

Head Start Monthly Report May 2022

Conduct of Responsibilities –

Each Head Start agency shall ensure the sharing of accurate and regular information for use by the **Governing Body and Policy Council**, about program planning, policies, and Head Start agency operations, including:

- (A) Monthly financial statements, including credit card expenditures;
- (B) Monthly program information summaries
- (C) Program enrollment reports, including attendance reports for children whose care is partially subsidized by another public agency;
- (D) Monthly reports of meals and snacks provided through programs of the Department of Agriculture;
- (E) The financial audit;
- (F) The annual self-assessment, including any findings related to such assessment;
- (G) The communitywide strategic planning and needs assessment of the Head Start agency, including any applicable updates;
- (H) Communication and guidance from the Secretary;

In accordance with the New Head Start Performance Standards that went into effect on November 7, 2016:

1301.2 (b) Duties & Responsibilities of the Governing Body -

(1) The governing body is responsible for activities specified at section 642©(1)€ of the Head Start Act.

(2) The governing body must use ongoing monitoring results, data on school readiness goals, and other information described in 1302.102, and information described at section 642(d)(2) of the Act to conduct its responsibilities.

Please see Program Information Summary & attachments to this monthly report for monitoring reports.

A. Monthly Financial Statements including credit card expenditures:

Credit Card: \$1233

4/1/22	MC Fairgrounds	\$51.00	Recruitment
4/4/22	Survey Monkey	\$384	Data Collection
4/25/22	GWL	\$159.60	A. Esser
4/25/22	GWL	\$159.60	S. Stammen
4/25/22	GWL	\$159.60	A. Searight
4/25/22	GWL	\$159.60	K. Kramer
4/25/22	GWL	\$159.60	J. Bell

Program Information Summary

District affiliated events Director participated in include: Board meeting, Admin mtg, Preschool Discussions

External committees / meetings affiliated with Head Start – Weekly Directors meetings, OHSAI Executive Board, OHSAI REDI, OHSAI Futures Group, H2K planning team, Ohio KAN, OHSAI Community of Learners Director, FCFC Steering Committee

Internal committees / meetings – Policy Council meetings, Administrative meetings, Recruitment, NHSA, Discussion with Treasurer regarding OHS reports, Recruitment, , TTA with grantee specialist for Fiscal (D Jenkins), Monthly call with Regional Office (OHS), Student & Staff Calendars planning discussions,

Trainings provided – PIR – Disabilities, PIR – Family Services, Individual Staff Improvement Plan

Training received – Grant Solutions, CACFP National Conference (virtual)

Completed & submitted NHSA Program of Excellence Indicators. The program continues to function under a Non-Federal match Waiver

Education – Education Manager and education staff met with local school district staff to discuss children transitioning to kindergarten in the Fall. Celebrated the Week of the Young Child

Mental Health – Significant increase in mental health referrals for children & families this month.

Disabilities – 25 students received IEP services this year. PIR will require Head Start to report and identify children who should have been referred to LEA and were not due to local practice of not evaluating young 3 year olds & DLLs.

Health – Identified a potential partner for next PY to provide onsite dental screenings for children.

ERSEA – Director stopped accepting children into the program at the end of the month for PY 21/22. Recruitment for PY 22/23 is ongoing.

Family Engagement – Attendance continues to be low for POPs events

B. Enrollment / Attendance

105 children are currently enrolled.

Enrollment by Program Option:

Half Day PY Head Start	41
Full Day School Year Ed Complex	57
Full Day School Year Rockford	7

Attendance by Program Option:

Half Day PY Head Start	87.95%
Full Day School Year Ed Complex	91.79%
Full Day School Year Rockford	88.16%

C. CACFP report – CACFP claimed meals

Month Served	April 2022
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Total Days Attendance	Rockford = 12 EC FD = 15, EC PD = 13
Total Breakfast	1085
Total Lunches	1338
Total Snacks	1049
Total Meals	3472

D. Self-Assessment –

E. Community Assessment

- In Progress

F. Communication and guidance from the Secretary

See attached IM

Attachments to report:

Recruitment Report

ACF-IM-HS-22-03 – SNAP now considered categorically eligible

Verifying Eligibility – Income - Policy Update

Quality Improvement & COLA guidance (Director will be asking for a special Board meeting for approval to meet June 1st submission deadline)

MCHS student calendars

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Esser

Executive Director

INDIVIDUAL CARDHOLDER ACTIVITY

AMY ESSER 5563-7500-2990-4743	CREDITS \$0.00	PURCHASES \$1,233.00	CASH ADV \$0.00	TOTAL ACTIVITY \$1,233.00
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ACCOUNTING CODE:

Purchasing Activity

Post Date	Tran Date	Reference Number	Transaction Description	Amount
04-01	03-31	55436872091130919908603	MERCER COUNTY FAIRGROU 419-5863239 OH P.O.S.: 837033123350001 SALES TAX: 0.00	51.00-
04-04	04-01	75418232091143972480912	SMK*SURVEYMONKEY.COM 971-2311154 CA P.O.S.: 42338588 SALES TAX: 0.00	384.00-
Total Purchasing Activity				\$435.00

Travel Activity

Post Date	Tran Date	Reference Number	Transaction Description	Amount
04-25	04-21	85369432112160205073545	GREAT WOLF LDG MASON - MASON OH 0042160010 ARRIVAL: 04-20-22	159.60-
04-25	04-21	85369432112160205073552	GREAT WOLF LDG MASON - MASON OH 0042160296 ARRIVAL: 04-20-22	159.60-
04-25	04-21	85369432112160205073560	GREAT WOLF LDG MASON - MASON OH 0042160020 ARRIVAL: 04-20-22	159.60-
04-25	04-21	85369432112160205073578	GREAT WOLF LDG MASON - MASON OH 0042160308 ARRIVAL: 04-20-22	159.60-
04-25	04-21	85369432112160205074386	GREAT WOLF LDG MASON - MASON OH 0042162283 ARRIVAL: 04-20-22	159.60-
Total Travel Activity				\$798.00

MERCER COUNTY HEAD START RECRUITMENT PLAN

Month	Internal Strategy	External Strategy	Position Responsible	Costs	Objective	Outcome	Comments
January	Recruitment meeting		Director, FESM, FAs	Neutral	Take inventory of recruitment supplies	Found that there were ample supplies in storage & that not many supplies needed to be ordered	
	Review required forms		Director, FESM, FAs	Neutral	Make necessary changes	completed	
	Update required forms		HS Secretary	Neutral	Keep things up to date	completed	
	Review marketing materials		Director, FESM, FAs, Secretaries, Parents	Neutral	Make necessary changes & updates		Need to focus on Rockford area
	Update marketing materials		Director, FESM, HS Secretary	\$125	Marketing materials to be appealing to target audiences	No cost	Added advertisements in Play Program & Sports Program
February	Order Marketing materials		HS Secretary	\$1500	Have materials ready for 1 st quarter distribution	Spent \$759	
	Run returning eligible student & sibling report in COPA		IT Secretary	Neutral	Provide updated list of children eligible for upcoming program year	Over 40 students age-eligible to return, 20 siblings will be eligible over the next program year	
	Recruitment Meeting		Director, FESM, FAs	Neutral	Distribute marketing materials and list of places for distribution		Advocates check posted

MERCER COUNTY HEAD START RECRUITMENT PLAN

										materials monthly
	Distribute marketing materials at local social service agencies and other entities identified.	FAs	Neutral	Saturate area with Head Start information						
	Facebook & website	HS Secretary	Neutral	Inform visitors that Head Start is taking referrals for upcoming program year						HS Secretary updates Facebook postings
	Distribute recruitment information to COLT members	FAs	Neutral	Provide agency directors with information about the program.						Completed in March with networking meeting onsite
	Begin applications for returning children and siblings	FAs	Neutral	Reach 25% enrollment with returning children						25% - Completed in May
February	Begin applications for siblings	FAs		Reach 40% enrollment with siblings						36 returning students completed, 3 siblings completed – May 2022
	Recruitment presentations to WIC, JFS, Foundations - videos	Director, FESM, FAs	\$500	Educate social service agencies on program						Siblings cannot be completed any earlier than 30 days before 3 rd birthday
	Attend & present at No Wrong Door - videos	Director, FESM, FAs	\$500	Provide materials to other non-profits						Videos not completed
	Recruitment meeting	Director, FESM, FAs, Secretaries	Neutral	Share information, discuss strategy, modify plan if needed						No wrong door was not held
	Identify locations for yard signs	FAs	Neutral	Marketing materials						Used remaining yard signs

MERCER COUNTY HEAD START RECRUITMENT PLAN

Month	Activities	FAs	Neutral	Reach 60% enrollment	Not completed
March	Begin applications on new referrals	FAs	Neutral	Reach 60% enrollment	Not completed
	Review enrollment packet forms	Director / FESM / HS Secretary	Neutral	Have updated information ready for staff	Completed
	Provide school districts with flyers to be sent home with elementary students	HS Secretary	\$50	Identify younger siblings of school aged students throughout the county	FESM distributed flyers to schools
	Support ESC with Child Find Activities	FAs	Neutral	Identify potential eligible children through screening	ESC did not ask for our help
	Support local districts with kindergarten screens	FAs	Neutral	Identify potential enrollees/ students not yet ready to enter kindergarten	Celina did not ask for our help
	Post flyers throughout the community.	FAs	\$250	Saturate the area with visual flyers with tags	\$0
April	Continue to complete applications on new applicants	FAs	Neutral	75% of enrollment complete	Not completed
	Week of the Young Child	All Staff	\$250	Bring awareness to local Head Start program	\$0
	Parent flyers	Parents	\$50	Provide parents with flyers and info sheets to distribute among friends	Activities held internally
	Distribute Yard Signs	FAs, FESM		Yard signs distributed to local businesses	
	Kindergarten Screens	FAs, FESM		Recruit & assist with kindergarten screens	\$0
	Public Service announcements	Director, FESM		Provide articles to local newspapers	Supported through scheduling screens Ads placed in Celina & Rockford
May	Continue to complete	FAs	Neutral	80% enrollment complete	12 new applications completed 33% enrollment completed

MERCER COUNTY HEAD START RECRUITMENT PLAN

	applications on new applicants						
	Enrollment packets printed	HS Secretary	\$100	Packets ready for use			
	Replenish flyers / posters throughout county agencies	FAs	Neutral	Keep information available & current			
	Low income housing applications	FAs	Neutral	Reach families in low income housing units			
June	Contact local kindergarten principals for children not ready for kindergarten	Director	Neutral	Obtain names of possible applicants			
	Facebook boosts 4 weeks	HS Secretary	\$75	Reach qualified candidates via social media			
	Health Screening Day	HCSM	\$400				
	Complete enrollments	FAs	Neutral	100% enrollment			
	Begin filling slots of MIA	FAs	Neutral	100% enrollment			
	Class lists completed	Director, FESM, EM	Neutral	100% enrollment			
July	Staff & families participate in local parade	FESM, FAS, Driver	Salary costs	Advertise the program within the community			
	Public service announcements and paid advertising	FESM	\$300	Advertise the program in local paper			
	Contact no show appointments and families with no phone at addresses provided	FAs	Neutral	Reach families with little to no contact with center			
	Continue completing	FAs	Neutral	100% full enrollment			

MERCER COUNTY HEAD START RECRUITMENT PLAN

	enrollments & organize child files								
	Collect physicals & dentals		FAs	Neutral	Meet requirements				
August	Billboards for advertising	FESM	\$1500		Reach community at large				
	Replenish flyers and posters at local social service agencies	FAs	\$50		Keep information available & current				
	Contact local JFS for foster care children	FESM	Neutral		Locate children in foster care placement				
	Continue completing enrollments	FAs	Neutral		100% full enrollment				
September, October, November	Continue taking applications	FAs	Neutral		Children turning 3 after program year starts or children late for enrollment				



Head Start Categorical Eligibility for Families Eligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

 eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/policy/im/acf-im-hs-22-03

[View the Latest COVID-19 Updates from the Office of Head Start](#)

Head Start Categorical Eligibility for Families Eligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program ACF-IM-HS-22-03

U.S. (United States) Department
of Health and Human Services

ACF
Administration for Children and Families

1. **Log Number:** ACF-IM-HS-22-03
2. **Issuance Date:** 04/21/2022
3. **Originating Office:** Office of Head Start
4. **Key Words:** Head Start; Eligibility; Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program; SNAP; Categorical

Information Memorandum

To: All Head Start and Early Head Start Agencies and Delegate Agencies

Subject: Head Start Categorical Eligibility for Families Eligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Information:

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) strives to ensure that programs minimize the burden on families seeking public assistance and to coordinate benefit programs in such a way that families who are eligible for one benefit program can more easily participate in other services for which they are eligible. ACF (Administration for Children and Families) issues this Information Memorandum (IM) to set forth its interpretation of the phrase “public assistance” in Sec. 645 of the Head Start Act to include the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Adopting this interpretation will make it easier for eligible

families to enroll children in Head Start services by allowing families to demonstrate proof of SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) receipt or eligibility to enroll in Head Start and will simplify the process of determining program eligibility for grantees.

For the purposes of Head Start eligibility determination, the Office of Head Start (OHS) will expand its interpretation of “public assistance,” as used in the Head Start statute, to include SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program). OHS (Office of Head Start)’s interpretation of the statute has been to consider only Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) as public assistance. Previously, we had not considered including SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) in this definition because it had slightly higher income threshold than the base income threshold for Head Start services. However, recently there has been a sharp reduction in families that establish eligibility through the current public assistance definition, so we have reconsidered this interpretation to make the public assistance route more available to families and grantees.

Upon issuance, this IM (Information Memorandum) adds SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) to public assistance to determine recipients as categorically eligible for Head Start programs. Recently, we have found that SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) households with young children have equivalent level of need to families currently receiving Head Start services^[1]. Note that this approach does not guarantee a SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) recipient enrollment in a Head Start program. Programs must adhere to their recruitment and selection criteria to ensure they prioritize enrollment for those who may benefit most from Head Start services. The sole purpose of this document is to make clear that Head Start programs can consider SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) as public assistance for purposes of determining Head Start eligibility.

Enhanced Public Assistance Eligibility to Support Enrollment

Congress established Head Start eligibility criteria in Sec. 645(a)(1)(B)(i) of the Head Start Act to include families with incomes at or below the federal poverty level and families that are eligible for public assistance. Congress also allowed for other categorical eligibility allowances which consider family need rather than income. For example, children experiencing homelessness and children in foster care are categorically eligible for Head Start services.

The interpretation provided herein, that SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) is considered public assistance” for purposes of section 645(a)(1)(B)(i) of the Head Start Act, does not change statutory eligibility criteria. Given the flexibilities inherent in the statute and the duty of programs to ensure they are serving the most needy families in their communities (45 CFR §1302.13), the primary effect of this IM (Information Memorandum) is to eliminate barriers to families who are already eligible for, and in many cases already enrolled in, Head Start services by providing a streamlined way for such families to demonstrate eligibility.

Moreover, inclusion of ~~SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)~~ as public assistance reduces the challenge of navigating multiple federal program eligibility processes and supports better alignment and coordination across federal programs, a factor that President Biden's Executive Order on Transforming Federal Customer Experience and Service Delivery to Rebuild Trust in Government called for federal agencies to consider.

Since 2015, the share of families enrolling in Head Start services based on the statute's public assistance receipt prong has declined from 16% of the total enrollment to just 10% in 2019. This drop represents more than 50,000 slots and comes at a time when there have been vacant Head Start slots. This has caused unnecessary burden for families and grantees during eligibility determinations and needlessly undercuts the use of public assistance categorical eligibility and has impacted the number of vacant slots. The need for public assistance and the share of Head Start participants receiving public assistance has remained stable over the same timeframe despite the decline in programs using public assistance categorical eligibility. Between 2015 and 2019, nearly half of Head Start enrollees were also receiving ~~SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)~~ benefits. The addition of ~~SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)~~ would greatly facilitate the enrollment of children on ~~SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)~~ who have demonstrated the need for services. Furthermore, the interpretation put forth in this ~~IM (Information Memorandum)~~ will reduce undue burden in the eligibility determination process for these children and their families.

This interpretation is reasonable under the statute, and it furthers the important policy goal of better reaching families who could already benefit from Head Start services but are not currently enrolled. The great majority of young children in ~~SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)~~ households are in families with incomes below 100% of poverty; but currently, these families must document their income eligibility, which can be burdensome to both families and grantees. Documenting income eligibility requires a large number of pay stubs or other income documentation while ~~SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)~~ eligibility can be determined by a single document. Allowing programs to count receipt of ~~SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)~~ as establishing categorical eligibility will reduce these administrative burdens and improve access for these families.

Most (about 3 million) of these families, according to ~~SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)~~ data, have incomes at or below 100% of the poverty line.^[2] This ~~IM (Information Memorandum)~~ provides a new way for such families to more easily prove their eligibility. Some ~~SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)~~ recipients (about 600,000) have family incomes above the 100% poverty line but only about 150,000 of these families have incomes above 130% of the poverty line. Those families with incomes above 100% but below 130% of poverty could already be eligible for Head Start services through existing allowances for programs to enroll families above the 100% of the poverty line with demonstrated need for program services.

Importantly, all Head Start programs must continue to use their selection criteria to prioritize the enrollment of the families most in need of services as required in 45 CFR §1302.13. Therefore, the inclusion of ~~SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)~~ is unlikely to substantially expand the number of Head Start participants with incomes exceeding 100% of poverty.

This interpretation also facilitates cross-program recruitment and eliminates duplicative and burdensome paperwork for families who are already eligible for a federal public assistance benefit. Removing the frustration of multiple eligibility processes will allow families to easily access the vital early childhood services that Head Start programs provide.

Implementation of Policy Guidance

Upon issuance of this IM, public assistance includes ~~SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)~~ for purposes of determining categorical eligibility. Head Start programs can use this guidance in determining eligibility and in enrolling those children that met their selection criteria consistent with the Head Start Program Performance Standards at 45 CFR §§1302.10-16. If a program has vacant slots, this guidance can support enrolling additional families.

To verify ~~SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)~~ receipt or potential eligibility, a program would need to examine and maintain a copy of documentation from the state, local, or tribal public assistance agency as required in 45 CFR §1302.12(i)(2). For example, a family could present a copy of notice of approval, other documentation of eligibility or benefits from the ~~SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)~~ agency, or an Electronic Benefit Transfer card with ~~SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)~~ ID number to become categorically eligible for Head Start services.

Programs should consider revisiting their Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance (ERSEA) policies and procedures in light of this guidance. Policies and procedures must always support a program's eligibility determinations to ensure they are meeting all requirements under 45 CFR §1302. Annual review of the community needs assessment at 45 CFR §1302.11(b) will allow programs to determine if, based on ~~SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)~~ recipients in the community, they need to address their selection criteria as previously referenced. Programs may also examine community partnerships and outreach efforts for ways to encourage ~~SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)~~ recipients to apply for Head Start services.

Please refer any questions to your ~~ACF (Administration for Children and Families)~~ regional office.

Thank you for your work on behalf of children and families.

/ Dr. Bernadine Futrell /

Dr. Bernadine Futrell
Director
Office of Head Start

See PDF Version of Information Memorandum:

[Head Start Categorical Eligibility for Families Eligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program](#) [PDF, 83KB]

[1] U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Policy Support, Characteristics of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Households: Fiscal Year 2019. Alexandria, VA, 2021.

[2] Ibid.

Historical Document

Mercer County Head Start Policies and Procedures

P/P Topic:	Verifying eligibility - Income	P/P #:	
Part:	1302 Program operations	PC Approval Date:	5/12/2022
Subpart:	<i>A Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance</i>	Last Reviewed Date:	7/15/2021
Section Title(s):	<i>Determining, verifying, and documenting eligibility</i>	Implementation Responsibility:	Family Advocates
Related Performance Standard(s):	1302.12 (c), (i)(1)(2)(3)(4)	Monitoring Responsibility:	FESM

(A) Policy	<p>(1) A pregnant woman or a child is eligible if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the family’s income is equal to or below the poverty line; or, (ii) The family is eligible for or in the absence of childcare would be potentially eligible for public assistance; including TANF child only payments; or, (iii) The child is homeless as defined in part 1305; or (iv) The child is in foster care <p>(2) If the family does not meet a criterion under paragraph (c)(1) of this section, a program may enroll a child who would benefit from services, provided that these participants only make up to 10 percent of a program’s enrollment in accordance with paragraph (d) of this section.</p> <p>ACF-IM-HS-22-03 – The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) strives to ensure that programs minimize the burden on families seeking public assistance and to coordinate benefit programs in such a way that families who are eligible for one benefit program can more easily participate in other services for which they are eligible. ACF issues the Information memorandum (IM) to set forth its interpretation of the phrase “public assistance” in Sec. 645 of the Head Start Act to include the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).</p>
(B) Responsibility	Family Advocates

(C) Procedure	<p>The family advocate will assist the parent / guardian in completing the income verification document.</p> <p>If the family is eligible for or is receiving child care benefits or other benefits deemed TANF (including SSI and SNAP), the appropriate box will be marked on the income verification form.</p> <p>Each family will complete a residency document. This document outlines the parameters of the <i>McKinney Vento</i> definition of homeless. If the family indicates that they are homeless the appropriate box will be marked on the income verification form.</p> <p>During the application, if the parent / guardian indicate that the child is in foster care or an out of home placement based on court order, the Family Advocate will obtain a release of information to obtain the legal documentation to verify placement. In the event that the child's placement meets the definition of foster care, the appropriate box will be marked on the income verification for.</p> <p>It is the responsibility of the Family Advocate to help secure this documentation once the child is enrolled in the program.</p> <p>During the application process the parent / guardian must provide documentation to prove the family's income or lack thereof. Documentation accepted includes: tax forms, pay stubs, written statements from employers, self-employment disclosures for the relevant time period (12 months either immediately previous to the application date or the previous calendar year tax forms), SNAP eligibility letter indicating family is eligible at the time of application.</p> <p>*Per federal guidance, COVID (pandemic) unemployment compensation / insurance and stimulus payments are not to be counted in income. Staff are to note unemployment on the income verification document and that it is NOT counted in income.</p> <p>If the family reports that a significant change has happened in the relevant time period, family advocates may calculate income based on <i>current circumstances</i>.</p> <p>The Family Advocate will calculate the family's total income. If the total income falls at or below the federal poverty guidelines the family is deemed eligible for services. If the family's income is above the federal poverty guidelines, the family can be considered for services but is deemed ineligible.</p> <p>The income verification form must be reviewed and signed by a parent / guardian, and staff member completing the form. The form is then reviewed for accuracy by the Family Engagement Services Manager and Director.</p>
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ACF Administration for Children and Families	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES	
	1. Log No. ACF-PI-HS-22-02	2. Issuance Date: 04/14/2022
	3. Originating Office: Office of Head Start	
	4. Key Words: Consolidated Appropriations Act; Appropriations; Fiscal Year 2022; Funding Increase; Cost of Living Adjustment; Quality Improvement	

PROGRAM INSTRUCTION

TO: Head Start and Early Head Start Grant Recipients and Delegate Agencies

SUBJECT: FY 2022 Head Start Funding Increase

INSTRUCTION:

President Biden signed the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2022, into law on March 15, 2022. The funding level for programs under the Head Start Act (the Act) is \$11,036,820,000, an increase of \$289 million over fiscal year (FY) 2021. This increase includes \$234 million to provide all Head Start, Early Head Start, and Early Head Start-Child Care (EHS-CC) Partnership grant recipients a 2.28% cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) and \$52 million for quality improvement. The total appropriation also includes \$6 million for Tribal College and University Head Start (TCU-HS) Partnership programs, of which \$2 million is an increase over the FY 2021 funding level to supplement existing TCU-HS Partnership grants.

This Program Instruction (PI) provides information about COLA and quality improvement funds available to grant recipients and TCU-HS Partnership supplemental funding. All Head Start, Early Head Start, and EHS-CC Partnership grant recipients are eligible to receive COLA and quality improvement funding. Grant recipients subject to competition for continued funding through the Designation Renewal System (DRS) are entitled to COLA funds through the end of their current award; however, the Administration for Children and Families reserves the right to delay decisions on quality improvement funding until DRS competition decisions are final. State collaboration grants are not eligible for COLA or quality improvement funding due to the statutory cap on their funding in the Head Start Act.

FY 2022 COLA

Each grant recipient may apply for a COLA increase of 2.28% of the FY 2021 base funding level. Base funding excludes training and technical assistance funds and any one-time funding received during FY 2021.

COLA funds must be used to permanently increase the Head Start pay scale by no less than 2.28% and be applied from the start of a recipient’s FY 2022 budget period, which may need to be retroactively applied. This includes salaries of current staff and the pay range of unfilled vacancies. An equivalent increase must be provided to delegate agencies and other partners to adjust their salaries and scales. Any grant recipient concerned that they cannot increase salaries for staff due to wage comparability issues should ensure public school salaries for elementary staff are included in their considerations.

Sections 653 and 640(j) of the Act provide further guidance on the uses and limitations of COLA funds. Section 653 restricts compensation to a Head Start employee that is higher than the average rate of compensation paid for substantially comparable services in the area where the program is operating. It also prohibits any Head Start employee from being compensated at a rate that exceeds that of an Executive Schedule Level II position, including employees being paid through indirect costs. Section 640(j) of the Act requires that compensation of Head Start employees be improved regardless of whether the agency has the ability to improve the compensation of staff employed by the agency that do not provide Head Start services.

Any grant recipient proposing to apply a COLA percentage less than 2.28% across its pay scale, or differential increases between delegates or partners, must justify its rationale in its application.

As specified in [Personnel policies, 45 CFR §1302.90](#), each grant recipient is required to establish written personnel policies and procedures that are approved by the governing body and Policy Council. They must be made available to all staff. Personnel policies and procedures should be reviewed as they may contain information relevant to this COLA.

Any remaining funds may be applied to fringe benefits costs or used to offset increased operating costs in other areas of the budget. This includes increased costs in rent, utilities, facilities maintenance and insurance, contractual arrangements, vehicle fuel and maintenance, and supplies.

FY 2022 Quality Improvement

Each grant recipient will be allocated an amount of quality improvement funding proportionate to their federal funded enrollment.

A program may apply to use quality improvement funds for activities consistent with [Sec. 640\(a\)\(5\)](#) of the Head Start Act, as outlined in [Attachment A](#), except that any amount of these funds may be used on any of the activities specified in such section. Programs are not bound by the requirements that at least 50% of the funds be used for staff compensation or that no more than 10% of funds be used on transportation. However, the Office of Head Start (OHS) strongly encourages grant recipients to prioritize investing this funding to increase compensation for staff (wages and benefits) to help recruit and retain a qualified Head Start workforce.

Adequate compensation is necessary to secure a well-qualified workforce. Retaining high-quality staff in Head Start programs can promote continuity of care for children and more positive outcomes for children and families. Currently, the low wages of Head Start staff, particularly frontline staff who work directly with children and families on a regular basis, do not align with their qualifications or the significant role they play in shaping child and family outcomes. Staff turnover in Head Start programs has increased nearly every year since 2010, and this pattern has been further exacerbated by the pandemic. Low, stagnant wages are likely a key contributor to increasing staff turnover rates.

The Head Start workforce plays a critical role in buffering the impacts of trauma on children and families by promoting resilience through stronger parent-child relationships, strong relationships between staff and children and between staff and families, and through connections to community supports. However, the formation of these key relationships is disrupted by high turnover rates and lack of frontline staff, particularly teachers, assistant teachers, home visitors, family child care providers, family service

workers, and staff who provide mental and behavioral health services. Increasing staff wages to promote recruitment and retention will contribute to a more stable learning environment for children and more stable connections for families. OHS strongly encourages programs to use as much of this funding as possible to improve the compensation of Head Start staff, particularly for frontline staff as described above or positions that experience high rates of turnover and are challenging to fill.

Lastly, grant recipients should consider ongoing, sustained investments in quality improvements, as opposed to one-time investments. OHS does acknowledge that one-time investments in FY 2022 may be necessary to sustain ongoing quality improvement. Grant recipients encountering other one-time program improvement needs are invited to apply for supplemental funding as needs emerge. These separate requests are addressed by priority and subject to availability of funds.

Application Requirements for COLA and Quality Improvement Funding

Grant recipients are required to request COLA and quality improvement funds through an application in the Head Start Enterprise System. A funding guidance letter will be issued shortly to specify each funding level and additional instructions on how to apply for these funds.

TCU-HS Partnership Program Supplemental Funding

Two million dollars is available to supplement grants of existing tribal colleges and universities funded under the Act to expand their current efforts related to supporting career pathways and degree obtainment for Head Start staff in partnership with American Indian and Alaska Native Head Start agencies. Existing grant recipients will be issued a funding guidance letter and additional instructions on how to apply for funds. Supplemental funding will be awarded by the end of September 2022.

Please direct any questions regarding COLA and quality improvement funding to your regional office. Existing TCU-HS Partnership grant recipients can direct any questions on available supplemental funding to their federal project officer.

Thank you for your work on behalf of children and families.

/ Dr. Bernadine Futrell /

Dr. Bernadine Futrell
Director
Office of Head Start

ACF-PI-HS-22-02 FY 2022 Head Start Funding Increase

Attachment A:

Allowable Uses of Quality Improvement Funds as Specified in the Head Start Act¹

1. To improve the compensation (including benefits) of educational personnel, family service workers, and child counselors, as described in sections 644(a) and 653 of the Head Start Act, in the manner determined by the Head Start agencies (including Early Head Start agencies) involved, to support the following —
 - ensure that compensation is adequate to attract and retain qualified staff for the programs involved in order to enhance program quality;
 - improve staff qualifications and assist with the implementation of career development programs for staff that support ongoing improvement of their skills and expertise; and
 - provide education and professional development to enable teachers to be fully competent to meet the professional standards established under Sec. 648A(a)(1) of the Act, including the following —
 - providing assistance to complete postsecondary course work;
 - improving the qualifications and skills of educational personnel to become certified and licensed as bilingual education teachers, or as teachers of English as a second language; and
 - improving the qualifications and skills of educational personnel to teach and provide services to children with disabilities.
2. To support staff training, child counseling, and other services necessary to address the challenges of children from immigrant, refugee, and asylee families; homeless children ; children in foster care; children with limited English proficiency; children of migrant or seasonal farmworker families; children from families in crisis; children referred to Head Start programs (including Early Head Start programs) by child welfare agencies; and children who are exposed to chronic violence or substance abuse.
3. To ensure that the physical environments of Head Start programs are conducive to providing effective program services to children and families, and are accessible to children with disabilities and other individuals with disabilities.
4. To employ additional qualified classroom staff to reduce the child-to-teacher ratio in the classroom and additional qualified family service workers to reduce the family-to-staff ratio for those workers.
5. To ensure that Head Start programs have qualified staff that promote the language skills and literacy growth of children and that provide children with a variety of skills that have been identified, through scientifically based reading research, as predictive of later reading achievement.

¹ Please note that the language in this document comes directly from Sec. 640(a)(5) of the Head Start Act, except that language has been removed from no. 1 specifying that at least 50% of the funds must be used for staff compensation and language has been removed from no. 8 specifying that no more than 10% of the funds can be used on transportation to align with the FY 2022-enacted appropriation language.

6. To increase hours of program operation, including the following —
 - converting part-day programs to full-working day programs; and
 - increasing the number of weeks of operation in a calendar year.
7. To improve communitywide strategic planning and needs assessments for Head Start programs and collaboration efforts for such programs, including outreach to children described in no. 2 above.
8. To transport children in Head Start programs safely.
9. To improve the compensation and benefits of staff of Head Start agencies, in order to improve the quality of Head Start programs.

[External Message] Prior Approval Waiver Requirements extension for requests related to
COVID-19

1 message

HSES Announcements <notice@hsesannouncements.org>
Reply-To: HSES Announcements <notice@hsesannouncements.org>
To: amy.esser@mercerheadstart.org

Tue, Mar 29, 2022 at 12:35 PM



Grant Recipients,

The Office of Head Start (OHS) remains committed to responding thoughtfully to recipient concerns and providing the administrative relief necessary to complete grant-related activities. One such response included the fiscal and administrative flexibilities outlined in [ACF-IM-HS-21-01](#). While there are several flexibilities still in place, a number have expired. Albeit we cannot extend every previous fiscal and administrative flexibility afforded to our Head Start community, OHS recognizes the impact on recipients and is extending all the provisions that are within our authority. Therefore, OHS is immediately extending the prior approval waiver requirements for requests related to COVID-19 as specified below.

Prior approval waiver requirements. [45 CFR § 75.407](#); [2 CFR § 200.407](#). Recipients may use funds from their current operating awards to respond to and recover from the impacts of COVID-19. All costs charged to federal awards must be consistent with federal cost policy guidelines and the terms of the award, except where specified in this IM. For expenses necessary to respond to COVID-19, OHS recipients may utilize the following waivers of prior approval requirements. These waivers are in effect until OMB memorandum [M-21-20](#) expires and/or is rescinded.

1. *Prior approval for the purchase of equipment* ([45 CFR §75.308\(c\)\(1\)\(xi\)](#)). Recipients may purchase equipment needed to respond to COVID-19 with a value of up to \$25,000 without prior ACF approval.
2. *Budget modifications* ([45 CFR §75.308\(e\)](#)). To allow recipients more flexibility to spend funds as needed to respond to COVID-19 and, when possible, quickly move to reopen closed centers, prior approval is waived for budget transfers between direct cost categories for an aggregate amount not to exceed \$1 million.
3. *Procurement by noncompetitive proposals* ([45 CFR §75.329\(f\)\(2\)](#)). OHS recognizes that COVID-19 has created a public emergency for all recipients. Competitive solicitations may result in delays that impair a recipient's ability to respond to or recover from COVID-19. OHS is authorizing recipients to engage in sole-source purchasing to obtain goods and services needed for COVID-19 response and recovery.

OHS intends to revise [ACF-IM-HS-21-01](#) to address the extension of these previously expired prior approval waiver requirements.

Our recipients have shown an extraordinary amount of resilience. It's our hope that these provisions provide some respite as programs continue to recover and work toward full in-person comprehensive services.

Thank you for your work on behalf of children and families as we continue to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic.

/ Dr. Bernadine Futrell /
Dr. Bernadine Futrell
Director
Office of Head Start

HSES Help Desk

Head Start Enterprise System

Email: help@hsesinfo.org

Toll Free: 866-771-4737 **Local:** 571-429-4858

Hours of Operation:

Monday–Friday 8:00 AM–7:00 PM ET

Excluding federal holidays and
weather-related federal office closures

You are receiving this email because you are established as a contact in the Head Start Enterprise System for communications.

This email was sent to amy.esser@mercerheadstart.org

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Office of Head Start · Head Start Enterprise System · Washington, D.C. 20201-0001 · USA

2022 - 2023 STUDENT CALENDAR

Starboard Sea Captains, Lakeside Learners, Captain's Crew, Anchor's Away

157

First Day For Students
Last Day For Students
No School
Make up Day

M	T	W	T	F

M	T	W	T	F
		6	7	8
		12	13	14
		19	20	21
		26	27	28
			29	

2
4
5
5
5
21

Labor Day

M	T	W	T	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	
31				

M	T	W	T	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	
21	22			
28	29	30		

M	T	W	T	F
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	

10
15
14
10
4
53

Thanksgiving Break

Christmas Break

M	T	W	T	F
9	10	11	12	13
17	18	19	20	
23	24	25	26	
30	31			

M	T	W	T	F
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	
21	22	23	24	
27	28			

M	T	W	T	F
6	7	8	9	3
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	
27	28	29	30	31

9
14
13
12
9
57

Christmas Break
Martin Luther King Day

President's Day

M	T	W	T	F
3	4	5		
11	12	13	14	
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28

M	T	W	T	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	

M	T	W	T	F

8
8
5
5
26
157

Easter Break

M	T	W	T	F

2022 - 2023 CALENDAR

Part-Day Student (Turtle Troop, Light House Leaders) 3.5 hrs / day

133

First Day For Students
 Last Day For Students
 No School
 Make up Days

August					September				
M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
							6	7	1
							12	13	8
							19	20	15
							26	27	22
									29

Labor Day

October					November					December				
M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
10	11	12	13		8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
17	18	19	20		14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27		21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31					28	29	30							

Thanksgiving Break

January					February					March				
M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
		4	5		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9	10	11	12		6	7	8	9	10	13	14	15	16	17
		18	19		13	14	15	16	17	20	21	22	23	24
		25	26		20	21	22	23	24	27	28	29	30	31
					27	28								

Christmas Break

April					May					June				
M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
		4	5		1	2	3	4	5					
		11	12	13	8	9	10	11	12					
		18	19	20										
		25	26	27										

Easter Break

July				
M	T	W	T	F

August					September				
M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
							6	7	1
							12	13	8
							19	20	15
							26	27	22
									29

Labor Day

October					November					December				
M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
10	11	12	13		8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
17	18	19	20		14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27		21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31					28	29	30							

Thanksgiving Break

January					February					March				
M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
		4	5		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9	10	11	12		6	7	8	9	10	13	14	15	16	17
		18	19		13	14	15	16	17	20	21	22	23	24
		25	26		20	21	22	23	24	27	28	29	30	31
					27	28								

Christmas Break

April					May					June				
M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
		4	5		1	2	3	4	5					
		11	12	13	8	9	10	11	12					
		18	19	20										
		25	26	27										

Easter Break

July				
M	T	W	T	F

August					September				
M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
							6	7	1
							12	13	8
							19	20	15
							26	27	22
									29

Labor Day

October					November					December				
M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
10	11	12	13		8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
17	18	19	20		14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27		21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31					28	29	30							

Thanksgiving Break

January					February					March				
M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
		4	5		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9	10	11	12		6	7	8	9	10	13	14	15	16	17
		18	19		13	14	15	16	17	20	21	22	23	24
		25	26		20	21	22	23	24	27	28	29	30	31
					27	28								

Christmas Break

April					May					June				
M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
		4	5		1	2	3	4	5					
		11	12	13	8	9	10	11	12					
		18	19	20										
		25	26	27										

Easter Break

July				
M	T	W	T	F

August					September				
M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
							6	7	1
							12	13	8
							19	20	15
							26	27	22
									29

Labor Day

October					November					December				
M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
10	11	12	13		8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
17	18	19	20		14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27		21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31					28	29	30							

Thanksgiving Break

January					February					March				
M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
		4	5		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9	10	11	12		6	7	8	9	10	13	14	15	16	17
		18	19		13	14	15	16	17	20	21	22	23	24
		25	26		20	21	22	23	24	27	28	29	30	31
					27	28								

Christmas Break

April					May					June				
M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
		4	5		1	2	3	4	5					
		11	12	13	8	9	10	11	12					
		18	19	20										
		25	26	27										

Easter Break

July				
M	T	W	T	F

