



# Better Beginnings Certification Process



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## Overview of the Certification Process

The Better Beginnings certification process consists of eight steps. Certification is valid for three years. You should start working on your application about one year before you plan to submit it.

1. About 12 months before you plan to apply, begin the **Better Beginnings Application Checklist** and email the **Intent to Apply** form to [BetterBeginnings@AState.edu](mailto:BetterBeginnings@AState.edu).
2. Prepare for environmental assessment(s) and program review.
3. Gather documentation.
4. Complete environmental assessment(s) and program review.
5. Review the **Better Beginnings Application Checklist**.
6. Submit your Better Beginnings Application for the level for which you have qualified in the ELS portal.
7. Receive notification of Better Beginnings level assigned.
8. Maintenance, growth through technical assistance and training, and Recertification.

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Providers must complete all requirements (including ERS Environmental Assessments and PAS Program Reviews) before submitting their Better Beginnings application in the ELS portal. All documentation must be uploaded before the application is submitted or the application will not be accepted.

Certification will be awarded based on the highest level of requirements met. Certification is valid for three years. It is recommended that programs request Technical assistance (TA) for classroom support in the two years after certification and attend a PAS portfolio cohort a year before the application is due.

To access the ELS portal go here: [https://ardhslicensing.my.site.com/elicensing/s/?language=en\\_US](https://ardhslicensing.my.site.com/elicensing/s/?language=en_US)

If you need help accessing or completing the application in the ELS portal, or other technical support related to the online application contact your Better Beginning Specialist at DCCECE, 501-320-6161, [BetterBeginnings@dhs.arkansas.gov](mailto:BetterBeginnings@dhs.arkansas.gov).

For more information on requirements and the application process go to: [https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1LWOUqOhojtroGkIv3UXf003zESI\\_Oupm?usp=share\\_link](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1LWOUqOhojtroGkIv3UXf003zESI_Oupm?usp=share_link)