

As of the fall of 2023, all publicly-funded programs that serve children ages birth-to-five are required by [state law](#) to participate in the Unified Virginia Quality Birth-to-Five System (VQB5).

This Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document is intended to supplement information shared in the [VQB5 Participation Requirements 2024-2025 summary document](#). Full details about participation requirements can be found in the [VQB5 Guidelines](#), as noted in the section references below.

What do I need to do to participate in VQB5?

Publicly-funded sites must complete three activities annually to meet the legislative requirement. Non-publicly-funded sites who opt-in to VQB5 must also complete these activities in order to receive a public quality profile.

1. All VQB5 participants are required to use LinkB5 to provide information about their sites, classrooms, teachers, and child enrollment through the completion of various profiles. (Section 3)
2. Every eligible classroom must complete 2 local CLASS observations, one in the fall and one in the spring. (Section 4.5)
3. All participating sites must participate in external observations for each age-level served, between August 15 and May 31. (Section 4.6)

What is the definition of a “publicly-funded provider”?

"Publicly-funded provider" means any: (Section 3.1.2)

- Educational program provided by a school division or local government to children between birth and age five (or)
- Child day program serving three or more unrelated children that receives state or federal funds in support of its operations
- Is intended to include all funding sources that support direct early childhood care and educational services for young children - [View list of publicly funded program categories in Virginia](#).

What is the definition of “unrelated children” in VQB5?

Unrelated children are those who are not a direct relative of a family day home provider or lead teacher. A child who is a “direct relative” means a son, daughter, grandchild, niece, or nephew whether by blood or adoption. Only subsidy vendors that serve three or more unrelated children in support of their operations are required to participate. (Section 3.1.2a)

Are publicly-funded programs that only serve school-age children required to participate in VQB5?

No. The requirement only applies to publicly-funded early childhood care and education programs that serve children between the ages of birth to five. (Section 3.1.2)

Are programs/classrooms that ONLY accept subsidy for before/after school care, after hours/evening care, or summer camps required to participate in VQB5?

No. Publicly-funded early care and education programs/classrooms that **only** provide before/after school care, after hours/evening care, or summer camps for children ages birth-to-five are not required to participate in VQB5. (Section 3.1.2)

Are programs that operate on a part-time basis required to participate?

No, only publicly-funded programs that operate full-time are required to participate in VQB5. In VQB5, full-time refers to a program that operates at least 4 days a week, for at least 128 days per year, with children enrolled in classes that operate for a minimum of 3 hours per day. (Section 3.1.3)



What is the participation enrollment minimum?

Virginia law states that publicly-funded early care and education programs serving three or more unrelated children

are required to participate in VQB5. Publicly-funded early care and education programs that have fewer than three unrelated children under age 5 enrolled at the time of the annual registration period (August 15-October 1) are not required to participate in VQB5. (Section 3.2.2)

What if my site opens or has classrooms that open after the October 1st registration deadline?

Publicly-funded sites and classrooms that open or begin taking public funds after the October 1 annual registration deadline are not required to register or complete VQB5 measurement activities until the start of the following program year. Sites that open after October 1 are not eligible for a VQB5 quality rating until the following year. (Section 3.2.1d)

What are the consequences for not participating?

Publicly-funded sites that do not complete the [participation requirements](#) will be out of compliance with the law and may have public funding terminated. The VDOE will take steps to inform publicly-funded programs that they must participate prior to any enactment of consequences. (Section 3.4)

Can non-publicly-funded programs participate in VQB5?

Yes. Sites that do not receive public funds have the option to participate if they choose to do so, with the understanding that support for publicly-funded programs will be prioritized. (Section 3.2)

How can I learn more about VQB5 Participation Requirements?

The [VQB5 Guidelines](#) provide detailed information about observation requirements, quality curriculum options, and improvement supports. The guidelines also provide additional information about VQB5 Quality Profiles, to be released publicly in the fall of 2024. Additional information, webinar recordings, and resources can be found on the [VQB5 webpage](#). Contact your [Ready Region](#) to learn more about how to prepare for the VQB5 2024-2025 Program Year.

Additional questions about VQB5 Participation Requirements may be directed to VQB5@doe.virginia.gov.

Stay up-to-date on VQB5 by subscribing to our weekly newsletter, [Readiness Connections](#).