



First 5 California CARES Plus Program

Lead Agency Responsibilities in the *Classroom Assessment Scoring System™* (CLASS™) In-Person Observation Process

Scheduling and completing CLASS™ in-person observations for CARES Plus participants must be accomplished within a short timeframe. It is essential that Lead Agencies, the Child Development Training Consortium (CDTC), and First 5 California staff work collaboratively to ensure the timely completion of this essential data collection process. This Notification outlines the process for the CLASS™ in-person observation, along with the Lead Agency's role in that process.

Selection for In-Person Observation

September 15, 2013, is the deadline for Lead Agencies to submit initial enrollment data into PROOF. Approximately one week later:

- First 5 California will select participants for the CLASS™ in-person observations.
- CDTC will mail every selected participant a letter (N.OBS.1 – *CARES Plus Participant Selected for CLASS™ Observation*) explaining the observation, the Notifications for their site Director/Owner and families, and a request to inform their Lead Agency if the observer does not contact them within two weeks.
- First 5 California will send each Lead Agency a list of CARES Plus participants selected for in-person observations.

Lead Agencies are asked to:

1. Contact each selected participant within five working days after being notified by First 5 California.
2. Explain that:
 - Participation in the observation process is a requirement of the CARES Plus program.
 - First 5 California will provide a reliable CLASS™ observer to perform the CLASS™ in-person observations of selected participants in fall and spring.
 - The fall observation must be completed by **November 15, 2013**.
 - The spring observation must be completed by **May 15, 2014**.
3. Confirm the participant's contact information and the ages of children served.
4. Update PROOF with any changes to participant information. It is imperative that contact information is accurate to facilitate the observer's ability to reach the participant.



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Scheduling the In-Person Observation

The observer has been instructed to contact the participant within two weeks to schedule the in-person observation. Contact Maria Guzman (guzmanma@yosemite.edu) at CDTC if a participant informs you they have not been contacted by their observer within the two-week period.

Exemption from In-Person Observation Requirement

The CLASSTM in-person observation is a requirement of the CARES Plus Program. The data collected as part of the CLASSTM in-person observation process are essential to the CARES Plus Program evaluation. All participants should have the *First 5 California CARES Plus Program Facility Director/Owner Authorization for In-Person Observation* (Form P.1.A) on file with their application.

If a participant's site Director/Owner will not allow the participant to be observed, or if an unexpected event occurs which prevents the participant from following through with this requirement, the participant must request an exemption from the in-person observation requirement of CARES Plus.

Lead Agencies are asked to:

1. Provide the *Request for Exemption from In-Person Observation Requirement* (Form LA.2) to any participant who is unable to comply with the CLASSTM in-person observation requirement. It is the participant's responsibility to complete and return the form to First 5 California. First 5 California will review the information and make a decision regarding the participant's status. Lead Agencies will be notified of the decision by e-mail.
2. Inform the participant of First 5 California's decision regarding the exemption request. Participants approved by First 5 California for exemption from the in-person observation requirement may be eligible to continue participating in the local CARES Plus program, at the county's discretion.

If you have any questions about the CLASSTM in-person observations, please send them to CARESPPlus@ccfc.ca.gov.