

# ExceleRate Illinois Quality Recognition and Improvement System

## Environment Rating Scale (ERS) training in Illinois

July 2025

### Illinois ERS training:

Historically, Illinois has been able to offer providers an Introduction to ERS training since 2007. This training has been part of ExceleRate-approved training for ExceleRate Illinois participation in the assessment path at Bronze, Silver, and Gold for licensed child care centers and licensed family child care homes.

Upon paid registration for Introduction to ERS training, the on-site program administrator would receive the Scales applicable to the ages of children for which the program is licensed. Teaching staff would receive the Scale applicable to the ages served in their classroom.

Illinois no longer offers Introduction to ERS training as of June 30, 2025.

It is important to note that many states refer their providers to the Environment Rating Scales Institute (ERSI) training or other entities tied to the individual state's Registry rather than creating/offering ERS training within their state. The process outlined below is the plan for how Illinois is trying to structure a more feasible, long-term solution for Illinois child care providers.

### 1. What will ERS training look like in Fiscal Year 2026 (July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026)?

Recently Illinois made a copyright request to Teachers College Press (ERS' publishing entity) regarding the inclusion of ITERS-3 in Illinois' existing Introduction to ERS training. Illinois' request was denied. Therefore, we have taken this time to reset and determine how best to offer ERS training within Illinois on an on-going basis, knowing that the Scales are updated somewhat regularly, and additional iterations of the Scales will be coming in the future.

Illinois' solution is outlined below.

- Illinois will offer a free **How ERS Works** Zoom meeting (*in English and Spanish*) through INCCRRA on a monthly schedule statewide. This training will include family child care providers, as well as center-based providers.
  - *We have not yet determined the schedule, but initially in the first few months, it will be offered more frequent.*
  - *The training schedule will be announced, and dates will be posted, on the Gateways Statewide training calendar.*
  - *This will allow for more accessible training to staff, eliminating the need to wait for an individual Agency to offer the introductory training.*
- Training is anticipated to be no longer than two hours. It will cover the basics of the ERS-general terminology used across all Scales, self-assessment, a quick touch on scoring, website resources available, specialist technical assistance available, etc. There will be minimal individual Scale specifics included. Again, this will be helpful as we move to new iterations of Scale(s) in the future.
- The Scale(s) will **not** be provided to participants upon registration to **How ERS Works** training. Instead, the program/participant should use the money they would have spent on ERS training registration toward purchasing the correct Scale(s) for the ages they serve.

Scales can be purchased through many entities. A few have been included below:

Teachers College Press [www.tcpres.com/ERS-overview](http://www.tcpres.com/ERS-overview)

Kaplan [www.kaplanco.com](http://www.kaplanco.com)

Environment Rating Scale Institute [www.ersi.info/scales](http://www.ersi.info/scales)

- **How ERS Works** will be the title of the training; this will be the new Illinois option for ExceleRate- approved training on ERS. There will be trainers selected to train on this curriculum via Zoom statewide. This training will not be offered through the local Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R).
- Because this is a new training process for everyone, state administrators will be monitoring usage, scheduling, participant feedback, etc for potential process changes in the future.
- The expectation for any Illinois ERS training is that to receive credit, participants must be on-time and present the entire training, the camera is on, and the participant is in view, etc.

## 2. When will the *How ERS Works* training be available in Illinois?

The goal is August/September 2025.

## 3. What training, if any, will be available on individual Scales in Illinois?

The plan in Illinois is to have individual Scale trainings (via Zoom webinar) for ITERS-3, ECERS-3 and FCCERS-3.

**How ERS Works** - will be the step 1 training to complete, before taking the step 2 training below, which applies to the ages you care for.

**Making ITERS-3 Work for You** - This training will be offered to current ExceleRate centers in August and September 2025. Registration information will be sent to the ExceleRate on-site contact in July.

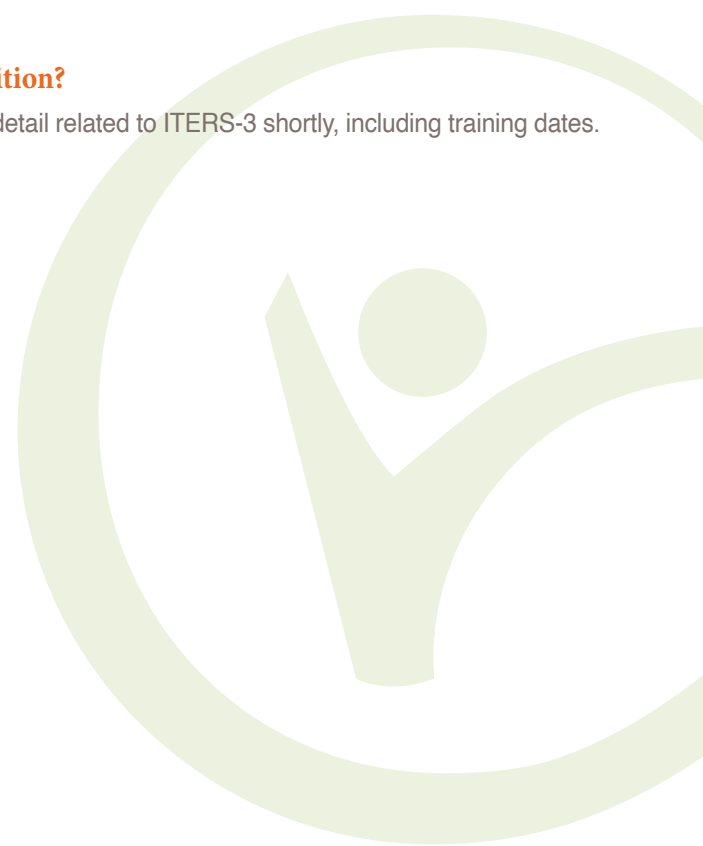
**Making ECERS-3 Work for You** - This training will be offered in Fall/Winter 2025. This training was previously offered several times in 2021-2023.

**Making FCCERS-3 Work for You** - This training will be offered in the future. As we know that a transition to FCCERS-3 is on the horizon, we will not be creating a FCCERS-R module.

Each individual Scale training will be offered by the McCormick Institute for Early Childhood at National Louis University (NLU) via Zoom webinar, recorded and available on I-learning for staff to complete as their schedule allows. Staff will log in to I-learning, complete the training and it will populate to the individual's Professional Development Record (PDR).

## 4. When will more information be shared specific to ITERS-3 transition?

ExceleRate centers (through the assessment path) will receive additional detail related to ITERS-3 shortly, including training dates.



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1226 Towanda Ave. | Bloomington, IL 61701 | p. 866.697.8278 | f. 309.828.1808 | [www.exceletrateillinois.com](http://www.exceletrateillinois.com)

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