

Head Start Monthly Report October 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: **\$2613.08**

9/8/22	\$551.95	Kaplan	EDECA
9/15/22	\$425	CDA Council	CDA
9/16/22	\$50*	Kills Flowers*	Sunshine*
9/16/22	\$1180	Varidesk	Ed Supply
9/21/22	\$406.13*	Scholastic*	Family Lit

Head Start funds not used to cover these costs.

B. 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, OHSAl Executive Board, OHSAl Futures Group, Ohio KAN, OHSAl Community of Learners Director, OHSAl Regional Meeting, Mtg w/ JFS Director to discuss SNAP

Internal committees / meetings – Policy Council meetings, Administrative meetings, NHSA, Discussion with Treasurer regarding budgets, Recruitment, Monthly call with Regional Office (OHS), Contracted Coach, Contracted Kinship facilitator

Trainings provided – Tri Star (students) with Ed Manager

Training received – ODE Homeless Grant

Completed classroom observations, met with team and parent to create a transition plan for a high needs child. Updated policy and procedure to meet new guidance related to COVID.

Recruitment Report – The program continues to enroll eligible children as they contact the program. Annual recruitment plan begins in January. Revisions to the plan occur in December. The lack of Family Engagement staff had a negative impact on the program’s ability to enroll families quickly which may have led families to seek other resources.

Community Partnerships – Director is currently in process of updating MOUs with community agencies. Director has reached out to the Mercer County Economic Development Group to create a new working partnership. The Tri Start Early Childhood Education partnership has been reignited with the addition of Mrs. Diller and support of Director Buschur.

Education – New this year is the implementation of Heggerty Literacy.

Social Services – Policy Council elections were conducted. Our new Policy Council parents are: Joe & Angela Criswell, Brittany Thomas, Marcy Jett, Cheri Ruwoldt, Alicia Larger, Rachel Moen,

Danielle Naugle, Carlie Helmer, Erika Myers, Kelsey Bump, Chris DeBrum, Kara Stephens, Theresa Hittle

Health – 1 positive COVID case (child)

Mental Health –23 children referred for MHC.

Disabilities – 10 children currently being served

C. Enrollment / Attendance

Cumulative enrollment reported is 104

Enrollment by Program Option:

Half Day PY Head Start	44
Full Day School Year Ed Complex	50
Full Day School Year Rockford	10

Attendance by Program Option:

Half Day PY Head Start	87.66%
Full Day School Year Ed Complex	91.83%
Full Day School Year Rockford	85%

D. CACFP report - CACFP claimed meals

Month Served	September 2022
Total Days Attendance	Rockford - 18 Part Day programming - 17 Ed Complex Full day Programming - 21
Total Breakfast	1194
Total Lunches	1436
Total Snacks	1100
Total Meals	3730

E. Financial Audit -

F. Annual Self-Assessment

- Completed May 2022

G. Community Assessment

- Completed

H. Communication and guidance from the Secretary

- PIs, IMs – see attached

Attachments to report:

Director is asking for an approval of the Personnel Policy Manual.

Director is asking for approval of the attached updated COVID related policies.

Director is applying for the ODE Homeless Grant in the amount of \$10,000.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Esser
Executive Director

INDIVIDUAL CARDHOLDER ACTIVITY

AMY ESSER 5563-7500-2990-4743	CREDITS \$0.00	PURCHASES \$2,613.08	CASH ADV \$0.00	TOTAL ACTIVITY \$2,613.08
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ACCOUNTING CODE:

Purchasing Activity

Post Date	Tran Date	Reference Number	Transaction Description	Amount
09-08	09-07	85504992250900012415236	KAPLAN EARLY LEARNING 336-6766737 NC	551.95-
09-15	09-14	55310202258206686000863	THE COUNCIL FOR PROFES 2027725540 DC	425.00-
09-16	09-15	55432862258204617009552	SQ *KILLS FLOWERS AND SPENCERVILLE OH P.O.S.: 00023058430162931 SALES TAX: 3.42	50.00-
09-16	09-15	75418232258156235398514	VARIDESK* 1800 207 258 800-2072587 TX	1,180.00-
09-21	09-20	05123482264600028445087	SCHOLASTIC EDUCATION 573-632-1834 MO	406.13-
Total Purchasing Activity				\$2,613.08

HEAD START - 2022 GRANT

	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
REVENUE													
Federal Revenue	134,000.00			209,636.16					750,000.00		230,000.00		1,323,636.16
CACFP Revenue		6,562.77	8,011.23	7,755.06	11,095.82	13,983.40							47,408.28
Other Local													
Refund prior year exp													
Board advance													
Total	134,000.00	6,562.77	8,011.23	217,291.22	11,095.82	13,983.40			750,000.00		230,000.00		1,370,944.44
EXPENDITURES													
Salary	70,133.46	71,290.15	106,616.29	67,790.29	72,257.28	33,858.81	69,947.30	103,398.92	67,636.10	74,732.56			737,663.16
Fringe Benefits	48,398.76	387.95	47,853.30	108,976.68	45,912.51	400.00	64,753.24	57,517.96	3,521.42	70,038.21			447,758.03
Programming	8,046.00	5,344.65	10,981.70	13,748.78	15,818.46	15,975.67	5,735.16	6,223.88	2,313.79	6,750.63			90,939.50
Supplies	6,378.02	4,039.96	8,012.21	16,648.76	3,333.88	11,524.11	3,992.70	6,213.19	4,635.24	4,802.14			69,580.21
Capital Outlay													
Other Expenditures	1,500.00		621.00	175.00	979.00								3,275.00
PA22 subtotal	134,456.24	81,062.71	174,086.50	207,339.49	138,301.13	61,758.59	144,429.40	173,353.75	78,106.55	156,321.54			
Training & Technical Services (job code 400)													
Training & technical serv (OBJ 419)		3,750.00	1,125.00	1,383.25		5,400.00	1,095.97		410.38	470.50			13,635.10
Staff out of town travel (OBJ 439)		116.99	262.95	194.87	134.44		2,799.09	2,034.73	1,366.70	75.00			7,649.31
Subtotal Puch Service		3,866.99	1,387.95	1,578.12	134.44	6,064.54	3,895.06	2,034.73	1,777.08	545.50			21,284.41
Training & Technical Supplies													
Training & Tech Supplies					33.00								33.00
Subtotal Supplies					33.00								33.00
T&TA -PA20		3,866.99	1,387.95	1,578.12	167.44	6,064.54	3,895.06	2,034.73	1,777.08	545.50			
Return of Board Advance													
TOTALS	134,456.24	84,929.70	175,474.45	208,917.61	138,468.57	67,823.13	148,324.46	175,388.48	79,883.63	156,867.04			1,370,533.31

HEAD START - 2022 GRANT

	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
REVENUE													
Federal Revenue	134,000.00	6,562.77	8,011.23	209,536.16	11,095.82	13,983.40			750,000.00				1,093,536.16
CACFP Revenue				7,755.06									47,488.28
Other Local													
Refund prior year exp													
Board advance													
Total	134,000.00	6,562.77	8,011.23	217,291.22	11,095.82	13,983.40			750,000.00				1,140,344.44
EXPENDITURES													
Salary	70,133.46	71,290.15	106,616.28	67,790.29	72,257.26	33,658.81	69,947.30	103,388.92	31,346.42				626,640.92
Fringe Benefits	46,386.76	387.95	47,853.30	106,976.68	45,912.51	400.00	64,753.24	34,080.72	200.00				350,363.16
Programming	8,046.00	5,344.63	40,881.70	13,748.76	15,818.46	15,976.07	5,736.16	5,233.68	2,724.17				84,399.25
Supplies	5,378.02	4,039.86	8,012.21	16,648.76	3,333.86	1,324.11	3,862.70	6,213.18	4,224.86				64,367.69
Capital Outlay													
Other Expenditures	1,500.00		621.00	175.00	879.00								3,276.00
PA22 subtotal	134,456.24	81,082.71	174,066.50	207,338.49	138,301.13	61,758.59	144,428.40	149,916.51	38,495.45				
Training & Technical Services (job code 400)						5,400.00	1,095.97						12,754.22
Training & technical serv(OBJ 419)		3,750.00	1,125.00	1,383.25	134.44			2,034.73	1,366.70				7,574.31
Staff out of town travel (OBJ 439)		116.89	262.95	194.87	134.44								20,328.53
Subtotal Purch Service		3,866.89	1,387.95	1,578.12	134.44	5,064.54	3,886.06	2,034.73	1,366.70				443.38
Training & Technical Supplies													443.38
Training & Tech Supplies					33.00				410.38				443.38
Subtotal Supplies					33.00				410.38				443.38
T&TA -PA20		3,866.99	1,387.95	1,578.12	167.44	6,064.54	3,886.06	2,034.73	1,777.08				1,171,389.84
Return of Board Advance													
TOTALS	134,456.24	84,929.70	175,474.45	208,937.61	139,466.57	67,823.13	148,324.46	151,951.24	40,273.53				1,150,617.93

HEAD START - 2022 GRANT

	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
Federal Revenue	134,000.00	6,562.77	8,011.23	209,536.16	11,085.82	13,983.40			750,000.00	750,000.00			1,093,535.16
CACFP Revenue				7,755.06									47,408.28
Other Local													
Refund prior year exp													
Board advance													
Total	134,000.00	6,562.77	8,011.23	217,291.22	11,085.82	13,983.40			750,000.00	750,000.00			1,140,844.44
REVENUE													
Salary	70,133.46	71,290.15	105,616.29	67,790.29	72,257.28	33,958.81	69,947.30	103,398.92	31,346.42				526,640.92
Fringe Benefits	46,388.76	387.95	47,553.30	105,976.68	45,912.51	400.00	64,753.24	34,080.72	200.00				350,863.16
Programming	8,045.00	5,344.65	10,961.70	13,782.76	15,618.46	15,973.67	5,795.16	6,223.68	2,724.17				84,589.25
Supplies	6,378.02	4,038.96	3,012.21	16,646.76	3,333.88	11,524.11	3,992.70	6,213.19	4,224.86				64,367.69
Other Expenditures	1,500.00	821.00		175.00	979.00								3,275.00
PA22 subtotal	134,456.24	81,062.71	174,086.50	207,339.49	138,301.13	61,758.59	144,429.40	149,916.51	38,495.45				
Training & Technical Services (job code 400)													
Training & technical serv (CBJ 419)		3,750.00	1,125.00	1,383.25		5,400.00	1,095.97						12,754.22
Staff out of town travel (OBJ 439)		116.99	262.95	154.87	134.44	664.54	2,759.09	2,034.73	1,366.70				7,574.31
Subtotal Purch Service		3,866.99	1,387.95	1,578.12	134.44	6,064.54	3,855.06	2,034.73	1,366.70				20,328.53
Training & Technical Supplies													
Training & Tech Supplies					33.00				410.38				443.38
Subtotal Supplies					33.00				410.38				443.38
T&TA -PA20		3,866.99	1,387.95	1,578.12	167.44	6,064.54	3,895.06	2,034.73	1,777.08				1,171,386.84
Return of Board Advance													
TOTALS	134,456.24	84,929.70	175,474.45	209,917.61	139,688.57	67,823.13	148,324.46	151,951.24	49,272.53				1,150,817.93

HEAD START - ARP GRANT 525 - 9022

	SEPT-DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
REVENUE													
180047 Federal Revenue-C-6	35,759.52	-	-	6,606.40	-	2,595.87	-	-	-	-	-	-	42,385.92
47553 Other Local	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,595.87
Return prior year exp	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Board advance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	35,759.52	-	-	6,606.40	-	2,595.87	-	-	-	-	-	-	44,981.79
EXPENDITURES													
Salary	29,302.76	1,521.19	1,964.41	1,723.57	-	-	-	-	-	1,906.66	-	-	36,418.59
Fringe Benefits	2,352.60	200.00	-	540.96	-	-	-	-	-	1,575.24	-	-	4,668.80
Programming	-	-	-	-	-	1,294.86	-	239.90	-	-	-	-	1,294.96
Supplies	4,104.16	3,222.51	-	29.63	-	-	113.85	-	-	-	-	-	7,710.05
Capital Outlay	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Expenditures	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
PA22 subtotal	35,759.52	4,943.70	1,964.41	2,294.16	-	1,294.86	113.85	239.90	-	3,481.90	-	-	50,092.40
Training & Technical Services (job code 400)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Training & Technical serv (OBJ 419)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Staff out of town travel (OBJ 439)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sublocal Purch Service	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Training & Technical Supplies	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Training & Tech Supplies	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sublocal Supplies	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
T&TA -PA20	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Return of Board Advance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTALS	35,759.52	4,943.70	1,964.41	2,294.16	-	1,294.86	113.85	239.90	-	3,481.90	-	-	50,092.40

HEAD START - 2022 GRANT

	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
REVENUE													
Federal Revenue	134,000.00								750,000.00		230,000.00		
CACFP Revenue		6,562.77	8,011.23	209,636.16	11,095.82	13,983.40							1,323,536.16
Other Local				7,755.06									47,408.28
Refund prior year exp													
Board advance													
Total	134,000.00	6,562.77	8,011.23	217,291.22	11,095.82	13,983.40			750,000.00		230,000.00		1,370,944.44
EXPENDITURES													
Salary	70,133.46	71,280.15	106,616.29	67,790.29	72,257.28	33,858.81	69,947.30	103,398.92	67,636.10	74,732.56			737,663.16
Fringe Benefits	48,398.76	387.95	47,853.30	108,976.68	45,912.51	400.00	64,753.24	57,517.96	3,521.42	70,036.21			447,758.03
Programming	8,046.00	5,344.65	10,981.70	13,748.75	15,818.46	15,975.67	5,736.16	6,223.88	2,313.79	6,750.63			90,939.50
Supplies	6,378.02	4,039.96	8,012.21	16,648.76	3,333.88	11,524.11	3,892.70	5,213.19	4,635.24	4,802.14			69,560.21
Capital Outlay													
Other Expenditures	1,500.00		621.00	175.00	979.00								3,275.00
PA22 subtotal	134,456.24	81,062.71	174,066.50	207,339.49	138,301.13	61,758.59	144,425.40	173,353.75	78,106.55	156,321.54			
Training & Technical Services (job code 400)													
Training & technical serv (OBJ 419)		3,750.00	1,125.00	1,363.25		5,400.00	1,095.97		410.38	470.50			13,635.10
Staff out of town travel (OBJ 439)		116.99	262.95	194.87	134.44	664.54	2,799.09	2,034.73	1,366.70	75.00			7,649.31
Subtotal Purch Service		3,866.99	1,387.95	1,578.12	134.44	6,064.54	3,895.06	2,034.73	1,777.08	545.50			21,284.41
Training & Technical Supplies													
Training & Tech Supplies						33.00							33.00
Subtotal Supplies						33.00							33.00
T&TA -PA20		3,866.99	1,387.95	1,578.12	167.44	6,064.54	3,895.06	2,034.73	1,777.08	545.50			
Return of Board Advance													1,391,850.72
TOTALS	134,456.24	84,929.70	175,474.45	208,917.61	138,468.57	67,823.13	148,324.46	175,388.48	79,883.63	156,867.04			1,370,533.31

ACF Administration for Children and Families	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES	
	1. Log No. ACF-IM-HS-22-05	2. Issuance Date: 08/29/2022
	3. Originating Office: Office of Head Start	
	4. Key Words: American Rescue Plan (ARP); Appropriations; Fiscal Year (FY) 2022; COVID-19	

INFORMATION MEMORANDUM

TO: Head Start American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act Grant Recipients

SUBJECT: Office of Head Start Guidance for Use of Funds Appropriated in the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP) (Pub. L. 117-2); Accompaniment to ACF-IOAS-DCL-22-01

INSTRUCTION:

The purpose of this Information Memorandum (IM) is to provide an overview and guidance on funds made available through the ARP.

President Biden signed Public Law 117-2, the American Rescue Plan Act, 2021 (ARP), into law on March 11, 2021. The \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan includes \$1 billion for Head Start programs.

All Head Start, Early Head Start, and Early Head Start-Child Care (EHS-CC) Partnership grant recipients are eligible to receive additional funds proportionally based on funded enrollment levels.

When combined with the \$750 million in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and the \$250 million in supplemental funds in the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act, the Head Start program has received a total of \$2 billion in additional funding to support staff, children, and families during this unprecedented time.

Guidance

Grant recipients have flexibility to determine which one-time investments best supports the needs of staff, children, and families, while adhering to federal, state, and local guidance. In making these determinations, grant recipients should consider how the use of the one-time funds could meet both short- and long-term needs and determine whether purchasing, leasing, or contracting for services is more prudent.

Uses of funding include, but are not limited to, the following, as specified in [ACF-PI-HS-21-03 FY 2021 American Rescue Plan Funding Increase for Head Start Programs](#):

Reach More Families

Enrollment and recruitment. Now is the time to focus on re-enrollment and enrolling new families. Programs can use funds to purchase services, materials, and technology to ramp up recruitment and enrollment efforts so that, as a program, you are able to enroll the eligible children and families in your community.

Additional weeks of Head Start or Early Head Start programming. Extending the program year or offering summer programming to increase the time children and families receive services.

Family supports. Addressing families' economic security by partnering with them on employment, education, and career goals. Investing in the development of partnerships with local community colleges, apprenticeship programs, and local employers committed to helping Head Start and Early Head Start families find meaningful employment and career tracks. Assessing families' nutritional, health, and wellness needs more frequently. Ensuring materials and resources are available in languages families understand.

Mental health support for children and families. Employing additional family service workers and mental health consultants to assist families with adverse circumstances, including families who may be experiencing homelessness.

Provision of meals and snacks not reimbursed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, including purchasing kitchen equipment and supplies to support in-person meal service.

Transportation. Hiring bus drivers and monitors to allow more trips with fewer children per bus. Purchasing buses and other vehicles that support continuity of program service and reaching families most in need of services, including families experiencing homelessness.

Partnerships to increase the inclusion of children with disabilities. Providing more training for teachers and families and more support for families. Remodeling classrooms and playgrounds to be accessible.

Partnerships to increase the enrollment of children experiencing homelessness. Partnering with local shelters and public schools to identify and serve children and families experiencing homelessness.

Addressing unique needs within their communities, such as providing internet access to support extended learning.

Get Facilities Ready for In-person Comprehensive Services

Ventilation to reduce risk of indoor transmission and make facilities safer. Installing new heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems or other improvements, such as windows that can open with safety measures to prevent falls.

Outdoor learning and play. Purchasing or enhancing outdoor learning spaces, including nature-based learning and outdoor classrooms. Creating play areas and landscape features that promote exploration and discovery in a natural environment, such as plantings, gardens, and “loose parts” (i.e., materials for construction and pretend play), rather than traditional play structures or playgrounds.

Cleaning supplies and services. Purchasing necessary supplies or contracting services to clean and disinfect facilities and vehicles.

Renovations or other space modification. Converting available space into classrooms, modifying current classroom designs with room dividers, or adding well-ventilated modular classrooms.

Additional space. Renting additional classroom space, due to physical distancing, to increase opportunities for more children to return to in-person services. Contracting for slots with child care providers in center-based or family child care settings to deliver comprehensive services.

Other locally determined facility, staff, and equipment or partnership actions that are necessary to safely resume and maintain full in-person program operations.

Support Head Start Employees

Planning sessions for staff. Preparing for a return to in-person comprehensive services starts by ensuring that everyone has the knowledge, skills, and resources necessary to operate effectively. This funding can be used to invest in planning sessions to prepare for providing services now and in the summer and fall.

Staff wellness and mental health support. Conducting employee wellness surveys or engaging in other data collection to better understand the needs of team members. Increasing access to mental health consultation and therapy services for staff, contracting with an Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and instituting a staff wellness program that includes activities such as mindfulness breaks and opportunities for self-reflection.

Additional staff. Hiring additional classroom staff to meet physical distancing requirements or reduce group size. Bringing in full-time floaters to reduce the need to bring in outside substitutes.

Professional learning and development for staff. Providing professional learning experiences on key topics such as equity, diversity, inclusion, bias, economic mobility, trauma-skilled practices, and other topics.

Other personnel costs. Offering fringe benefits and expanding sick leave.

Vaccine support. Providing transportation assistance to vaccination sites and temporary coverage to allow absence from the workplace for vaccination. Offering paid time off, sick leave, or other paid leave for the time spent receiving vaccination and if staff members experience side effects post-vaccination.

Additional Resources

- [Staff Development](#)
- [OHS COVID-19 Updates](#)
- [American Rescue Plan](#)

Relevant Resources

- [Enrollment Forward Campaign](#)
- [Prioritizing Staff Wellness](#)
- [Performance Progress Reporting](#)
- [Earned Income Tax Credits, Child Tax Credit, and Free Tax Help FAQs](#)
- [Investing in Families: The American Rescue Plan](#)
- [Emergency Rental Assistance and Housing Vouchers FAQs](#)
- [Resources to Support Families Experiencing Housing Instability](#)
- [Know Your American Rescue Plan Benefits Checklist](#)
- [Chatathon Live Series: American Rescue Plan Benefits](#)
- [Investing with Families Initiative](#)
 - [Social Media Toolkits](#)
- [The American Rescue Plan Benefits for Families Social Media Toolkit](#)
- [Partnering with Families to Access Benefits Through the American Rescue Plan](#)

Information Memoranda

- [ACF-IM-HS-22-03 Head Start Categorical Eligibility for Families Eligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program](#)
- [ACF-IM-HS-22-04 Competitive Bonuses for the Head Start Workforce](#)

Program Instructions

- [ACF-PI-HS-21-04 Office of Head Start \(OHS\) Expectations for Head Start Programs in Program Year \(PY\) 2021–2022](#)
- [ACF-PI-HS-21-03 FY 2021 American Rescue Plan Funding Increase for Head Start Programs](#)

Please direct any questions regarding this IM to your Regional Office.

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

/ Katie Hamm /

ACF Administration for Children and Families	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES	
	1. Log No. ACF-IM-HS-22-06	2. Issuance Date: 09/12/2022
	3. Originating Office: Office of Head Start	
	4. Key Words: Head Start Workforce; Compensation; Wages; Benefits; Bonuses; Recruitment and Retention; Apprenticeship; Career Pathways; Teacher Qualifications Waiver	

INFORMATION MEMORANDUM

TO: All Head Start and Early Head Start Grant Recipients

SUBJECT: Strategies to Stabilize the Head Start Workforce

INFORMATION:

The federal Head Start program is a nationally recognized leader in the field of early childhood education for providing innovative, high-quality services to the children and families who will most benefit from early education and comprehensive services. In this memo, “Head Start” refers to Head Start, Early Head Start, Migrant and Seasonal Head Start, and American Indian and Alaska Native Head Start programs, services, and staff, unless otherwise specified. The credentials and qualifications of Head Start staff have significantly increased over the past decade, while their compensation has been persistently low. Stagnant wages and lack of comprehensive benefits and wellness supports make it difficult to recruit and retain staff, which contributes to classroom closures and high caseloads for current staff. A well-compensated and supported workforce is essential to providing high-quality services to promote children’s optimal development and family well-being. The Office of Head Start (OHS) draws upon the legacy of Head Start leadership in the early childhood field to encourage programs to appropriately compensate and support their staff.

Head Start staff are deeply committed to the mission of the program and are highly qualified professionals. OHS encourages programs to look holistically at their organizational structure and identify sustainable ways to support and compensate staff accordingly. As needed, OHS encourages grant recipients to consider restructuring their programs as a sustainable mechanism for providing increased compensation and other necessary supports to staff. This requires a balance of effectively providing high-quality, comprehensive services to the highest need children and families while improving staff compensation and supports. This may include consolidating grants, restructuring management or organizations, or requesting a reduction in the overall number of funded slots while continuing to prioritize services to the children and families who are most in need.

During this process, we encourage programs to consider equity issues in pay and benefits for staff. Research shows that, like other fields, there are ethnic and racial pay disparities in early childhood education. We understand these are difficult decisions that will take time and careful consideration of local wages, cost of living, data on current enrollment and staffing, and other relevant information.

If a program requests an enrollment reduction to increase staff compensation, the request should focus on those positions for which staffing challenges are most pressing and are impeding the program from fully serving children and families. We encourage programs to take the time needed to make such decisions through thoughtful, data-informed strategic planning, while not reducing the quality of services for children and families. All enrollment reduction requests must be submitted via the Head Start Enterprise System (HSES). Regional Offices will carefully review each request to determine whether it can be approved.

This Information Memorandum (IM) highlights strategies to support the Head Start workforce that grant recipients can begin working toward immediately.

Increase Compensation and Financial Supports for Head Start Staff

Permanently Increase Compensation

OHS strongly encourages Head Start grant recipients to permanently increase compensation, which is the most effective strategy in retaining and recruiting qualified staff. When considering an increase in staff compensation, OHS encourages programs to use findings from their [wage comparability study](#) to help support their decisions. Programs can consider elementary school settings for purposes of wage comparability, including neighboring school districts. OHS also urges programs to consider benefits that might be critical to recruit and retain a qualified, diverse workforce — such as health care, retirement, and paid leave benefits — and compete with other employers providing comparable services in their local job market. Additionally, the [Financial Essential Series](#) may help programs in restructuring existing budgets to align with program goals and support high-quality program services.

Offer Bonuses, Short-term Pay Increases, or Other Financial Incentives

As detailed in [ACF-IM-HS-22-04 Competitive Bonuses for the Head Start Workforce](#), programs can use American Rescue Plan (ARP), other COVID-19 relief, or base grant funds to provide retention bonuses, hiring bonuses, or other financial incentives to staff to support their workforce in the short-term. OHS encourages programs to prioritize bonuses or incentives for staff who have an established tenure with the program, and to consider distributing any hiring bonuses out over time rather than in one lump sum. OHS also strongly urges programs to use their own data on the workforce to determine for which positions bonuses might be most impactful. OHS reminds programs that any bonuses or incentives for staff must be incorporated into their personnel policies and procedures approved by the governing body and Policy Council or policy committee. Since monetary bonuses likely count as income, grant recipients should understand income requirements for public benefits to determine how such bonuses may impact staff members' access to these benefits.

At their discretion, programs can decide to require a service commitment as a condition of receiving a bonus or financial incentive. However, any service requirement is solely the responsibility of the grant recipient to establish, implement, and enforce as they see fit.

Compensate Staff During Closures and Transitions

OHS reminds programs that when centers are closed or in-person home visits are temporarily suspended due to a disaster, they can continue to provide compensation for up to two weeks to those staff who are unable to engage in employment activities as described in [ACF-IM-HS-19-01](#). Programs also may continue to pay health insurance premiums for up to 90 days for staff subject to furlough, such as during a summer break ([ACF-IM-HS-21-02](#)).

Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF)

Programs can provide information to their staff about federal programs that could help make student loans easier to pay back and lead toward loan forgiveness, such as the [PSLF program](#). The Department of Education is offering a [time-limited waiver for PSLF](#) so borrowers can count additional payments toward forgiveness. Watch this [webinar](#) for additional information. The waiver expires October 31, 2022. After that, normal PSLF rules will be in effect. Staff who wish to take advantage of the time-limited changes are encouraged to apply for PSLF as soon as possible to ensure they complete the required paperwork prior to the deadline.

Additional Supports and Flexibilities for the Head Start Workforce

Promoting a Positive and Empowering Work Environment

A healthy and supportive work environment is critical for recruiting and retaining staff, as well as providing high-quality services to children and families. Programs are encouraged to consider strategies to promote the mental health and well-being of their workforce. This may include providing staff with regularly scheduled breaks, brief unscheduled wellness breaks, reflective supervision, and access to employee assistance programs. These and other strategies are described in [ACF-IM-HS-21-05 Supporting the Wellness of All Staff in the Head Start Workforce](#).

Additionally, programs can consider how personnel management could be improved to foster a satisfying and engaging work environment, including through:

- Effective communication and feedback with staff (e.g., two-way instead of top-down)
- Improved orientation or onboarding practices
- Clear personnel policies and procedures
- Ample professional development, coaching, and mentoring opportunities that value the work staff perform and help them improve and move forward in their careers

Recognizing Head Start staff as professionals, inviting innovative practices and ideas, and including staff input in the program's plans and operation contributes to job satisfaction and employee retention.

Supports for Educational Attainment and Career Advancement

Head Start programs have a unique opportunity to invest in their communities by supporting the career development of their staff. Programs may advertise and encourage existing staff to use educational benefits, such as tuition and fee support, and opportunities for career growth that are associated with increased educational attainment.

Apprenticeship programs are a strategy to support educational growth and provide consistent pools of staff. Apprenticeship models recruit people who have interest and talent in working in early childhood settings and support them in obtaining required credentials and employment with Head Start programs. This includes, for example, starting as paid substitutes, floaters, or bus monitors, and then moving into other positions as they obtain required degrees or credentials. Increases in compensation typically accompany increases in qualifications and responsibilities. Watch this [webinar](#) for resources on how to build and execute a successful registered apprenticeship program. Grants to support apprenticeship programs are often available from the U.S. Department of Labor.

Programs can also create partnerships with high schools, community colleges, and other higher education institutions that are available to multiple staff and designed to promote successful completion of degree or credential requirements (e.g., courses offered at times that accommodate full-time workers or taught in non-English languages). Further, creating cohorts of staff enrolled in the same education or credentialing program can facilitate shared support systems.

Costs associated with supporting educational attainment and development of career pathways for staff, such as tuition and fees for obtaining a degree or credential or costs associated with developing an apprenticeship program, can be paid for using Head Start base grant, ARP, or other COVID-19 relief funds. If a program uses funds from the Coronavirus Relief and Response Supplemental Appropriations or Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Acts, they must document and justify that the expense is directly supporting their response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Qualification Waiver for Head Start Preschool Teachers

A program that has attempted unsuccessfully to recruit a qualified teacher for a Head Start preschool classroom may submit to their Regional Office a request for a waiver of up to three years for the position's qualification requirements ([Sec. 648A\(a\)\(4\)\(B\)](#)). To be considered for the waiver, the program must demonstrate that the Head Start preschool teacher is 1) enrolled in a program that grants a qualifying degree and such degree will be completed in a reasonable time not to exceed three years; and 2) has at least a current center-based preschool Child Development Associate® (CDA) credential or a state-awarded certificate that meets or exceeds the CDA credential.

As outlined in the Head Start Act, a qualifying degree includes an associate or bachelor's degree in early childhood education, or in a related field with coursework equivalent to an early childhood education major along with experience teaching preschool-age children. A waiver request must also adequately describe how the program's attempts to recruit qualified individuals were unsuccessful. The Regional Office will review each waiver request and determine whether to grant the waiver. Programs could consider using the waiver process to promote a strong assistant teacher to a lead teacher role, ensuring that teacher will receive the necessary degree in a reasonable timeframe as described above.

OHS will continue to work with programs as they support a strong, qualified workforce that is highly valued, healthy, and committed to the Head Start mission. Please direct any questions about the content of this IM to your OHS Regional Office.

Thank you for all you do on behalf of children and families.

Sincerely,

/ Katie Hamm /

Katie Hamm
Acting Director
Office of Head Start

ACF Administration for Children and Families	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES	
	1. Log No. ACF-IM-HS-22-07	2. Issuance Date: 09/27/2022
	3. Originating Office: Office of Head Start	
	4. Key Words: Child Incidents; Reporting; Health and Safety	

INFORMATION MEMORANDUM

TO: All Head Start Agencies and Delegate Agencies

SUBJECT: Reporting Child Health and Safety Incidents

INFORMATION:

The Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS) at [45 CFR §1302.102\(d\)\(1\)\(ii\)](#) require programs to “submit reports, as appropriate, to the responsible U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) official immediately or as soon as practicable, related to any significant incidents affecting the health and safety of program participants.” This includes any incident regarding staff or volunteer compliance with laws addressing child abuse and neglect.

This Information Memorandum (IM) clarifies reporting requirements of 45 CFR §1302.102(d)(1)(ii), including the responsible HHS official to whom programs must report and the reporting timeframe. It also outlines the consequences for failure to report during the given timeframe, explains the obligation to report child incidents in blended classrooms, and offers examples of incident types that must be reported. This IM applies to all Office of Head Start (OHS) programs, including Head Start, Early Head Start, Migrant and Seasonal Head Start, and American Indian and Alaska Native Head Start programs.

“Responsible HHS Official” to Whom Programs Send Reports

For reporting significant incidents regarding the health and safety of children in Head Start programs, the responsible HHS official is the program specialist assigned to your grant or the regional program manager. This is in addition to reporting to local, state, or tribal entities as required by applicable laws.

Reporting Timeframe

HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.102(d)(1)(ii) requires programs to submit reports, as appropriate, to the responsible HHS official immediately or as soon as practicable. OHS interprets “immediately or as soon as practicable” to mean without delay, but no later than seven calendar days following an incident. Head Start programs should not wait for adjudication through local or state officials. Incidents must be reported to OHS staff within seven days of the incident, regardless of investigations by relevant local, state, tribal, or federal law enforcement.

Consequences for Failure to Report Incidents “Immediately or as Soon as Practicable”

To make sure programs report significant incidents to their assigned program specialist or regional program manager, OHS reviews publicly available information and reports from the grant period to identify any child health and safety incidents. If OHS discovers a program failed to report a significant incident within seven calendar days from the time of the incident, the program will receive a monitoring finding, which may include a deficiency determination.

It is important to report all incidents involving Head Start staff that affect the health and safety of young children in early childhood settings, including those not funded by Head Start dollars. These actions have broader implications for all children served in the program. For this reason, the requirement to report applies to incidents involving Head Start staff, contractors, and volunteers in all settings, including blended classrooms.

Types of Reportable Incidents

A program must report all significant incidents affecting the health and safety of children. OHS considers a “significant incident” to be any incident that results in serious injury or harm to a child, violates Head Start standards of conduct at [45 CFR §1302.90\(c\)](#), or results in a child being left alone, unsupervised, or released to an unauthorized adult.

It is not possible to provide an exhaustive list of incidents that threaten children’s health and safety. However, OHS is providing a thorough list of the types of incidents that should be reported. Some examples of significant incidents include, but are not limited to:

- **Child injuries that require either hospitalization or emergency room medical treatment**, such as a broken bone; a severe sprain; chipped or cracked teeth; head trauma; deep cuts; contusions or lacerations; or animal bites.
- **Inappropriate discipline**, which is any type of conduct used to instill fear or humiliate rather than to educate a child, such as poking or pinching a child; making fun of or laughing about a child; using/withholding food or an activity as a punishment or reward; or isolating a child.
- **Potential child abuse and maltreatment**, such as grabbing, shoving, shaking, swatting, or dragging a child; spanking or any other type of corporal or physical punishment; binding, tying, or taping a child; terrorizing a child with threats or menacing acts; or any form of sexual contact.
- **Lack of supervision** while in the care or under the supervision of program staff, which includes leaving a child alone anywhere on the grounds of a Head Start facility (e.g., in a classroom, bathroom, on a playground), as well as outside the facility in a parking lot, on a nearby street, or on a bus or another program-approved transportation or excursion.
- **Unauthorized release** where a child is released from a Head Start facility, bus, or other

approved program transportation to a person without the permission or authorization of a parent or legal guardian and whose identity had not been verified by photo identification.

Next Steps

OHS places the utmost priority on child health and safety. Research shows the impact of child abuse and child maltreatment is associated with adverse health and mental health outcomes in children and families, and those negative effects can last a lifetime. Preventing significant incidents that affect children's health and safety in Head Start programs is everyone's responsibility. We encourage program staff to complete the [iLookOut](#) training, a free online professional development course focused on protecting child safety and preventing and identifying child abuse.

OHS is committed to continuous quality improvement and will continue to provide support and guidance in preventing incidents that jeopardize children's safety. If you have any questions regarding this IM, please contact your Regional Office.

By working together to swiftly identify, report, and correct health and safety incidents, we can better support child health and well-being in Head Start programs. Thank you for your work on behalf of children and families.

/ Katie Hamm /

Katie Hamm
Acting Director
Office of Head Start

Mercer County Head Start Policies and Procedures

P/P Topic:	Volunteer	P/P #:	
Part:	Program Operations	PC Approval Date:	10/13/22
Subpart:	<i>I – Human resource Management</i>	Last Reviewed Date:	
Section Title(s):	<i>Volunteers</i>	Implementation Responsibility:	Staff
Related Performance Standard(s):	1302.94(a)(b)	Monitoring Responsibility:	Managers

(A) Policy	<p>A program must ensure regular volunteers have been screened for appropriate communicable diseases in accordance with state, tribal, or local laws. In the absence of state, tribal or local law, the Health Services Advisor committee must be consulted regarding the need for such screenings.</p> <p>A program must ensure children are never left alone with volunteers.</p>
(B) Responsibility	Managers
(C) Procedure	<p>Program volunteer recruitment will be done through parent/guardian, staff, and community partnerships.</p> <p>Agency volunteers will complete required paperwork and be trained for their work in the program, matching their talent and interest areas in the program. Prospective volunteers are interviewed and screened through administrative staff.</p> <p>MCHS supports regular / routine volunteers via the new employee packet (mission statement, child discipline, child abuse & neglect awareness, background check, non-conviction statement, code of conduct, and confidentiality policy).</p> <p>A “regular” volunteer is defined as someone who supports the program on a routine basis and is at the center at least 4 times per month.</p> <p>Regular volunteers must also demonstrate they are free from communicable disease (provide a copy of immunization record). Regular volunteers MUST complete the background check process at the expense of MCHS.</p> <p>Parent Volunteers receive information about the program via the parent handbook and are supervised at all times while volunteering in the classroom.</p> <p>Volunteers are educated on non-federal share and instructed on the</p>

	<p>completion of in-kind forms.</p> <p>ODE licensing requires Non-conviction / non-guilty statement and BCII background check.</p> <p>Volunteers are to be accompanied by staff at all times.</p> <p>Children are NEVER to be left alone with a Volunteer despite the background check process.</p> <p>MCHS can at any time refuse a volunteer's services. MCHS managers determine a volunteer's worksite, hours to volunteer. MCHS leadership can at any time suspend and or increase the use of volunteers.</p> <p>Volunteers are to follow the program's dress code.</p> <p>Volunteers are to check in at the MCHS office and obtain a visitor's badge upon signing in each time the volunteer is volunteering.</p>
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Mercer County Head Start Policies and Procedures

P/P Topic:	Special Education Services (COVID-19)	P/P #:	
Part:	1302 Program Operations	PC Approval Date:	10/13/2022
Subpart:	<i>D-Health Program Services</i> <i>F-Additional Services for Children with Disabilities</i>	Last Reviewed Date:	
Section Title(s):	<i>Safety Practices</i> <i>Additional Services</i>	Implementation Responsibility:	Teaching Staff, Education Manager
Related Performance Standard(s):	1302.47(b)(7)(iii) 1302.61(a)(b)(c)(1)(i)(ii)	Monitoring Responsibility:	HCSM

(A) Policy	<p>A program must establish, train staff on, implement, and enforce a system of health and safety practices that ensure children are kept safe at all times. A program should consult <i>Caring for our Children Basics</i>, available at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/eecd/caring_for_our_children_basics.pdf, for additional information to develop and implement adequate safety policies and practices described in this part.</p> <p><i>Administrative safety procedures.</i> Programs establish, follow, and practice, as appropriate, procedures for, at a minimum:</p> <p>(iii) Protection from contagious disease, including appropriate inclusion and exclusion policies for when a child is ill, and from an infectious disease outbreak, including appropriate notifications of any reportable illness.</p> <p>a) <i>Additional services for children with disabilities.</i> Programs must ensure the individualized needs of children with disabilities, including but not limited to those eligible for services under IDEA, are being met and all children have access to and can fully participate in the full range of activities and services. Programs must provide any necessary modifications to the environment, multiple and varied formats for instruction, and individualized accommodations and supports as necessary to support the full participation of children with disabilities. Programs must ensure all individuals with disabilities are protected from discrimination under and provided with all services and program modifications required by section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. 794), the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. 12101 <i>et seq.</i>), and their implementing regulations.</p> <p>(b) <i>Services during IDEA eligibility determination.</i> While the local agency responsible for implementing IDEA determines a child's eligibility, a</p>
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	<p>program must provide individualized services and supports, to the maximum extent possible, to meet the child’s needs. Such additional supports may be available through a child’s health insurance or it may be appropriate or required to provide the needed services and supports under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act if the child satisfies the definition of disability in section 705(9)(b) of the Rehabilitation Act. When such supports are not available through alternate means, pending the evaluation results and eligibility determination, a program must individualize program services based on available information such as parent input and child observation and assessment data and may use program funds for these purposes.</p> <p><i>(c) Additional services for children with an IFSP or IEP.</i> To ensure the individual needs of children eligible for services under IDEA are met, a program must:</p> <p>(1) Work closely with the local agency responsible for implementing IDEA, the family, and other service partners, as appropriate, to ensure:</p> <p>(i) Services for a child with disabilities will be planned and delivered as required by their IFSP or IEP, as appropriate;</p> <p>(ii) Children are working towards the goals in their IFSP or IEP;</p>
(B) Responsibility	Teaching staff, Education Manager
(C) Procedure	<p>MCHS will continue to follow best practices per guidance driven by guidance driven by the Ohio Department of Health, the office of Ohio State Governor Mike DeWine, Occupational Health and Safety Act, the Centers for Disease Control, and Care for our Children Basics the following recommendations have been set forth in response to the global pandemic of COVID-19 (coronavirus).</p> <p>It is the intent of MCHS to maintain a healthy and safe environment for all staff, children, family, and visitors to MCHS facilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All persons entering the facility must record their temperature with the Head Start Office • Social distancing is recommended • Handwashing should be frequent using warm water rubbing with soap for a minimum of 20 seconds • Hand sanitizer may be used in between handwashing • Workspaces are recommended to be cleaned every 2 hours while working, in between students, and then once again before leaving for the day • If any symptoms of fever at or above 100.)°F, dry cough, shortness of breath, chills, loss of taste or smell, muscle aches, sore throat, or

headache, please stay home and follow directions from your primary care physician

COVID 19 requirements terminated on June 2, 2021, per the Office of Ohio State Governor Mike DeWine.

MCHS Administration will re-instate COVID-19 pandemic requirements based upon the direction of Office of Ohio State Governor, Ohio Department of Health, Occupational Health and Safety Act, and the Centers for Disease Control, Mercer County Health District, and Care for Our Children Basic (guidance).

MCHS Administration will reinstate social distancing and mask wearing in times of communicable disease outbreak.

Mercer County Head Start Policies and Procedures

P/P Topic:	Social Distancing (COVID-19)	P/P #:	
Part:	1302 Program Operations	PC Approval Date:	10/13/22
Subpart:	<i>D-Health Program Services</i>	Last Reviewed Date:	
Section Title(s):	<i>Safety Practices</i>	Implementation Responsibility:	All Staff
Related Performance Standard(s):	1302.47(b)(7)(iii)	Monitoring Responsibility:	HCSM

(A) Policy	<p>A program must establish, train staff on, implement, and enforce a system of health and safety practices that ensure children are kept safe at all times. A program should consult Caring for our Children Basics, available at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/ecd/caring_for_our_children_basics.pdf, for additional information to develop and implement adequate safety policies and practices described in this part.</p> <p><i>Administrative safety procedures.</i> Programs establish, follow, and practice, as appropriate, procedures for, at a minimum:</p> <p>(iii) Protection from contagious disease, including appropriate inclusion and exclusion policies for when a child is ill, and from an infectious disease outbreak, including appropriate notifications of any reportable illness.</p>
(B) Responsibility	All Staff
(C) Procedure	<p>MCHS will continue to follow best practices as outlined per guidance driven by the Ohio Department of Health, the Office of Ohio State Governor Mike DeWine, Occupational Health and Safety Act, the Centers for Disease Control, and Care for our Children Basics: the following recommendations have been set forth in response to the global pandemic of COVID-19 (Coronavirus).</p> <p>It is the intent of MCHS to maintain a healthy and safe environment for all staff, children, family, and visitors to MCHS facilities.</p> <p>Staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Break times should be staggered, if not; when using communal breakroom space, and sanitize space before leaving area. • Classroom staff members will avoid congregating with other staff members outside of their classroom during the school day. • When possible support staff should avoid “floating” from one classroom to another. If this cannot be avoided; Staff <i>must</i> wash and sanitize hands • After leaving the classroom, staff <i>must</i> wash and sanitize hands <p>Students:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Restrooms <i>must</i> be sanitized after each use.● Classrooms should be set up and arrange to allow maximum amount of space for each student.● Classrooms should, to the extent possible, prevent groups from mixing. <p>COVID 19 requirements terminated on June 2, 2021, per the Office of Ohio State Governor Mike DeWine.</p> <p>MCHS Administration will re-instate COVID-19 pandemic requirements based upon the direction of Office of the Ohio State Governor, Ohio Department of Health, Occupational Health and Safety Act, and the Centers for Disease Control, Mercer County Health District, and Care for our Children Basics (guidance).</p> <p>MCHS Administration with re-instate social distancing and mask wearing in times of communicable disease outbreak.</p>
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Mercer County Head Start Policies and Procedures

P/P Topic:	Meal Service / Family-style dining	P/P #:	
Part:	C. Program Operations	PC Approval Date:	10/13/22
Subpart:	Early Childhood Development and Health Services	Last Reviewed Date:	03/17
Section Title(s):	Child Health and Safety	Implementation Responsibility:	Education and Cafeteria Staff
Related Performance Standard(s):	1304.23 (c)	Monitoring Responsibility:	HCSM

(A) Policy	<p>Nutritional services in center-based settings will contribute to the development and socialization of enrolled children by providing:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A variety of food is served which broadens each child's food experiences; 2. Food is not used as punishment or reward, and that each child is encouraged, but not forced, to eat or taste his / her food; 3. Sufficient time is allowed for each child to eat; 4. Preschool children and assigned classroom staff, including volunteers, eat together family style and share the same menu to the extent possible; 5. Medically-based diets or other dietary requirements are accommodated; and 6. As developmentally appropriate, opportunity is provided for the involvement of children in food-related activities.
(B) Responsibility	Cafeteria, Education, and Management staff

(C) Procedure

- All meals and snacks will be served ‘family style’ in a pleasant, well-lit, and ventilated area that promotes socialization.
- Staff, parents, and volunteers will model appropriate behavior, as well as positive attitude toward all foods served.
- Children and adults will serve and pass food among them. A small amount of a new food may be offered with familiar foods to increase variety.
- As able to, children will be seated at child size tables with pediatric size place-settings and silverware, and each child will make his or her own food choices based on individual appetites and preferences.
- Special diets that are medically prescribed by a physician to ensure that a child’s health will be accommodated to ensure the child’s health is not be jeopardized and that individual needs are met.
- Staff will encourage interesting and pleasant table conversation across a variety of topics, not only those related to food and nutrition. Staff will be sensitive to cultures that do not encourage children to participate in meal conversation.
- Sufficient time will be allowed for each child to eat...approximately ½ hour for breakfast and lunch and approximately 15 minutes for snack. Slower eaters will be allowed sufficient time to finish their food.
- A variety of food is served to broaden children of all cultures food experiences.
- Menus will be evaluated annually and as needed by a registered dietitian.

MCHS will continue to follow best practices as outlined per guidance driven by the Ohio Department of Health, the office of Ohio State Governor Mike DeWine, Occupational Health and Safety Act, the Centers for Disease Control, and Care for Our Children Basics, the following recommendations have been set forth in response to the global pandemic.

It is the intent of MCHS to maintain a healthy and safe environment for all staff, children, family, and visitors to MCHS facilities.

- All surfaces *must* be cleaned and sanitized prior to use.
- Students and staff *must* wash hands prior to meal service.
- Staff *must* wear gloves while serving students.
 - If gloves becomes soiled during meal service, staff *must* dispose of gloves, wash hands, and replace gloves.
- Students and staff *must* wash hands after meal service.
- All surfaces *must* be cleaned and sanitized after meal service.

- Trash will be changed and trash receptacle cleaned and sanitized.

MCHS Administration will re-instate COVID-19 pandemic requirements based upon the direction of Office of Ohio State Governor, Ohio Department of Health, Occupational Health and Safety Act, the Centers for Disease Control, Mercer County Health District, and Care for Our Children Basics (guidance).

Mercer County Head Start Policies and Procedures

P/P Topic:	COVID Testing	P/P #:	
Part:	1302 Program Operations	PC Approval Date:	10/13/2022
Subpart:	<i>I. Human Resources</i>	Last Reviewed Date:	
Section Title(s):	<i>Staff Health and Wellness</i>	Implementation Responsibility:	Administration
Related Performance Standard(s):	1302.93(a)(1)(2)	Monitoring Responsibility:	Executive Director, HCSM

(A) Policy	<p>(1) All staff, and those contractors whose activities involve contact with or providing direct services to children and families, must be fully vaccinated for COVID-19, other than those employees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) For whom a vaccine is medically contraindicated; (ii) For whom medical necessity requires a delay in vaccination; or (iii) Who are legally entitled to an accommodation with regard to the COVID-19 vaccination requirements based on an applicable Federal law. <p>(2) Those granted an accommodation outlined in paragraph (a)(1) of this section must undergo SARS-COV-2 testing for current infection at least weekly with those who have negative test results to remain in the classroom or working directly with children. Those with positive test results must be immediately excluded from the facility, so they are away from children and staff until they are determined to no longer be infectious.</p>
(B) Responsibility	All Staff
(C) Procedure	<p>As of October 1, 2022, Ohio is one of the state's that is permanently enjoined regarding the Interim Final Rule for required vaccination and masking. The body of this policy remains intact; however, the Head Start Director has authority to implement the policy when local conditions warrant the overall safety and well-being of staff, children, families, and the community.</p> <p>MCHS will collect COVID 19 vaccination status on staff, contractors with direct contact with children, and volunteers.</p> <p>If the IFR were to be reinstated by the ACF HHS for Ohio programs: Staff granted an exemption to the COVID – 19 vaccine, MUST undergo weekly SARS-COV-2 testing. Weekly testing is the ONLY accommodation granted in lieu of vaccination.</p>

Testing will be conducted every Wednesday, immediately prior to the employee's report to work time. The test will be conducted in private with the employee and an administrator present.

If the test reports negative, the employee is to proceed directly to their assigned worksite. The administrator will document testing results in the employee's COVID file.

If the test reports positive, the employee will immediately leave the facility. The Executive Director and HCSM will be notified. The HCSM will communicate with the employee about next steps which may include reporting to required entities, contact tracing, notification of quarantining procedures, and contacting the primary care physician.

Tests are provided by the employer while grant funds remain available.

Administrators will be trained on the proper procedure to administer and read COVID 19 tests.

All tests are self-administered.

If a staff member refuses to administer the test, they will be excused from work until further notice. An internal investigation will be conducted with the presumption the employee is voluntarily relinquishing their employment.

Response to a positive COVID 19 test :
MCHS will follow the current local health guidelines regarding exclusion / quarantine provided by Mercer County Health District guidelines.

HCSM will post the most up to date COVID 19 guidance including exclusion and quarantining in a central location for all staff.

Mercer County Head Start

Our Core Values are Trust, Integrity, and Excellence. We define *Trust* as the firm belief in the reliability, ability, or strength of a person / organization. Within an organization we *trust* that each individual fulfills his / her duty and responsibility. Our parents *trust* that we will provide the highest quality education to their children while ensuring their safety. Our community *trusts* that we implement the Head Start program with fidelity and excellence. *Integrity* is defined by demonstrating sound moral and ethical principles. We do the right thing no matter who is watching. *Excellence* requires constant adaptation, innovation, and vigilance. Winston Churchill stated, "To improve is to change; to be perfect is to change often". Early childhood education and care is evolving and to remain relevant and maintain leadership in the field we must adapt and change as well. We must create innovative programming that alleviates barriers and constraints for our children and families.

We invest in individualized, comprehensive services which champion school ready children and self-sufficient families... this is our Mission.

Our collective efforts are to be focused on ensuring that children are ready to learn and can be successful in their journey of education. It is also our responsibility to provide our families the tools and resources to build the capacity to be self-sufficient. By increasing the individual human capacity of our parents, we increase the likelihood of success for their children. Their success becomes our community's strength.

Our Vision is to *Establish Mercer County Head Start as the foremost leader in early childhood services.*

Through innovative problem solving and collaborative partnerships in our community we strive to lead by example. Our constant focus on the whole child and the whole family, produces positive child, family, and community outcomes.

Leadership

Celina City Schools Board of Education

Policy Council

Executive Director – Amy Esser

Education Manager – Sandy Stammen

Health & Community Services Manager – Angie Stephenson

Family Engagement Services Manager – Kim Kramer

Mental Health Manager – Ashley Searight

Locations

Education Complex – 585 E. Livingston St. Celina, OH 45822

Rockford / New Horizons Church – 833 S. Main St. Rockford, OH 45882

Welcome to Mercer County Head Start. We look forward to a long and productive working relationship. It is our hope that your time spent working with children and families will be mutually rewarding and beneficial. Your contribution will make a difference in the lives of children and their families.

The management team and entire staff welcome the opportunity to provide support and assistance as you transition into your new position. Feel free to observe, ask questions, and allow yourself time to become familiar with expected practices, policies, and procedures.

The purpose of this Personnel Policies Handbook is to introduce you to Mercer County Head Start and to acquaint you with the policies, rules, procedures, practices, and benefits which control, guide, and enhance your employment, as well as assure clear and consistent delivery of quality services. Although not inclusive in nature, every attempt will be made to address identified needs as well as federal performance standards requirements. This handbook is informational rather than contractual in nature and supplements the current joint labor contract between the Agency and OAPSE #457.

Mercer County Head Start reserves the right to make changes to this handbook at any time, including deletions, additions, or other modifications. All changes will be effective immediately upon publications by the Executive Director or designated representative, and subject to ratification by the Policy Council and the governing board. Changes shall be in writing and distributed to employees.

Employees are expected to familiarize themselves with the contents of this handbook, read this handbook carefully and retain it for future reference.

Please direct any questions regarding the contents to your immediate supervisor. All employees will sign and date an employee orientation checklist indicating receipt of and understanding of this handbook, this completed form will be placed in your personnel file.

Again, welcome to our school family! I hope you find this work fulfilling and life changing!

Wishing you well!

Amy Esser

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Code of Conduct and Professional Ethics Policy

All staff and volunteers (includes Board members and Policy Council members) are required at time of hire or placement to understand and abide by the codes of conduct as set forth in the Head Start Program Performance Standards 45 CFR 304.52(i)(1-3). The following standards specify:

1. I will respect and promote the unique identity of each child and family and refrain from stereotyping on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion or disability.
2. Maintaining confidentiality is important to the success of our mission, our reputation in the community, and the privacy of clients and staff. Family files, personnel records, financial information, client information, and other related information is considered confidential. I am required to protect this information by safeguarding it when in use, filing it properly when not in use, and discussing it only with those who have a legitimate need to know. If approached by members of the news media requesting information regarding Mercer County Head Start operations, I will refer requests to the Executive Director.
3. I understand that no child shall be left alone or unsupervised while under my care. I will use positive methods of child guidance that do not engage in corporal punishment, emotional or physical abuse, humiliation, isolation or the use of food as punishment or reward or the denial of basic needs.
4. I understand that no child may be removed from the presence of staff other than a child's own parent or guardian or other authorized person.
5. I will not solicit or accept gratuities, favors, or anything of significant value for personal use or enrichment from contractors/vendors or potential contractors/vendors who have been awarded contracts or provide services or materials for Mercer County Head Start.
6. I understand this document shall be placed in my personnel file and that any violation of these codes shall result in disciplinary action as indicated in Article XIII- Disciplinary Procedures in the OAPSE #457 negotiated agreement.

This policy complies with Head Start Program Performance Standard 1302.90(c)(1)(2).

Chain of Command & Communication

The previous page of this document provides each employee an illustrated diagram of the organizational chart of the program. All direct service staff (Teachers, Teacher Assistants, Aides, Family Advocates, Bus Drivers, Cooks, and Secretaries) are directly supervised by a Program Manager or the Executive Director. Employees shall direct questions and concerns to their immediate supervisor. Head Start programming is unique in design inasmuch that every position comes into contact with every programmatic and operational area. There will be instances where questions and or direction is directed to / from a program manager other than an employee's direct supervisor. All parties will engage in two-way communication ensuring that all parties are aware of direction and questions. It is best practice and in alignment with the program's mission statement, to communicate directly with an individual for clarification of questions, problem solving issues, and resolving differences.

When conflicts arise, supervisors will instruct employees to speak directly with the individual with whom there is a conflict. After that step, a supervisor can mediate a discussion between employees. This same process is in place for conflicts between employees and supervisors. The Executive Director will mediate a discussion between an employee and supervisor.

Conflicts arise primarily due to a lack of communication or unclear communication. It is best practice to clearly state expectations and ask questions when issues arise.

Confidentiality

There are multiple local, state, and federal laws that govern confidentiality for the Head Start program. The Head Start program MUST ensure that the privacy of personally identifiable information is safeguarded at all times. All software systems MUST include safeguards to protect confidential information. Head Start programs MUST have policies and procedures in place to ensure that confidential information is not disclosed without permission. Any violation of the confidentiality policy will result in disciplinary action.

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Equal Employment Opportunity

MCHS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation and transgender identity), disability, age, religion, military status, ancestry, genetic information, or any other protected category, in its programs and activities, including employment opportunities.

The CCS District's Compliance officer shall handle inquiries regarding the Board's nondiscrimination policies and address any complaint of discrimination.

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Staff Recruitment, Interviewing, Selection, & Advancement

In an effort to reach qualified applicants of varied backgrounds, recruitment for positions will occur in several formats. These formats may include word of mouth, advertisement in media, and networking with like programs. All qualified applicants will be considered for posted positions. Current employees who meet the qualifications for posted positions may apply (or bid) for open positions. Part of the Head Start mission is to support and encourage employment of parents of Head Start children. In cases where there are candidates (parents) with equal qualifications for a specific position, hiring preference will be given to parents in the program.

Interviews are conducted by the manager of the programmatic area in which the position is housed. There will always be a minimum of two members of the administrative team conducting interviews. In some cases, Policy Council members may be asked to assist with interviewing candidates.

Candidates selected for hire are those who meet the hiring qualifications and display an attitude and demeanor that supports the program's core values, mission, and vision.

Employees who have a desire to advance their career are strongly encouraged to develop an individual professional development plan that supports professional growth and leadership skill building.

Job Description

Employees receive a job description during orientation. A signed copy of the job description is kept in the employee file. Job descriptions will be reviewed and revised periodically as needed. An updated job description will be made available to staff and should replace the previous job description. Revisions may be necessitated due to revised performance standards or state / federal directives, model or staffing changes or other job parameters as determined by the grant recipient. Input from employees holding a particular position will be solicited when there is a major revision to a job description. All newly created job descriptions are subject to approval by the Policy Council and Celina Board of Education.

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Work Schedules and Working Hours

The number of work hours per week and the number of work weeks per year are determined at time of hire or classification. Work hours and work weeks are determined by the needs of the Head Start grant. The work calendar for each individual calendar will be prepared annually and designed to support the Head Start program year. There will be times where variations in the employee's schedule of work hours will be necessary. These include but are not limited to flexing time for training, meetings, home visits, conferences, or committee work. These variations / flexing work schedule **REQUIRES PRIOR APPROVAL** from your supervisor or designee. As always meeting the needs of the students is the top priority when giving consideration to time off for flex time.

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Working Additional Hours

Employees are expected to complete all work requirements within their contracted times and days. Only in very limited and special circumstances are employees allowed to work additional time. Prior written approval MUST always be obtained from the employee's immediate supervisor for any additional work time.

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FSLA Time Logs & Time Sheets

To establish the program's compliance with the recordkeeping requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act, the program is required to obtain and maintain the actual time(s) worked daily by each employee not exempted by FSLA rules. Head Start requires time and effort documentation. MCHS utilizes activity logs for every position and every employee. Because some positions are cost allocated between multiple funding sources, it is imperative the employee ensures accurate completion of the appropriate form. It is best practice to complete the form daily. Activity logs are due at the end of every month to the employee's direct supervisor and retained in the employee's personnel file.

Time sheets are the mechanism by which Celina City Schools has the employee record any time worked that is above or beyond the employee's contracted duties or any substitute hours for other positions other than the employee's contracted position.

Staff Wages & Benefits

The negotiated agreement between OAPSE #457 and Celina City Schools Mercer County Head Start / Board of Education outlines information related to wages and benefits including but not limited to the following:

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Salary Scale | Insurance |
| Retirement | Sick Time |
| Funeral Leave | Personal Leave |
| Leave for Court Appearance | Leave of Absence |
| Armed Services Leave | Pay Periods / Deductions |
| Severance Pay | Vacation / Holidays |

The Office of Head Start requires grant recipients to conduct a wage study every three years. The Head Start Act requires that when a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) is provided, all Head Start employees MUST receive the COLA increase.

Vacation and Holidays

The following are the eleven paid holidays for 225-day and 260-day non-certified employees

Labor Day	New Year's Day	Thanksgiving Day
Martin Luther King Jr. Day	Good Friday	Day after Thanksgiving
Christmas Day	Christmas Eve	Memorial Day
Independence Day	JuneTeenth	

The following are the seven paid holidays for 185 days and 207 days employees.

Labor Day	Martin Luther King Jr. Day	Thanksgiving Day
Christmas Day	Good Friday	Memorial Day
New Year's Day		

The following are the six paid holidays for those employees contracted for less than 185 days

Labor Day	Martin Luther King Jr. Day	Thanksgiving Day
Christmas Day	Good Friday	New Year's Day

Administrative Head Start employees working a 260-day contract receive 25 vacation days annually.

Sick Leave

All full-time classified employees shall accrue sick leave at the rate of one and one-fourth (1.25) days per month. Hourly or part-time employees will accumulate and deduct sick leave at a rate that is proportional to their assigned work day. Sick leave will accumulate to a maximum of two hundred (200) days.

Employees may use sick leave upon the Head Start Director (or designee) for absence due to personal illness, injury, illness in family, pregnancy, or exposure to a contagious disease.

Upon request after three days the need for sick leave must be established to the satisfaction of the Head Start Director (designee).

Sick leave can be used for the care of immediate family. Immediate family shall include spouse, parents, spouse's parents, children, brothers, sisters, grandchildren and other person (not renters) residing within the immediate household.

Supervisors can and are encouraged to request documentation of sick leave for every absence.

Falsification of sick leave is grounds for disciplining up to and including termination of employment.

There is a Sick Leave bank program available. Please see the negotiated agreement for how and when to participate and access the sick leave bank.

Funeral Leave

Absence to attend and to plan funerals that occur on days school is in session for death in the immediate family (spouse, children, parents, and spouse's parents, brothers, sisters, grandparents / grandchildren, and any other person (not renters) in the immediate household for the past six (6) months shall be limited to three (3) days. Any other relatives, the employees are allowed one (1) day.

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Personal Leave

Each employee is entitled to three (3) unrestricted personal leave days each year upon request to his / her supervisor. Such days shall be without loss of pay or deduction from sick leave.

An employee not using his / her unrestricted personal leave will be compensated for each day at the daily rate of pay for the particular job. Said stipend compensation shall be paid to the employee during the last pay period in the yearly contract (i.e. 24th pay period).

No personal leave may be taken on the day immediately preceding or following a school holiday or during the first week with students and last two weeks of school with students, unless a dire emergency exists.

Personal leave will be granted based on time / date order that the individual's leave form has been submitted.

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Performance Evaluation and Professional Development

All new hires will be considered “probationary” for a period of at least (60) sixty calendar days. This time period will allow for observation of employee performance as well as any necessary action with regard to criminal record checks. At the conclusion of the probationary period, a formal written Performance Evaluation will occur. A supervisor has the option to recommend hire of the employee or extend the probationary period. Annually, the performance will be reviewed for all staff. Additional evaluations may be warranted if the staff person is on a performance improvement plan. The results of these evaluations will be used to identify staff training and professional development needs and assist each staff member in improving his or her skills and professional competencies. MCHS policy requires an annual performance evaluation for all staff members.

A program must establish and implement a systematic approach to staff training and professional development designed to assist staff in acquiring or increasing the knowledge and skills needed to provide high-quality, comprehensive services within the scope of their job responsibilities, and attached to academic credit as appropriate. At a minimum, the system must include:

Staff completing a minimum of 15 clock hours of professional development per year.* For teaching staff, such professional development must meet the requirements described in section 648A(a)(5) of the Act.

MCHS ensures that adequate funding is available to meet the professional development needs of staff to support child and family outcomes.

Attending Higher Education

The Head Start Act specifically speaks to the on-going education of the Head Start workforce. Grant dollars (when available) are allocated to support higher education costs for staff who choose to expand their educational journey. Internal policy states that the Head Start funds can be allocated for higher education costs when that positively impacts the Head Start program. Any staff who utilizes Head Start funds for higher education must sign an employment contract for service.

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CDA

MCHS has made an intentional effort to support entry level educational staff members with obtaining Child Development Associate (CDA). MCHS will cover the cost of the tuition for CDA accredited program, CDA testing and observation. Staff utilizing this benefit must sign an employment contract for service.

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Employee Advancement

All vacant and new positions will be posted in accordance with the negotiated agreement guidelines. Staff members will be provided opportunities to enhance current skills, develop new skills, and explore career opportunities through various continuing education opportunities.

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Attendance and Punctuality

Families and children depend on staff to be at their respective centers each and every day. Each position requires preparation time to be ready to serve children and families as they arrive. Staff are highly encouraged to speak directly with a supervisor to define punctuality.

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Reporting / Contacting Your Supervisor

Supervisors are to provide at least one communication method (phone number, text, email, etc) in which staff can communicate directly and privately. This is to be completed as part of the employee's orientation. If a staff member cannot to report to work as assigned (calling in ill, family emergency, etc.) communication must be sent at a minimum one (1) hour before the employee's report time. It is strongly encouraged that an employee notifies their supervisor as early as possible if there will be an absence or reporting late. It is the employee's responsibility to ensure the supervisor has received the communication. If the employee is a part of a team (i.e. classroom staff), the employee must notify the remaining members of the team. Some positions are responsible to locate a substitute for their absence. Please clarify this process with your direct supervisor.

Inclement Weather

Due to hazardous weather conditions the Sheriff may designate the county with a Level 3 Emergency. All Head Start facilities will be closed for Level 3 weather closings. Similarly, the Superintendent may cancel student activities due to hazardous weather conditions. When the Superintendent cancels school for weather related conditions, Head Start will cancel sessions as well. All sites regardless of location follow Celina City Schools weather cancellations. When conditions are safe for staff to travel to work, it is expected that staff report to work. Staff are to communicate with their direct supervisor about safe travel concerns related to their individual commute. Staff do not receive “snow days” and all contracted time is to be accounted for.

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Dress Code

Mercer County Head Start exemplifies and personifies professionalism. As such, employee dress should always be worn in a manner that dignifies each staff's given profession.

Clothing shall be fitted but not too tight or revealing. Clothing shall be comfortable but always presentable. MCHS has designated days to illustrate unification of the staff and overall well-being. On these days, staff are encouraged to participate in the identified dress code to reflect unity and wellness. When conducting professional business (training, meetings, community events) staff will wear professional dress unless otherwise prescribed.

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Personal Use of Wireless Controlled Devices While At Work

During work hours personal communications made or received, regardless of whether on a WCD, or a regular telephone or network computer can interfere with employee productivity and distract others. Employees are expected to use discretion in using WCDs while at work for personal business. Employees are asked to limit personal communications to breaks and lunch periods, and to inform friends and family members of the Board's policy in this regard. At no time may any WCD be utilized by an employee in a way that might reasonably create in the mind of another person an impression of being threatened, humiliated, harassed, embarrassed, or intimidated.

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Personnel Files

Both Celina City Schools District and Mercer County Head Start are required to keep personnel files on all employees. While some information is duplicated, other information is not. As employees are asked to provide information to each entity, please do so with urgency. Employees have access to their personnel files and can request access through the Head Start Director for the MCHS file and from the Superintendent's Secretary for the CCS District file. Both entities follow policy and procedure to ensure personnel information is kept confidential.

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Staff Discipline

MCCHS follows a progressive discipline plan. For specific details please see the negotiated agreement. Employees involved in serious acts of omission or commission may be suspended, reduced in pay or position, permanently transferred, or terminated, due to an act or acts which would include but not limited to incompetency, inefficiency, dishonesty, drunkenness, immoral conduct, in subordination, discourteous treatment of the public, neglect of duty, and / or violations of reasonable rules and regulations of the Board. In such cases if a serious nature, the progressive discipline procedure need not be followed by the Board / Head Start Director prior to suspension and / or termination of the employee.

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Staff Well-Being

The Office of Head Start has articulated the need for staff well-being to be a priority for Head Start programs. MCHS has clearly articulated a Staff Wellness Action Plan (SWAP) that takes a holistic approach to wellness in a variety of opportunities. When grant funds are available, MCHS intends to provide two (2) wellness days for staff to receive education and participate in wellness activities. Other staff wellness activities are provided throughout the year and staff are strongly encouraged to participate.

It is important that staff take responsibility for being their best selves to ensure the highest quality services to children and families.

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Employee Safety

MCHS will enforce all safety policies and procedures required by funding sources, oversight agencies, and those determined by the Head Start Director and governing Board to be effective in ensuring the safety of all employees and clients. It is the responsibility of each employee to comply with safety policies and procedures as conveyed either verbally or in written form by his / her supervisor(s). It is the responsibility of program leadership to see all employees are informed of and comply with all safety policies and procedures, Noncompliance may result in disciplinary action.

No employee will be required to perform any duty or activity that s/he feels would provide an imminent threat to his / her safety. If a situation arises in which the employee needs assistance in performing a duty that should threaten his / her health or safety, the employee should request assistance from his / her supervisor.

MCHS will conduct safety-training sessions on an ongoing basis to inform and educate employees of occupational safety hazards and means of prevention. Employees may be required to attend such training sessions.

Fiscal Policy

As a recipient of federal taxpayer dollars, it is the responsibility of Celina City Schools District and each Mercer County Head Start employee to be good fiscal stewards of allocated dollars. Funds can only be used for Head Start activities and operations if they are allowable and allocable. Most fiscal policies are written and designed for daily operations and are conducted by the Celina City Schools District Treasurer's office and the Head Start Director's office. Some fiscal policy and procedure relate directly to staff.

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Purchase Order / Procurement

Prior to any purchase or contracted service, a purchase order must be secured.

1. Contact your direct supervisor to discuss items / services needing purchased.
2. Provide direct supervisor with all information to be included on the purchase order.
(Name of vendor, address of vendor, list of items to be requested complete with item number, brief description, page number or web address of item, reason item is being requested, amount per item, tax [program is tax exempt and there should not be tax], shipping and handling charges).
3. Members of the administrative team must submit purchase order requests on behalf of their staff. This ensures a line of approval.
4. Purchase order requests are submitted to the Head Start Secretary. Any purchase order requests not completed correctly will be returned to the administrator.
5. The Head Start Secretary enters the purchase order request into the USAS system for approvals.
6. Once in the USAS system, there are multiple levels of approval including the Head Start Director, District Superintendent, and District Treasurer.
7. After all approvals are in place, a requisition is generated by USAS and delivered to the Head Start Secretary.
8. The Head Start Secretary places the order.
9. A copy of the purchase order / requisition is kept in the MCHS fiscal binder along with correspondence about the purchase request and packing slips.
10. Once the item(s) is purchased / delivered, a payment request (invoice / bill) can be paid. Payment approval can only be made by the Head Start Director* by signing the invoice with initials, "okay to pay" and the date.
11. The approved invoice is provided to the Treasurer's Office, Accounts Payable, for processing of payment.
12. A copy of the invoice approved for payment is kept with the original purchase order / requisition in the MCHS fiscal binder.

*In the event the Head Start Director is unable to approve a purchase or payment in a reasonable amount of time, the District Superintendent or District Treasurer can approve payment in the same manner as the Head Start Director.

Credit Cards

The Mercer County Head Start program has a credit card to be used to conduct the business of the program. Only authorized users may have access to and use the card. The credit card is housed in the District Treasurer's Office and must be signed in and out for use. Physical custody of the card must be accounted for at all times.

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Petty Cash

Each classroom is allocated \$150 for petty cash purchases. Petty cash purchases are to cover those items that cannot be obtained through a vendor (Discount School Supply, Lakeshore, etc.) Items for cooking are permissible. Candy, pop, and gum are not permissible for purchase for classroom activities. Petty cash purchases cannot total more than \$15.00 per receipt, per vendor, per day.

Items over the cost of the approved “petty cash” amount should be requested through the use of requisition / purchase order. The requisition must be approved by immediate supervisor prior to being forwarded to the Director for coding to the appropriate program and category.

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Mileage

Employees are eligible for automobile mileage reimbursement for use of their personal vehicles during the performance of official agency business such as home visits, training events, meetings, etc. An approved purchase order must be completed in advance of incurring any reimbursable mileage. A mileage reimbursement form must be completed and approved by the supervisor prior to submission for reimbursement. Mileage reimbursement rates will NOT exceed the mileage rate set by the Federal Government.

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Inventory

Most items purchased with Head Start funds are inventoried. All equipment (property valued over \$5000) must be inventoried. Both the Head Start office and CCS Treasurer's office is responsible for the inventory of goods. Items assigned to classrooms, offices, buildings, must have inventory forms completed prior to movement, storage, or disposal.

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Use of Agency Vehicles

The program provides vehicles available for staff use to conduct agency business.

Employees who choose to utilize the vehicles must complete a driving disclosure form, provide a copy of the employee's driver's license, proof of vehicle insurance, and complete fuel training. No employee shall utilize a cell phone while driving an agency vehicle. The employee is expected to comply with all laws and to use care and good judgment at all times, including but not limited to the following examples:

1. The use of the agency vehicle is prohibited when under the influence of intoxicants
2. No driver shall use the vehicle when his / her ability to do so safely is impaired by illness, fatigue, injury, or prescription medication.
3. All occupants of the vehicle must wear seat belts.
4. Drivers are responsible for the security of company vehicles assigned to them. The vehicle engine must be shut off, ignition keys removed, and doors locked when the vehicle is unattended.
5. Drivers must promptly report all accidents to the HCSM / designee, and to the Transportation Director, Treasurer's Office and report for a drug screen as directed by the Superintendent.

The vehicle sign in and out log as well as vehicle keys are kept in the Head Start office and maintained by the Head Start Secretary.

Drug-Free Workplace

Celina City Schools District and all facilities affiliated with the district are considered drug-free. This includes free of the use of tobacco, alcohol, illicit / illegal drugs, paraphernalia, and vaping mechanisms of any kind.

In addition to any disciplinary action, the Board may refer the employee to a treatment or counseling program for illegal drug use or controlled-substance abuse. Appropriate Board representatives shall determine whether an employee, referred for illegal drug use or controlled-substance abuse treatment or counseling, shall be reassigned to another available position.

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Employee Assistance

The Board is willing to help employees who have alcohol and substance abuse problems and encourages such employees to voluntarily seek assistance prior to testing. To that end, employee assistance is available for employees and their families through a list of resources available through insurance.

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Resignation

If an employee chooses to end their employment with MCHS, a two-week notice for classified positions is required. It is best practice and in the best interest of children in an educational setting for educators to remain with the program until the end of the program year. Over the summer months, employees who have found alternative employment are to notify their direct supervisor by July 10th, as to give MCHS ample opportunity to find replacement staff for the beginning of the school year.

Administrative positions are to give at least a 30-day notice of resignation. This allows the program to begin the process of identifying possible candidates for the position as well as develop a transition plan for the exiting employee.

The Head Start Director shall give a minimum of 60-day notice to the Policy Council and Board for resignation. It is best practice to give a 3-month notice, so the governing bodies can identify and hire a replacement Director.

Whistleblower Protection

The Board expects all employees to be honest and ethical in their conduct, and to comply with applicable State and Federal law, policies and administrative guidelines. The Board encourages staff to report possible violations of the Board expectations to their immediate supervisors.

It is the responsibility of an employee who is aware of conduct on the part of any Board member or employee that possibly violates Federal or State law, or Board policy, to call this conduct to the attention of his / her immediate supervisor. If the employee's immediate supervisor is not responsive or is the employee whose behavior is in question, the employee may report to the Director. If the report conduct relates to the Director, the report may be filed directly to the Superintendent.

After such a report is made, the immediate supervisor will ask that employee's report be put in writing. Any employee making such a report shall be protected from discipline, retaliation, or reprisal for making such report as long as the employee made a reasonable and good faith effort to determine the accuracy of any information reported. Employees are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination, for purposely, knowingly, or recklessly making a false report under this policy. Conversely, employees are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination, if they are aware of a violation of Federal, State, or local law that the Board has the authority to correct and they do not make a report confirmed in writing to their immediate supervisor.

In the case of reporting suspected fraud or fraudulent activity, an employee may file a report using the Auditor of State's system for reporting fraud. This reporting mechanism may be used either in addition to or instead of filing a written report with the employee's supervisor or other District authority.

While this employee personnel policy manual covers a variety of topics, policies, and procedures, it is not all inclusive. Employees are to familiarize themselves with all MCHS personnel policies and procedures, Head Start Program Performance Standards policies and procedures, and CCS Board of Education policies and procedures.

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Mercer County Head Start Policies and Procedures

P/P Topic:	Incentive – Retention	P/P #:	
Part:	45CFR 75.430(f)	PC Approval Date:	10/13/22
Subpart:		Last Reviewed Date:	
Section Title(s):		Implementation Responsibility:	CFO
Related Performance Standard(s):	<i>ACF-IM-HS-22-04</i>	Monitoring Responsibility:	HS Director

(A) Policy	<p>This Information Memorandum describes providing competitive financial incentives with existing grant funds as a short-term strategy to invest in the Head Start workforce and promote retention of current staff, as well as recruitment of new staff to fill vacant positions. This policy applies to Mercer County Head Start employees only.</p>
(B) Responsibility	District Treasurer’s Office
(C) Procedure	<p>High-retention workplaces tend to employ more engaged workers invested in the mission and vision of the program. Employee retention promotes the health and success of the program. Seasoned employees maintain and demonstrate institutional knowledge.</p> <p>While employee retention is important in all work environments, it is especially relevant and detrimental to the unique services Head Start staff / programs provide to enrolled children and families.</p> <p>For all Head Start employees who remain employed at the time this incentive is scheduled to be distributed, that employee shall receive a one-time payment in the amount of 5% of their budgeted salary.</p> <p>The MCHS employee must remain employed at MCHS to receive any retention incentive payments as scheduled. All pending or potential incentive payments will be forfeited by the employee upon termination, regardless of the reason(s) for separation of employment.</p> <p>This policy meets the definition of reasonableness per the IM narrative address workforce shortages and allowable per the IM directing grant recipients to utilize ARP, COVID related funds, and base grant funds.</p> <p>This policy will remain in effect provided grant funds are available.</p>