

Introduction

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Gateways Authorized Entity (AE). We applaud your commitment to providing high quality training for early care and education, school-age, and youth development practitioners in Illinois.

This Policy & Procedure Manual is a resource guide for those working with the Illinois Network of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (INCCRRA) and the Gateways Registry. It is designed to provide information regarding policies and procedures, as well as services offered by INCCRRA.

The statements contained in this manual are intended to offer guidance. Questions may arise that are not directly addressed in this manual; therefore, when further clarification is warranted, contact Megan Barton, at mbarton@inccrra.org for assistance.

This manual, revised January 2026, replaces any previous manuals and written or unwritten policies and procedures covering the same subject.

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I. Gateways to Opportunity and Gateways Registry

A. Gateways to Opportunity

Gateways to Opportunity is a statewide professional development support system designed to provide guidance, encouragement, and recognition to individuals and programs serving children, youth, and families. Resources and services provided by Gateways to Opportunity include Credentials, Professional Development Advisors, Great START, Gateways to Opportunity Registry, the Illinois Trainers Network, and Gateways to Opportunity Scholarship Program.

B. Gateways Registry

Gateways Registry Membership offers a way to track training and education online and meets Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (IDCFS) licensing requirements.

II. Authorized Entity Overview

A. Authorized Entity

The Gateways to Opportunity Authorized Entity provides quality assurance for trainings. This designation provides an option for the trainings offered by the entity to be submitted as Registry-approved trainings. The process validates that the entity's trainer and training selection process meets the criteria established by the Registry. The Gateways Registry Authorized Entity application validates that the entity/agency has established policies and procedures regarding the selection of trainers they utilize and the trainings they offer, and that these policies meet a high standard of quality established by the Gateways Registry.

Once approved, Authorized Entities are approved for three years.

III. Authorized Entity Application and Approval Process

Applicants wishing to become an Authorized Entity (AE) must submit an application. Applications are emailed to prospective agencies that are interested in applying. More information on this process can be located on the Gateways website under Gateways Registry.

A. Authorized Entity Application Process

1. Authorized Entity Application Process

Potential Authorized Entity must complete the following:

- a. Authorized Entity Application
 - i. Primary Contact
 1. The person listed will be the primary contact should the Gateways to Opportunity Registry staff have any questions about the application.
 - ii. Data Entry Contact
 1. This person is responsible for entering and scheduling all trainings via the Authorized Entity Portal and reconciling rosters after trainings are complete.
 2. The data entry contact person must be a Registry member.
- b. Sample Training Outline
- c. Trainer and Training Selection Process Policy
- d. Continuing Professional Development for Trainers Policy
- e. Technology Policy, if applicable

2. Authorized Entity Portal Training

The data entry contact for each agency will be required to take the *Authorized Entity Portal* training on the i-learning website. This training will walk the data entry contact through the AE Portal and how to enter their agencies trainings into the portal so their participants can receive Gateways Registry credit. The data entry contact will need to be a Gateways Registry Member in order to access the portal and to take this online training.

B. Authorized Entity Approval Process

All application materials must be received prior to the application review process.

1. Timeline for Approval

Once the application and all required documents are received, the approval process is normally completed within 10 business days. At the completion of the process, an applicant will receive an email with a letter of notification indicating the organization's status and the Memorandum of Understanding.

2. Memorandum of Understanding

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is an agreement between two or more parties outlined in a formal document. The MOU must be dually signed before an Authorized Entity is officially approved. Once the MOU has been dually signed, the Authorized Entity is approved for 3 years and can begin entering their trainings into the AE Portal.

3. Missing Documentation

Applicants shall be given 90 days to submit missing documentation. If missing documentation is not submitted within 90 days, trainer approval shall be found Ineligible.

C. Authorized Entity Renewal

Authorized Entity status is eligible for three years. Two months before the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is due to expire, a renewal letter will be sent to the Authorized Entity stating all renewal requirements.

1. Authorized Entity Renewal Application Process

- a. Renewal Letter
- b. Renewal Requirements
 - i. Authorized Entity must have presented at least three trainings throughout the course of the current MOU.
 - ii. Authorized Entity must submit evaluation forms from three Registry-approved trainings the Authorized Entity has offered; one set of evaluations for each of the three years.
 - iii. Authorized Entity must complete the contact and data entry person information on the renewal form.

These documents should be returned **2 months** before the renewal date. Within 5 days of all documentation being submitted, an Extension of the MOU will be created and sent to the Authorized Entity to sign.

D. Authorized Entity Renewal Approval Process

Once INCCRRA receives the signed Extension of the MOU, the Authorized Entity will be approved for another three-year period.

1. Timeline for Approval

Once the application and all required documents are received, the approval process is normally completed within 10 business days. At the completion of the process, an applicant will receive an email with a letter of notification indicating the organization's status and the Extension of Memorandum of Understanding.

2. Extension of Memorandum of Understanding

Once an Authorized Entity has submitted all of their renewal forms, an Extension of Memorandum of Understanding will be extended to the AE. The Extension of Memorandum of Understanding must be dually signed before an Authorized Entity is officially approved. Once the Extension of MOU has been dually signed by INCCRRA and the AE, the extension will be good for another 3 years.

3. Missing Documentation

Applicants shall be given 90 days to submit missing documentation. If missing documentation is not submitted within 90 days, agency approval shall be found Ineligible.

IV. Authorized Entity Portal & Data Entry

Once a signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is received by INCCRRA and officially approved, new Authorized Entities (AEs) may begin entering and scheduling their trainings through the AE Portal.

All Data Entry Contacts will be responsible for completing the online Authorized Entity Portal Training before the AE is able to enter any training events into the AE Portal.

In addition, a PDF document is available that explains step-by-step how to use the Authorized Entity Portal. Please visit the following web page to view the Guide to Using the Gateways Registry Authorized Entity Portal.

<https://inccrra.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/articles/205024789-Guide-to-Using-the-Gateways-Registry-Authorized-Entity-Portal>

A. Setting Up Training Courses in the AE Portal

One of the first steps an Authorized Entity will want to take is setting up courses for all of the trainings the AE will be offering. A course must be created before a training event can be set up.

Key information included on a course is:

- Course Title
- Course Description
- Contact Hours
- Language
- Gateways Content Areas
- CDA Content Areas
- Levels of Learning

B. Entering Trainers in the AE Portal

Next, an Authorized Entity will want to enter in all of their trainers that will be conducting trainings for them. Trainers can be linked to their individual training events.

Key information included when entering a trainer:

- Trainer Name
- Trainer Address
- Trainer Email Address
- Trainer Phone Number

C. Setting Up Training Events in the AE Portal

Once the two items above have been completed, next will be to set up training events for each training that the Authorized Entity will be hosting. It is best practice to set up the training events prior to the training taking place.

Key items included on a training event:

- Training Title
- Date of the training
- Time of the training
- Location of the training
- Registration Link
- Registration Fee
- Statewide Online Training Calendar

D. Statewide Training Calendar

The Statewide Training Calendar is a resource on the Gateways to Opportunity website that provides a statewide listing of trainings and conferences, with detail including (but not limited to) dates, location, and trainer name. The calendar is searchable in a variety of ways, including (but not limited to) by keyword(s), date(s), trainer, language, and content area(s).

The Data Entry Contact will denote whether or not the training should be posted to the calendar by checking the appropriate 'Yes' or 'No' box when setting up a training event.

E. Evaluation of AE Trainings

All Authorized Entities will have access to a standardized Registry Training Evaluation Form. AE's must either use this form or provide a copy of the evaluation form that will be used instead. A copy of the evaluation form each AE will use is required to be submitted during the application process. This form should be an evaluation of the training and trainer so that participants may evaluate the effectiveness in meeting their needs.

AE's will provide the evaluation form to participants at the end of their trainings and then collect them. It is the responsibility of the AE to retain copies of the evaluations so they can be submitted during the AE renewal process.

F. Certificate of Completion

AEs are welcome to use their own certificate template.

Certificates must include the following information:

- a. Participant Name
- b. Title of Training
- c. Date of Training
- d. Content Hours
- e. Organization Name
- f. Organization ID
- g. Gateways Registry Training Approval Seal
- h. Event ID

Certificates for Gateways Registry credit cannot be issued for partial credit.

G. Gateways Registry Training Approval Seal

When an AE provides a certificate to their participants, it must include the Gateways Registry Training Approval Seal. This is where the Training Event ID for this training should appear on the certificate. It is also where the AE Organization Number should appear on the certificate.

H. Training Reconciliation of Registry-Approved Trainings

Registry trainings delivered by Authorized Entities shall be reconciled by the AE's Data Entry Contact. Training reconciliation data must be entered into the AE Portal within **10** working days of the training completion.

Required documentation for reconciling trainings includes:

1. Copies of Registry Training Event Attendance Form
2. Copies of the Registry-approved Training Participant Evaluation Form

Appendix A

INCCRRA Contacts

Training Administration Manager: Megan Barton – mbarton@inccrra.org

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Direct Line: 309.557.1862

Senior Training Administration Specialist (SDAs 7 – 16), CCR&R PD Work Days and Trainings, Registry Trainers/Renewals, Registry Trainings: Kayla Cox – kcox@inccrra.org

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Training Administration Specialist (SDAs 1-6), SEIU, Military Events, and Registry Verified Conferences: Renae Friguglietti – jrfrieguglietti@inccrra.org

Phone: 800.649.1884 ext. 229

Training Administration Specialist – ITN Trainers/Renewals, ITN Appraisals, Authorized Entities, and ECE Level 1 High School: Jordyn Thomas – JThomas@inccrra.org

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