
		<b>DHS, Head Start Program Policy</b>			
<b>ERSEA 1</b>					
<b>SUBJECT</b>		Determining Community Strengths & Needs			
<b>REFERENCE</b>		Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance			
<b>EFFECTIVE</b>		02/17/2017			
<b>Policy Council Approval: 1/24/17</b>		<b>Policy Council Revision: 1/24/17</b>		<b>Governing Body Approval: 2/20/17</b>	
				<b>Governing Body Revision: 2/20/17</b>	
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**Policy:**

The Head Start Program will perform a Community Assessment once over the five year grant period with annual updates. Results from the Community Assessment will be used to ensure community strengths, needs, and resources are identified and adequately integrated. Results from the Community Assessment and updates will be analyzed, as required by Head Start Performance Standards.

Results from the Community Assessment will be used annually to reassess long and short range objectives; service areas, program options and services provided; center locations; and criteria that assign eligibility priority to children and families.

The Community Assessment and updates will include information related to:



- Number of children experiencing homelessness and foster care
- Availability of publicly-funded full day pre-kindergarten
- Availability of early childhood programs in the community
- Availability of state and other publicly funded preschool
- Demographic data on Head Start eligible children and families
- Children with disabilities, including types of disabilities and services
- Education, health, nutrition and social service needs of Head Start eligible children and their families including prevalent social or economic factors impacting their well-being
- Typical work, school and training schedules of parents with eligible children
- Child development, child care centers, family child care programs, publicly funded state and local preschools and approximate number of eligible children served
- Community resources and strengths

If resources are determined to be inadequate to meet the needs of the entire service area, the Head Start Program will select the areas that have the greatest need for Head Start Program services.

Community Assessments and all updates will be approved by the Head Start Policy Council and the Governing Body.

**Performance Standard:**

1302.13; Head Start Act Sec. 642 (b) (11) (e) (1);

		<b>DHS, Head Start Program Policy</b>		
<b>ERSEA 2</b>				
<b>SUBJECT</b>	Recruitment of Children			
<b>REFERENCE</b>	Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance			
<b>EFFECTIVE</b>	02/17/2017			
<b>Policy Council Approval: 1/24/17</b>	<b>Policy Council Revision: 1/24/17</b>	<b>Governing Body Approval: 2/20/17</b>	<b>Governing Body Revision: 2/20/17</b>	
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**Policy:**

The Head Start Program and Education Service providers will actively search for and recruit families most in need of Head Start services including children with disabilities, those who are homeless, in foster care, English Language Learners, and other vulnerable children. A recruitment plan will be developed each year and approved by the Head Start Policy Council.

Head Start Programs will publicize the recruitment areas to enhance the likelihood that eligible families and children will apply for the program.

Recruitment materials will be available in the applicant’s native language or where possible staff will be available to communicate with families in their native language.

All recruitment materials will identify available transportation services.

Recruitment efforts for the following program year begin in the spring and must continue throughout the year. Recruitment strategies may involve a multimedia campaign, canvassing neighborhoods, billboards, newspaper advertising, parents, volunteers, social media, and referrals with other agencies.

Head Start Programs will actively recruit children with disabilities through a variety of activities:

- Programs will develop recruitment materials which indicate that all children with disabilities, including severe disabilities, are welcome to apply.
- During the recruitment fairs, information will be made available which will inform parents that children with disabilities are served in the Head Start Programs.
- Identify children who are in Preschool Programs for Children with Disabilities (PPCD) classrooms that qualify for Head Start Programs.
- Develop MOUs with the ECI programs in the service area.
- Develop MOUs with Early Head Start Programs in the service area.
- Maintain ongoing communication with districts’ Special Education Directors and staff regarding the status of children’s referrals and services.

- Provide elementary school campuses with Head Start information and recruitment materials.



The Head Start Program Education Service Providers must actively recruit children as needed to meet and maintain a waiting list after the funded enrollment opportunities have been filled. Specific areas may be targeted for recruitment, depending on the centers' enrollment needs, particularly children with disabilities. If a specific Head Start center has a vacancy during the year, and the wait list for those classrooms has been exhausted, special recruitment may be used to increase the number of eligible children.

Head Start Programs, through recruitment events, open houses, appointments, and walk-in services will facilitate the application process for parents interested in Head Start services. When taking applications, staff will complete all applications in Child Plus. Staff will collect all necessary documents to determine eligibility, and will maintain an electronic child file for applicants in Child Plus to include documents used to determine eligibility. Staff will also document all contacts made with the family during the application process in Child Plus. Additionally, staff will provide referrals to community resources and when necessary, other Head Start programs.

Each Education Service Provider must maintain a monitoring system for recruitment and report to the Head Start Programs on all recruitment efforts.

**Performance Standard:**

1302.13; Head Start Act Sec. 642 (b) (11) (e) (1);

		<b>DHS, Head Start Program Policy</b>		
<b>ERSEA 3</b>				
<b>SUBJECT</b>	Eligibility			
<b>REFERENCE</b>	Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance			
<b>EFFECTIVE</b>	02/01/2017			
<b>Policy Council Approval: 1/24/17</b>	<b>Policy Council Revision: 1/24/17</b>	<b>Governing Body Approval: 2/20/17</b>	<b>Governing Body Revision: 2/20/17</b>	
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**Policy:**

The entire application process must be completed prior to determining a child’s eligibility, which shall be based solely on the following categories:

- **Age:**
  - Educational Service Providers must verify age. Children who turn 3 years old on or before September 1<sup>st</sup> are eligible for Head Start services in the Head Start Program. Exceptions may be made for children with disabilities. For Early Head Start, a child must be an infant or toddler younger than three years old. Children who transition from Early Head Start to Head Start are exempt from age eligibility requirements.
  - A child may remain in Early Head Start, following his or her third birthday, until he or she can transition into Head Start or another program.
  - If a child moves from an Early Head Start Program to a Head Start Program the family’s income must be re-verified.
  
- **Income:**
  - Families with an income at or below 125% of the *Federal Poverty Guidelines* may be eligible for enrollment in the Head Start Programs. The total number of families with income from 101%-125% of the *Federal Poverty Guidelines* must not exceed 35% of the total funded enrollment. Families with an income above 125% of the *Federal Poverty Guidelines* may be eligible for enrollment in the Head Start Programs by meeting the Children with Disabilities selection criteria. The total number of families with an income above 125% of the *Federal Poverty Guidelines* must not to exceed 10% of total funded enrollment. Exceptions must be approved by the grantee’s administrator.

- **Eligibility Requirements:**
  - Family's income is equal to or below the poverty guideline; or
  - Family is eligible for or in the absence of child care would be potentially eligible for public assistance, including TANF child only payments; or
  - Children who are in foster/kinship care or children who are homeless are eligible for the Head Start Programs services regardless of income.
  
- **Residency:** Children applying for the Head Start Programs must reside within the service area or qualify under the McKinneyVento Act.

**Performance Standard:**  
1302.12; City Policy ERSEA 4

		<b>DHS, Head Start Program Policy</b>			
<b>ERSEA 4</b>					
<b>SUBJECT</b>		Selection			
<b>REFERENCE</b>		Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance			
<b>EFFECTIVE</b>		02/01/2017			
<b>Policy Council Approval: 1/24/17</b>		<b>Policy Council Revision: 1/24/17</b>		<b>Governing Body Approval: 2/20/17</b>	
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**Policy:**

Head Start Programs will select the neediest children without regard for race, gender, disability, or creed in accordance with Head Start Performance Standards, Head Start Act and the Head Start Programs ERSEA policies.

If a child is declared eligible, his or her selection will be based on points received from the Selection Criteria Point System which is developed from the Community Assessment and approved by the Policy Council. To ensure the neediest children are selected for the program, a minimum of two separate selection events must occur with selection of the final 10 percent of slots happening no sooner than June of each year.

- **Income eligible** - Using the point system, Education Service Providers will first enroll only children whose family income is at or below 125% of the *Federal Poverty Guideline* or those who are eligible for or, in the absence of child care, would be potentially eligible for public assistance; or children who are homeless or in foster care and/ or those with the following exceptions:
  - **Children with Disabilities**- To comply with Head Start’s requirement of having 10 percent of actual enrollment be children with diagnosed disabilities, Education Service Providers must give first priority to children with diagnosed disabilities during the selection process. This priority will stay in effect until 10 percent of enrolled children are children with disabilities and will be granted as follows:
    1. Income eligible children with diagnosed disabilities with a current Individualized Education Plan (IEP)
    2. Over-income children with diagnosed disabilities with a current Individualized Education Plan (IEP)
    3. Income eligible children with suspected disabilities with a current Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) and/ or letter from a licensed professional

4. Over-income children with suspected disabilities with a current Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) and/ or letter from a licensed professional

All IEPs, IFSPs and letters from a licensed professional must be reviewed and verified by the Education Service Providers Disability Coordinator. All supporting documentation must be scanned and attached in Child Plus.



- **Children identified as Limited English Proficient (LEP)** - To place children who speak a language other than English in the appropriate language classrooms, the Education Service Providers may create a bilingual classroom. At the point a classroom is designated as bilingual and, in order to fill all vacancies in that classroom, Education Service Providers may select the next child identified as LEP on their waiting list even if that child has fewer points or is over-income.
- **Over Income** – Education Service Providers must receive approval from the Head Start Program Administrator prior to enrolling an over income child unless the child has a diagnosed or suspected disability. Excluding this priority, Education Service Providers may select over-income children after demonstrating to the Head Start Program they have conducted outreach and exhausted all resources to enroll income eligible children, families eligible for or in the absence of child care, would be potentially eligible for public assistance, children who are homeless or in foster care.
- **Tiebreaker** - In cases where families have the same point total for the same slot, priority will be given to the older child.
- **Bilingual Classrooms** – Children must be determined as English Language Learners to participate in a bilingual classroom.
- **Notification** – Education Service Providers will send written notification to all families who applied confirming whether or not their child has been selected for Head Start Services. If selected, parents will be informed they must still complete the enrollment process before their child is enrolled in the program. Children not selected will be given information on other programs for which they may qualify.

**Performance Standard:**

1302.14H.S Act Sec. 642 (c) (2)(d) (ii)

City Policy ERSEA 5



		<b>DHS, Head Start Program Policy</b>			
<b>ERSEA 5</b>					
<b>SUBJECT</b>		Enrollment			
<b>REFERENCE</b>		Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance			
<b>EFFECTIVE</b>		02/01/2017			
<b>Policy Council Approval: 1/24/17</b>		<b>Policy Council Revision: 1/24/17</b>		<b>Governing Body Approval: 2/20/17</b>	
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**Policy:**

All forms must be completed and any necessary documents obtained prior to official enrollment of a child in Head Start programs:

- **Each provider will be fully enrolled and have all children entered into ChildPlus prior to the first day of school or program year.**
- If a child is determined eligible and the child is enrolled in the Head Start program, he or she remains eligible through that enrollment year and the immediate succeeding enrollment year; however, all children must go through the re-certification process prior to enrolling for a third year.
- Only kindergarten-eligible children with a documented disability and Individualized Education Plan (IEP) may maintain enrollment in Head Start for an additional year. The child's IEP must include placement in a Preschool Program for Child with Disabilities, or PPCD. Education Service Providers must implement a system to document the following statement in Child Plus in the Enrollment Module under the Eligibility Notes for any kindergarten-eligible child enrolling in Head Start for an additional year: *It has been determined that this child should be enrolled in a Head Start/ PPCD classroom. Placement in a PPCD classroom is documented on the child's IEP, and the parents/guardians agree to enroll the child in Head Start for an additional year.*
- Children with a documented disability and Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) may be enrolled in the Early Head Start Program. The Disability Coordinator must implement a system to document receipt of IFSP and upload the IFSP documentation in Child Plus. The Disability Coordinator must annotate the following statement in Child Plus in the Enrollment Module under the Eligibility notes: *Received Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) from (agency).*

**Performance Standard:**

1302.15

		<b>DHS, Head Start Program Policy</b>			
<b>ERSEA 6</b>					
<b>SUBJECT</b>		Attendance			
<b>REFERENCE</b>		Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance			
<b>EFFECTIVE</b>		02/01/2017			
<b>Policy Council Approval: 1/24/17</b>		<b>Policy Council Revision: 1/24/17</b>		<b>Governing Body Approval: 2/20/17</b>	
				<b>Governing Body Revision: 2/20/17</b>	
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**Policy:**

The Education Service Providers will insure daily attendance and absences are recorded in the Child Plus data tracking system. To ensure children are safe, Education Service providers must implement a process to attempt to contact the parent/guardian within one hour of program start time for any unexpected absences to ensure the child’s well-being. If the absences are a result of illness or if they are well documented absences for other reasons, or the parent/guardian has informed the program, no special action is required. If the child has been absent for two consecutive unexplained absences or has multiple unexplained absences, a home visit and/or other direct contact with the family must be conducted by the Family Support Worker to determine the cause and assist the family in removing barriers to child’s attendance.

When direct contact with families such as by telephone or home visit are not successful, the program staff reaches out to families by other means, such as e-mail, text messaging, postal mail, notes sent home or other method.

Within the first 60 days of the program year and thereafter, Education Service Providers must conduct an analysis utilizing individual child attendance data to identify children at risk of missing 10% of program days per year. Providers must then identify reasons for absenteeism and develop strategies to improve attendance of children at risk. Strategies may include direct contact with parents or intensive case management. All efforts and contact with parents must be well documented in Child Plus.

When absences result from temporary family situations that affect a child’s regular attendance, Education Service Providers must initiate support procedures for the affected families.

In circumstances where chronic absenteeism persists and the program has made appropriate efforts to reengage the family and attendance does not resume, the child’s slot must be considered vacant with the Head Start Administrator’s authorization.

When the monthly average daily attendance rate falls below 85%, the Education Service Provider must analyze the causes of absenteeism and determine the systematic issues contributing to the

program's absentee rate. Education Service providers must implement a process, utilizing absenteeism data, to identify program strengths and needs and implement a plan to continuously evaluate compliance of performance standards. The aggregated data must be analyzed a minimum of three times a year to either strengthen or adapt strategies to improve attendance and must be reported to the Head Start Program.



Education Service Providers must support homeless eligible children by allowing attendance up to 90 days, or as allowed under state licensing requirements, without immunization and other records. Programs must give families reasonable time to present documents and work with families to obtain immunizations to comply with state requirements.

Education Service Providers must utilize community resources, where possible, to provide transportation to homeless children experiencing absenteeism due to transportation to and from the classes.

Education Service Provider and Family Support Workers will emphasize and provide information about the benefits of regular attendance, support families to promote regular attendance, and assist the family with referrals for services that will enhance attendance. All contact including home visits made by a Family Support Worker and/or the education staff must be well documented in Child Plus.

**Performance Standard:**

1302.06; 1302.16 (a) (1-3) (b); 1302.102 (b-c)

		<b>DHS, Head Start Program Policy</b>		 <b>HEAD START</b> City of San Antonio Department of Human Services	
<b>ERSEA 7</b>					
<b>SUBJECT</b>		Policy on Fees			
<b>REFERENCE</b>		Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance			
<b>EFFECTIVE</b>		02/01/2017			
<b>Policy Council Approval: 1/24/17</b>		<b>Policy Council Revision: 1/24/17</b>		<b>Governing Body Approval: 2/20/17</b>	
				<b>Governing Body Revision: 2/20/17</b>	
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**Policy:**



Head Start Programs do not charge any fees for participation in the program. Education Service Providers may not request parents to provide any supplies, materials, money, or other items including snacks for special celebrations or events. Teachers may accept donations for special celebrations or events but cannot exclude a child’s participation of events contingent on donations

Education Service Providers may not charge fees for field trips or other activities and events. The Head Start Programs provide adequate funding for all field trips to include parental participation and meals.

The Head Start Program encourages all Head Start staff to follow Education Service Provider district and campus policies, procedures, and guidelines regarding special celebrations and events, including birthday celebrations.

**Performance Standard:**

1302.18

		<b>DHS, Head Start Program Policy</b>			
<b>ERSEA 8</b>					
<b>SUBJECT</b>		Violation of Eligibility Determination Regulations			
<b>REFERENCE</b>		Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance			
<b>EFFECTIVE</b>		02/01/2017			
<b>Policy Council Approval: 1/24/17</b>		<b>Policy Council Revision: 1/24/17</b>		<b>Governing Body Approval: 2/20/17</b>	
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**Policy:**

The Head Start Program and Education Service Providers must develop procedures to address the violation of eligibility determination regulations that include, at a minimum, the following:

- Consequences for staff violating Federal and program eligibility determination regulations.
- Consequences for staff enrolling a child ineligible to receive Early Head Start or Head Start Services.
- Consequences for providing false information or documentation, including possible removal from the program.
- Actions against staff who intentionally violate federal and program eligibility determination regulations.

**Performance Standard:**

1302.12 (L)


		<b>DHS, Head Start Program Policy</b>			
<b>ERSEA 9</b>					
<b>SUBJECT</b>		Eligibility and Determination Records			
<b>REFERENCE</b>		Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance			
<b>EFFECTIVE</b>		02/01/2017			
<b>Policy Council Approval: 1/24/17</b>		<b>Policy Council Revision: 1/24/17</b>		<b>Governing Body Approval: 2/20/17</b>	
				<b>Governing Body Revision: 2/20/17</b>	
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**Policy:**

Head Start Program Education Service Providers must maintain eligibility determination records for any child enrolled in the program. All records must be kept for a minimum of one year after a child is no longer enrolled in the program.

**Performance Standard:**

1302.12 (k) (1-3)

		<b>DHS, Head Start Program Policy</b>			
<b>ERSEA 10</b>					
<b>SUBJECT</b>		Training			
<b>REFERENCE</b>		Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance			
<b>EFFECTIVE</b>		02/01/2017			
<b>Policy Council Approval: 1/24/17</b>		<b>Policy Council Revision: 1/24/17</b>		<b>Governing Body Approval: 2/20/17</b>	
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**Policy:**

The Head Start Program and Educational Service Providers will develop a system to provide training on Head Start and Early Head Start eligibility, Head Start Program Performance Standards and ERSEA policies and procedures that include at minimum the following:

- Annual training for Head Start Administrator, Directors, other management staff, and any staff who determine Head Start eligibility
  - Methods on how to collect and complete eligibility information from families and third party sources;
  - Strategies for treating families with dignity and respect and dealing with possible issues of domestic violence, stigma, and privacy; and,
  - Program policies, procedures, and actions taken against staff, families or participants who provide false information.
- Training for any staff member who determines Head Start eligibility within 90 days of hire
- Training for Governing Body and Policy Council members within 90 days of the beginning of a term
- Maintain all training records, including sign in sheets, agendas and training materials

**Performance Standard:**

1302.12 (m) (1-4)

		<b>DHS, Head Start Program Policy</b>			
<b>ERSEA 11</b>					
<b>SUBJECT</b>		Suspension and Expulsion			
<b>REFERENCE</b>		Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance			
<b>EFFECTIVE</b>		02/01/2017			
<b>Policy Council Approval: 1/24/17</b>		<b>Policy Council Revision: 1/24/17</b>		<b>Governing Body Approval: 2/20/17</b>	
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**Policy:**

The Head Start Program prohibits Educational Service Providers to suspend, expel, or unenroll a child from a Head Start Program due to a child’s behavior. Exceptions to this policy may be considered on a case by case basis. Consultation with the Grantee’s Mental Health Coordinator and Education Service Provider must be conducted to determine if the child’s enrollment presents a safety threat to the child or other enrolled children. These exceptions must be submitted to the Head Start Administrator and approved prior to any action.

**Performance Standard:**

1302.17 (a) (b)