4 PQAS Complaint Form. This can be accessed by going to website www.pakeys.org
- 6.5 PQAS Corrective Action Plan. This is available online at www.pakeys.org

7. Definitions

- **Infraction indicating immediate removal:** falsifying records, criminal activity, forging documents, and other behaviors that question the instructors' professionalism and/or competence in performing the work.
- **OCDEL:** Office of Child Development and Early Learning, a joint office of the Departments of Education and Welfare, is focused on creating opportunities for the Commonwealth's youngest children to develop and learn to their fullest potential. This goal is accomplished through a framework of supports and systems that help ensure that children and their families have access to high quality services. Included in this office are the following Bureaus: Certification, Early Intervention, Early Learning Services, Subsidy Child Care Services, and Regional Certification Offices.
- **Pennsylvania Early Learning Keys to Quality Registry system:** The PA Key manages three related registries which include the professional development calendar of events, a practitioner registry and instructor registry
 - **Professional Development Calendar of Events** – Identifies professional development available to practitioners. Location where practitioners register for professional development sessions.
 - **Practitioner Registry** – This registry is designed to track the professional development history of individual practitioners. Individuals wishing to register for and events posted to the calendar registry may sign-up to be a part of this registry.
 - **Instructor Registry** – A listing of approved PQAS instructors and consultants
- **PQAS:** Pennsylvania Quality Assurance System. The PQAS is a state system for approving individuals to provide professional development and technical assistance to early learning and school-age programs. Individuals are approved for specific content (topic codes) based on qualifications and demonstrated expertise. This system is managed by the PA Key.
- **PQAS Review Council:** representatives will include the Chief/Division of Operations Bureau of Early Learning Services (OCDEL), staff from the PA Key, a Regional Key Director, and a STARS Advisory Committee member.
- **Valid Complaint:** is a complaint that could be identified with visual evidence, corroboration with participant, and/or witnessed by Professional Development Organization/Regional Key/PA Key. Infractions include but are not limited to- sharing PQAS number, instructing on non-approved topic code, not adhering to terms of contract with PDO/Regional Key,

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violating of NAEYC Code of Ethics, or not following intranet /PD calendar protocol. (This list is not all inclusive and could include additional unprofessional behaviors.)

Send to:

Pennsylvania Key
200 North Third Street, 3rd Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17101