

Early Learning Program Quality Assessment and Accreditation Appeals Resource Packet



Appeals Process: Things to Know

The Council for NAEYC Accreditation of Early Learning Programs provides a formal appeal process for programs that receive an accreditation deferred decision. Here are a few things to know if you decide to submit an appeal for your program.

- The [Decision Appeals Policy](#) governs the appeal process.
- Appealing a decision does not prevent a program from successfully achieving accreditation in the future if an appeal has been denied.
- The Quality Assurance Committee who hears appeals is made up by three members of the [Council for NAEYC Accreditation of Early Learning Programs](#).
- Appeals go through a screening process to ensure that all requirements are fulfilled before being scheduled for review by the Quality Assurance Committee.
- The Quality Assurance Committee will be given additional evidence related to the appeal. This may include the final visit schedule; completed forms, worksheets, and tools completed by the assessor during the visit; the assessor's evaluation of the visit, the program's evaluation of the visit.
- The Quality Assurance Committee may request additional documentation from the program and/or request a detailed administrative review of all site visit materials by the Director of Early Learning Program Accreditation.
- The Quality Assurance Committee may make the following decisions:
 - Deny the appeal; the program can reapply for accreditation.
 - Grant the appeal without exception; a new term of accreditation is granted.
 - Grant the appeal pending a re-visit; a new visit is scheduled at NAEYC expense, and a new decision is issued.

Appeal Process Timeline

- Program has 30 days from the date of the Decision Notification to submit an appeal.
- Within 10 days of submission, the program will receive a response indicating whether the appeal has been accepted for review by the council or screened out.
 - If accepted, the program will receive a copy of the completed rubric and be informed when the appeal will be heard by the committee.
 - If screened out, the program will receive a copy of the completed screening rubric and be informed of the next steps the program can take to pursue accreditation. Final decisions on accepted appeals are issued within 60 days of the due date.
 - If the appeal is successful a 5-year term of accreditation is provided to the program. The Accreditation Certificate will be available immediately in the ELP Hub.
 - If the appeal results in an order to conduct another visit at NAEYC cost, the program will be provided with information to begin scheduling a new visit.
 - If the appeal is denied, the program will be informed of the next steps the program can take to pursue accreditation.

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Appeal Requirements

- The appeal must be received within 30-days of the deferred decision.
- The appeal must not be more than five single-sided pages in total length.
 - Licensing and legal documentation is not counted toward this limit.
 - The Quality Assurance Committee reserves the right to request additional documentation when deemed necessary.
- The appeal may not include new information related to the assessment that was not present or given to the assessor during the site visit.
- The appeal must address the specific scoring requirements that the program did not meet.

The appeal must address the specific [Application Protocol](#) or [Site Visit Protocol](#), [policy](#), or procedures that NAEYC or the assigned assessor(s) did not follow and/or the specific factual errors on the part of NAEYC or the assigned assessor(s) which resulted in the deferred accreditation decision.

If these requirements are not met, the appeal will not be forwarded to the Quality Assurance Committee for consideration. If you have any questions, please contact the Quality Assurance team at qualityassurance@naeyc.org.

A sample of the rubric used to screen appeals is included in this resource packet. Use this sample as a guide when creating and submitting your appeal. Examples appeals have also been provided to show how to successfully address these requirements.

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Sample Rubric for Accreditation Decision Appeals

Criteria	Adequate	Unsatisfactory
Timeliness <i>Date of Decision Notification:</i> <i>Date of Submission:</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> The appeal was received by the 30-day due date.	<input type="checkbox"/> The appeal was not received by the 30-day due date.
Length <i>Total pages:</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> The appeal totals five single-sided pages or less	<input type="checkbox"/> The appeal is more than five single-sided pages in length.
Relevance	<input type="checkbox"/> The appeal addresses the reason(s) the program failed the scoring (the failed required item(s), standard(s), classroom(s), and/or overall score) in the Accreditation Decision Report.	<input type="checkbox"/> The appeal addresses assessment items, standards, classes, or sources of evidence that are unrelated to the specific reason(s) the program failed the scoring in the Accreditation Decision Report.
Policies and/or Procedures	<input type="checkbox"/> The appeal identifies at least one aspect of the Site Visit Protocol or Early Learning Program Accreditation Policy which was not followed by NAEYC or the assessor(s). AND/OR <input type="checkbox"/> The appeal provides a detailed description of at least one factual error or mistake in how the Site Visit Protocol or Early Learning Program Accreditation Policy was followed by NAEYC or the assigned assessor(s).	<input type="checkbox"/> The appeal does not identify at least one aspect of the Site Visit Protocol or Early Learning Program Accreditation Policy which was not followed by NAEYC or the assessor(s). AND <input type="checkbox"/> The appeal does not provide a detailed description of at least one factual error or mistake in how the Site Visit Protocol or Early Learning Program Accreditation Policy was followed by NAEYC or the assigned assessor(s).
Documentation Integrity	<input type="checkbox"/> The appeal asserts that any documentation (e.g., written policies, photographs, lesson plans) submitted for consideration appears exactly as it was presented to the assessor(s) at the time of the site visit.	<input type="checkbox"/> The appeal includes documentation which was not available to the assessor at the time of the site visit. AND/OR <input type="checkbox"/> The appeal includes documentation which has been changed since the site visit.
Comments		

- ☐ The appeal has been screened out and will not be heard by the Quality Assurance Committee.
- ☐ The appeal has been accepted and will be reviewed by the Quality Assurance Committee on [MONTH/YEAR] appeals agenda.

January 15, 2023

I am appealing my program's deferred accreditation decision (received January 3, 2023) on the grounds that the NAEYC assessor failed to follow NAEYC Early Learning Program Accreditation's established policies and/or procedures.

Attached are the visit schedules left with our program following each visit clearly indicating the assessor's name and the date the visits were conducted. These have not been altered and are presented exactly as they were provided to us in the Visit Completion Packet email received at the end of both visits.

Therefore, the NAEYC assessor failed to follow established policies and/or procedures and this has affected our outcome of accreditation due to perceived and/or real bias against our program causing our program to fail multiple standards (5 and 9) and the overall pass rate required to renew our accreditation.

- **Timeliness:** The appeal submission date is less than 30 days from the deferred accreditation decision date.

- ■ ■ ● **Policies/Procedures:** The specific policy/procedure relevant to the appeal is identified and connected to a specific action by NAEYC in how the visit was conducted.

- Documentation Integrity: Document supports the claim and is unaltered.

- **Relevance:** The specific areas the program has failed are addressed in clearly connected to the reason for the appeal.

- **Length:** The appeal letter including the two attached documents is less than the 5-page maximum.

Accreditation Decision Appeal Sample Letter

November 15, 2022

Dear Appeals Committee,

We are appealing our program's deferred accreditation decision report which was received on October 19th, 2022 based on the following from the site visit protocol.

On page 12, it states that at least one class is observed at each site in multi-site programs. We are a multi-site program with three locations at Beaver Creek, Hawthorne, and Pinkney Way. Our assessor did not visit our Hawthorne location. Therefore, NAEYC failed to follow its established policies and/or procedures and affected the outcome of our accreditation.

On the attached schedule (as left with us by the assessor), you can see that the assessor conducted 4 Observations. We have also attached a screenshot of our class profile in the portal (unchanged since before the visit) which indicates the location of each classroom. Per the protocol, at least one of these should have taken place at the Hawthorne location. These observations all took place at the Beaver Creek and Pinkney Way locations.

It is our belief that had one of the observations taken late at Hawthorne, rather than the other two locations, which had already been sampled, we would have met the minimum overall pass rate of 80%, rather than falling just below at 77%.

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- Documentation Integrity: Document supports the claim and is unaltered.

- **Relevance:** The specific areas the program has failed are addressed in clearly connected to the reason for the appeal.

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