



The Latin American Community Center

Early Childhood Assistance Program (ECAP)

PROCEDURES AND IMPLEMENTATION PLANS FOR 1305

ELIGIBILITY, RECRUITMENT, SELECTION, ENROLLMENT, AND ATTENDANCE (ERSEA)

The following procedures describe the service area plans to ensure that all 1305 Performance Standards Mandates are met. All components of Head Start/Early Head Start are appropriately involved in the integration of program systems and services to ensure that resources are used efficiently.

The Director is responsible for overseeing all eligibility, recruitment, selection, enrollment, and attendance (ERSEA), and working with the Family Service staff to meet the Performance Standards Mandates for 1305.

The Instructional Manager & Family Services staff assist with recruitment. The Director and Family Services staff are responsible for implementation of the ERSEA service area plans. The Director supervises the Family Service staff that are responsible for eligibility, selection, and enrollment.



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Eligibility	ERSEA
Regulations & Guidance	

1305.2(e)	<i>Family</i> means all persons living in the same household who are: (1) Supported by the income of the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the child enrolling or participating in the program, and (2) related to the parent(s) or guardian(s) by blood, marriage, or adoption.
1305.4 (a)	To be eligible for Head Start services, a child must be at least three years old by the date used to determine eligibility for public school in the community in which the Head Start program is located, except in cases where the Head Start program's approved grant provides specific authority to serve younger children. Examples of such exceptions are programs serving children of migrant families and Early Head Start programs.
1305.4 (b)	(1) At least 90 percent of the children who are enrolled in each Head Start program must be from low-income families. (2) Except as provided in paragraph (b)(3) of this section, up to ten percent of the children who are enrolled may be children from families that exceed the low-income guidelines but who meet the criteria that the program has established for selecting such children and who would benefit from Head Start services. (3) A Head Start program operated by an Indian Tribe may enroll more than ten percent of its children from families whose incomes exceed the low-income guidelines when the following conditions are met: (i) All children from Indian and non-Indian families living on the reservation that meet the low-income guidelines who wish to be enrolled in Head Start are served by the program; (ii) All children from income-eligible Indian families native to the reservation living in non-reservation areas, approved as part of the Tribe's service area, who wish to be enrolled in Head Start are served by the program. In those instances in which the non-reservation area is not served by another Head Start program, the Tribe must serve all of the income-eligible Indian and non-Indian children whose families wish to enroll them in Head Start prior to serving over-income children. (iii) The Tribe has the resources within its Head Start grant or from other non-Federal sources to enroll children from families whose incomes exceed the low-income guidelines without using additional funds from HHS intended to expand Head Start services; and (iv) At least 51 percent of the children to be served by the program are from families that meet the income-eligibility guidelines. (4) Programs which meet the conditions of paragraph (b)(3) of this section must annually set criteria that are approved by the Policy Council and the Tribal Council for selecting over-income children who would benefit from such a program.
1305.4 (c)	The family income must be verified by the Head Start program before determining that a child is eligible to participate in the program.
1305.4 (d)	Verification must include examination of any of the following: Individual Income Tax Form 1040, W-2 forms, pay stubs, pay envelopes, written statements from employers, or documentation showing current status as recipients of public assistance.
1305.4 (e)	A signed statement by an employee of the Head Start program, identifying which of these documents was examined and stating that the child is eligible to participate in the program, must be maintained to indicate that income verification has been made.
Policy Clarifications	Additional guidance, too large for inclusion here, is available in the form of Policy Clarifications at http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc

Policies & Procedures

The following policies and procedures describe how the eligibility process is conducted for the ECAP program. All parties involved in the process will receive eligibility related training, including fraud prevention, at least annually.

Eligibility Overview

To be eligible to participate in the ECAP program children must be:

Policy Council Approval: May 16, 2016
Governing Board Approval: pending



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(1) Age Eligible

AND

(2) Income Eligible OR Categorically Eligible (At least 90% of all participants)

OR

Income and Categorically Ineligible but have a disability (Maximum 10% of all participants)

Age Eligibility

The date used to determine eligibility for public school, Kindergarten entry, in Delaware is August 31st.

To be age eligible for ECAP:

- Child must turn 4 years old by August 31st

The Family Service staff will verify age eligibility by examining one of the following documents:

- Birth Certificate (preferred)
- Immunization Record showing the child's age (with a computer generated label from a physician's office)
- Legal/Court Documents showing the child's age

Income Eligibility

A family is income eligible if its income is within the Federal Poverty Guidelines. To determine income eligibility, the Family Service staff will verify the family size and gross annual income.

Family Size Verification

The Family Service staff verifies family size by reviewing information in the enrollment application and counting all persons who:

1. Live in the same household as the child to be enrolled,
2. Are supported by the income of the child's parent(s)/guardian(s), and
3. Are related to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the child by blood, marriage or adoption.



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Income Verification

The Family Service staff verifies gross annual income by reviewing the enrollment application to determine the employment status of each parent/guardian living with the child. Only the income of the child's parents or guardians living with the child is included. Appropriate supporting documents are examined, which may include:

- Pay Stubs / Pay Envelopes
- Employer Income Verification
- Tax Return Form 1040
- W-2 Form
- Unemployment Income Statement
- Worker's Compensation Statement
- Child Support Statement
- Disability Income Statement
- Income Self Declaration
- No Income Declaration
- TANF Documentation
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Statement
- Other appropriate documentation
- Time Period to Consider

The Family Service staff will use his/her best judgment in deciding whether to consider evidence of family income from the last 12 months, the preceding calendar year or the current income situation. The Family Service staff will review whichever most accurately reflects the family's likely economic status during the period of the child's enrollment.

In most cases, the Family Service staff will base income eligibility decisions on the current income status. In some cases, such as seasonally employed workers, self-employed workers, or workers with variable schedules, the Family Service Staff will consider either the previous calendar year (such as on the W-2 or 1040 tax return) or the last 12 months of pay stubs, whichever will give a more accurate picture of that family's likely economic status.

Families with No Income

Families claiming no income will be interviewed by Family Service staff to discern the family situation. If the Family Service staff determines that the family's claim is accurate a completed and signed "Declaration of No Income" form will be sufficient documentation for the Family Service staff to make an eligibility determination.



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Categorical Eligibility

A child is categorically eligible if the child is in Foster Care or the family is homeless. The Family Service staff will examine one of the following supporting documents to verify categorical eligibility:

- Letter from a Social Worker confirming foster child status
- Completed Homeless Family Verification worksheet and Homeless Verification Letter from agency serving Homeless families

Homeless Families

Families who indicate they are homeless will be interviewed by Family Service staff to discern the family situation. If Family Service staff determines that the family's assertion is accurate a "Homeless Family Verification Worksheet" signed by the Family Service staff will be sufficient documentation to make an eligibility determination. The Family Service staff will also need a Homeless Verification Letter written on behalf of a family receiving homeless services (such as emergency or transitional housing) from social services agency.

Additional documents certifying homelessness as well as income and age verification may be obtained after enrollment and are secured as soon as possible but no later than 60 days after the date of enrollment. If 60 days goes by and the required documents have not been secured the child may be dropped. An exception to this is the child's Immunization Record and TB Assessment / Test which must be obtained before enrollment.

Delaware Child Care Licensing Requirements state that children may not attend a Child Care Center until after the child's immunization record is obtained unless a physician provides a written statement that an immunization(s) should not be given to a child and specifies how long the exemption is expected to be needed; or the child's authorized representative provides a written statement that immunizations are contrary to his/her personal or religious beliefs (see DELACARE: Regulations for Early Care and Education and School-Age Centers, p. 36, Section 57 <http://kids.delaware.gov/occl/announcements/Center-Regulations-2015.pdf>).

Over-Income Families

Up to 35% of total enrollment, which is 9 allowed students, may be children from families whose income is within the 101% - 130%

Up to 10% of total enrollment, which is 3 allowed students, may be children from families who are not income or categorically eligible. These slots are mostly, but not always, filled with children who have a disability.



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Children with Disabilities

At least 10 percent of all enrollment opportunities in Head Start are made available to children with disabilities. Applications for children with disabilities may be initially reviewed by the Family Service staff in collaboration with the Director / Instructional Manager to determine if the IEP/IFSP is current and if there should be any placement, start date, schedule, or other special accommodations.

Eligibility Verification

The Family Service staff completes and signs the Head Start Eligibility Verification form specifying which documents were examined, stating that the child is eligible to participate in the program, and stating whether the child is income eligible, categorically eligible or over-income. This form is maintained in the child's file.

Too Young

Children who are otherwise eligible but are too young for the program are placed on next year's waiting list and enrolled in one of the EDC's Toddler 3 classrooms.

Eligibility Fraud

To help prevent eligibility fraud the program will conduct training for all employees and childcare partner staff involved with eligibility annually. There are serious consequences for employees who knowingly commit fraud by signing a verification form that contains false information. Eligibility determinations made by the Family Service staffs are monitored through monthly audits.

If beneficiary fraud is suspected, the Family Service staff may use his/her own judgment to request any additional proof necessary and reasonable to verify a family's eligibility before qualifying the family for the program, or to deny eligibility as appropriate. The judgment of the Family Service staff as to the truthfulness of the family's claims can also be relied upon by the Family Service staff in such cases. Families who were qualified based on incomplete or inaccurate information may be re-evaluated for eligibility at any time.



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Recruitment	ERSEA
Regulations & Guidance	

1305.5 (a)	In order to reach those most in need of Head Start services, each Head Start grantee and delegate agency must develop and implement a recruitment process that is designed to actively inform all families with Head Start eligible children within the recruitment area of the availability of services and encourage them to apply for admission to the program. This process may include canvassing the local community, use of news releases and advertising, and use of family referrals and referrals from other public and private agencies.
1305.5 (b)	During the recruitment process that occurs prior to the beginning of the enrollment year, a Head Start program must solicit applications from as many Head Start eligible families within the recruitment area as possible. If necessary, the program must assist families in filling out the application form in order to assure that all information needed for selection is completed.
1305.5 (c)	Each program, except migrant programs, must obtain a number of applications during the recruitment process that occurs prior to the beginning of the enrollment year that is greater than the enrollment opportunities that are anticipated to be available over the course of the next enrollment year in order to select those with the greatest need for Head Start services.

Policies

1. A program wide recruitment plan will be developed and implemented each year to ensure that the number of complete and eligible applications exceeds funded enrollment before the beginning of the enrollment year.
2. All staff will help to recruit children throughout the year.
3. The Family Service staff will assist families in filling out the application form if necessary.

Recruitment Plan

In order to reach those most in need of EHS / ECAP services, the Latin American Community Center has developed and implements a recruitment process that is designed to actively inform all families with EHS / ECAP eligible children within the recruitment area of the availability of services and encourage them to apply for admission to the program. This process includes, but is not limited to, the following activities.

- contacting current EHS / ECAP families with other age eligible children
- using current EHS / ECAP families as referral sources to other potential families
- contacting current wait list families to update their application including re-verification of income
- posting flyers within the community and replacing them as necessary
- using local media to publish Public Service Announcements (PSA) about recruitment
- schedule a recruitment fair
- contact local schools to distribute recruitment flyers



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The EHS / ECAP programs at the LACC will have an annual recruitment meeting to formulate recruitment strategies. Family Service staff are given a recruitment plan checklist in order to aide in their efforts to actively inform the community of recruitment. Flyers, brochures, and other recruitment aides will be provided to Family Service staff. Time will be allotted for Family Service staff to share strategies that work best to solicit the most applications.

Family Service staff are to assist families in filling out the application form in order to ensure that all information needed for selection is completed.

Family Service staff will share the procedures to use in case of their absence. This should include an information sheet that a family would use to list their name, address and phone number where they can be reached and a brochure about programs and the services we provide, along with the information that the family will need to provide at time of application. Family Service staff will then contact those families and set up a time to complete their application.

Applications are taken continuously throughout the year to obtain as many applications as possible to help assist in gaining a number of applications that are greater than our enrollment opportunities.

Recruitment Strategies

Ways to market the program

- public service announcements on local radio (English & Spanish)
- article in WDEL and News Journal
- Applications available at reception even when FS staff are not there
- follow up with everyone who calls asking for information about enrollment
- send home Applications with every enrolled child in the program in the spring
- review files for siblings of enrolled children with the eligible birthdates
- create phone message with procedure to apply
- go door-to-door to all low-income housing projects and apartments in the area, set up table on rent day, ask manager to put flyers in mailboxes
- set up a table at the Food Bank, Multi-Service or Family Resource Center
- send flyers and cover letter to evening meal feeding program
- contact co-op preschools/child care centers in area; call Child Care Resources and Referral line about openings
- local grocery stores put a flyer in each bag for one or two weeks
- banner in a prominent place in the community

Parent activities

- train and encourage parents to do recruitment



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- teaming with staff
- video in various languages
- community booths at local events
- help identify key people in the community to spread the word
- give flyers to parents to pass out and post
- parents go door-to-door in their neighborhood/apartment
- mail Applications to past parents for distribution to their friends
- distribute brochures and applications to others they know who might be interested in, and
- eligible for Early Learning Programs
- post flyers and posters in places they frequent (e.g. grocery stores, laundromats, churches)
- post information in laundry rooms and other common-use areas in their apartment building
- host Open House and invite parents to bring friends and neighbors

Through local schools

- announcements in school newsletters
- brochures, flyers and applications available in school offices
- flyers or brochures sent home with children
- flyers posted in school windows and on bulletin boards
- Recruitment letters with applications and brochures to counselors, Child Find, Child Development Watch, etc.
- contact families on free lunch program
- email school staff

Recruiting Children with Disabilities

The Director or Family Services staff will:

- Provide program information to community agencies.
- Attend organizational and planning meetings and community activities for agencies
- Provide a monthly Disability report to the Director which includes recruitment activities and details on the number of children enrolled, in process of assessment by district, and teaching staff visiting classrooms.
- Maintain a monthly calendar of activities which outlines a rigorous and ongoing recruitment of children with disabilities in the attendance area. These activities include (but are not limited to):
 - Participation in EHS recruitment activities.
 - Mailing of program information to community agencies involved in working with young children and their families such as PIC



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- Update information which is included on electronic resources in the community such as Delaware 2-1-1: Online Guide to Human Services www.delaware211.org
- Maintain ongoing communication with LEA and other community agencies that provide services for children with disabilities and their families ages birth to five.

Selection		ERSEA
Regulations & Guidance		
1305.6 (a)	Each Head Start program must have a formal process for establishing selection criteria and for selecting children and families that considers all eligible applicants for Head Start services. The selection criteria must be based on those contained in paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section.	
1305.6 (b)	In selecting the children and families to be served, the Head Start program must consider the income of eligible families, the age of the child, the availability of kindergarten or first grade to the child, and the extent to which a child or family meets the criteria that each program is required to establish in Sec. 1305.3(c)(6). Migrant programs must also give priority to children from families whose pursuit of agricultural work required them to relocate most frequently within the previous two-year period.	
1305.6 (c)	At least 10 percent of the total number of enrollment opportunities in each grantee and each delegate agency during an enrollment year must be made available to children with disabilities who meet the definition for children with disabilities in Sec. 1305.2(a). An exception to this requirement will be granted only if the responsible HHS official determines, based on such supporting evidence he or she may require, that the grantee made a reasonable effort to comply with this requirement but was unable to do so because there was an insufficient number of children with disabilities in the recruitment area who wished to attend the program and for whom the program was an appropriate placement based on their Individual Education Plans (IEP) or Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSP), with services provided directly by Head Start or Early Head Start in conjunction with other providers.	
1305.6 (d)	Each Head Start program must develop at the beginning of each enrollment year and maintain during the year a waiting list that ranks children according to the program's selection criteria to assure that eligible children enter the program as vacancies occur.	
PC-I-024	<p>Question: Head Start classrooms with a majority of 4 year olds can have a maximum enrollment of 20 children. If in such a class a 4 year old leaves the program must the vacancy be filled with another 4 year old?</p> <p>Answer: Classes which are predominantly made up of 4 year olds can enroll up to 20 children while classes that are predominantly three can enroll no more than 17 children. The predominant age of the children in every class must be determined at the start of a Head Start's program year and that determination need not be changed during the program year, irrespective of any changes in the age composition of the children in the class. Furthermore, the class size that you begin the year with is the class size programs are expected to maintain throughout their program year (except, at the grantee's discretion in the last 60 days of the program). The program, in the above question, can fill the vacancy with either a three year old or a four year old and the program's selection criteria should be the determining factor in deciding which child on the waiting list will be offered admission into the program. Also, see OHS – PC – I – 001.</p>	

Policies

1. Enrollment opportunities will be offered first to families with the greatest need as determined by the Selection Criteria.
2. In cases where two families have the same number of selection criteria points, the family with the lowest income measured as a percentage of the poverty level will be selected first.
3. Eligible children will be selected for enrollment without regard for race, sex, creed, color, national origin or disability.

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4. Transfer requests are given priority for vacancies over waitlisted children except during the first two weeks of the enrollment year, when a Foster or Homeless child is next on the waitlist and at other times as determined by management staff in order to maintain full enrollment.

Procedures

Selection Criteria is utilized to identify the children with the most need. Children will be selected for ECAP services based on criteria specified in federal Head Start Program Performance Standards and as outlined by Red Clay School District. LACC ECAP will not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity or disabilities when considering a child for enrollment

Selection Process: The selection team will consist of two staff members, one of which must be a Director/Manager & the Family Services Coordinator. Initial selection will be made beginning in May continuing through the summer. Any remaining slots will be filled in August and September.

Income: Children with a family income equal to or below the official federal poverty level or who qualify as homeless, as a foster child based on receipt of TANF or SSI, will have priority. Children with a family income under 130% of federal poverty level will be considered if no other age and income eligible children are on the waiting list. In the event that over-income children are considered for enrollment, families with the lowest income will have the highest priority on a first come, first serve basis.

Family Risk Factors: Other risk factors will be considered when making selection decisions. Family risk factors include; involvement with child Protective Services, a child with a disability, chronic health problems or adult disability, depression or mental health issues, domestic violence, English language learner, foster child, incarcerated parent or family legal issues, parent who does not have a GED or High School diploma, single parent social isolation, substance abuse, or a teen parent. Risk factors will be determined through in person interview.

Children selected for enrollment as income-eligible four year-olds will remain in the program until they are eligible for public kindergarten.

Children with Disabilities: Ten percent (10%) of program enrollment opportunities will be filled by children with disabilities as defined in 1305.2(a). After the 10%, additional children with disabilities may compete for available slots with other children.

Transfer: Eligible children transferring from another program or Head Start grantee will be given priority if, or when, an opening is available to meet the family need. Child currently enrolled in agency programs will be eligible for transfer.

Reason for transfer:



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- Change of residence
- Change of employment or training status
- Change of child care provider

Selection Criteria

Children will be given points according to income eligibility and family risk factors. Foster children, homeless children, and family eligible for Temporary Assistance to Needy Families or Employment- Related Day Care (TANF funded benefits) or Social Security Income (SSI) will be considered a priority for enrollment.

* LACC ECAP staff will review the Head Start Income Guidelines of the current year to verify family income eligibility

Note - Children may be enrolled at 130% of federal poverty level only if no other age and income-eligible children are on the waiting list in a particular community.

- SSI
- TANF
- Foster Care - categorically eligible - 45 CFR 1305.2(l)
- Homeless/Shelter – categorically eligible - Head Start Act 645.(B)(ii)
- Deployed Military (Custodial parent)
- Income Meets 100% or below Guideline - HS Act 645.(B)(i)
- Income Meets 101% to 130% Guideline – HS Act 645.(B)(iii)(II)
- Disability with IEP 1305.6(c) _____
- Medicaid/Food Stamps (SNAP) in Household
- Child being raised by a relative _____
- Child has been Abused / Child Protective Service involved
- Hispanic Origin (Spanish primary language)
- Vicinity of LACC (lives within 3 block radius)
- Parental Loss by Death
- Teen Parent (under 21) OR Single Parent/Guardian
- Poor health of custodial parent/guardian
- 3 or more children ages 0-5 in the home
- WIC Recipient
- Substance abuse, addiction, domestic violence OR Incarcerated Parent
- Recent Immigrant/Refugee
- Prior Head Start Family
- Referral from within the LACC
- Sibling of current Before/After child
- Sibling of current EDC child



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Placement	ERSEA
Regulations & Guidance	

1306.32 (a)	<p>(3) For classes serving predominantly four or five year old children, the average class size of that group of classes must be between 17 and 20 children, with no more than 20 children enrolled in any one class.</p> <p>(4) When double session classes serve predominantly four or five year old children, the average class size of that group of classes must be between 15 and 17 children. A double session class for four or five year old children may have no more than 17 children enrolled. (See paragraph (c) of this section for other requirements regarding the double session variation.)</p> <p>(5) For classes serving predominantly three year old children, the average class size of that group of classes must be between 15 and 17 children, with no more than 17 children enrolled in any one class.</p> <p>(6) When double session classes serve pre dominantly three year old children, the average class size of that group of classes must be between 13 and 15 children. A double session class for three year old children may have no more than 15 children enrolled. (See paragraph (c) of this section for other requirements regarding the double session variation.)</p> <p>(7) It is recommended that at least 13 children be enrolled in each center-based option class where feasible.</p> <p>(8) A class is considered to serve predominantly four or five year old children if more than half of the children in the class will be four or five years old by whatever date is used by the State or local jurisdiction in which the Head Start program is located to determine eligibility for public school.</p> <p>(9) A class is considered to serve predominantly three year old children if more than half of the children in the class will be three years old by whatever date is used by the State or local jurisdiction in which Head Start is located to determine eligibility for public school.</p> <p>(10) Head Start grantees must determine the predominant age of children in the class at the start of the year. There is no need to change that determination during the year.</p> <p>(11) In some cases, State or local licensing requirements may be more stringent than these class requirements, preventing the required minimum numbers of children from being enrolled in the facility used by Head Start. Where this is the case, Head Start grantees must try to find alternative facilities that satisfy licensing requirements for the numbers of children cited above. If no alternative facilities are available, the responsible HHS official has the discretion to approve enrollment of fewer children than required above.</p>
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Policies

1. All students must be 4 years old by August 31st
2. Each Classroom will have a maximum of 20 students enrolled: 17 ECAP students and 3 EDC students.
3. Children will generally be placed randomly in the two Prek4 / ECAP classrooms, but may be placed in a specific classroom at the request of the family.
4. Siblings should not be placed in the same classroom and will be separated into the two classrooms unless it is not possible.
5. Children who are related to a staff member will not be placed in their parent's classroom but instead will be placed in the other classroom. If there is not an opening in the opposite classroom, the child may not be enrolled but will be placed on the waitlist.



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Class List Development Process (summer)

1. A waiting list of eligible applicants is developed.
2. The waiting list is sorted based on the selection criteria ranking system.
3. Preliminary class rosters are developed as follows:
 - a) Classrooms are assigned 20 children, 3 slots of which are reserved for children that are not eligible for ECAP
 - b) New children with an IEP/IFSP are placed according to recommendations
 - c) Final placement may be affected by children's needs, parent request, and/or availability.
4. A selection process timeline will be developed each year specifying a begin date and end date for the selection period. If waiting lists for specific classrooms do not exceed the number of slots available at those classrooms at time of Selection, the entire waiting list is selected and remaining vacancies are filled as soon as possible. This is to enable the program to have enough time to begin family intakes and other preparations for the coming year.
5. Preliminary class rosters are distributed and child files are created.
6. Each family is invited to an intake interview during which the Family Service staff requests physical and dental exams, introduces parent involvement, discusses health, nutrition, medications, allergies, other concerns, etc., and flags the file for further review if needed.

Families who fail to show up to intake appointments may be contacted again for a make-up appointment or are placed on the waiting list or dropped.

7. Final class lists are distributed to the teaching staff at pre-service.

Placement during the Enrollment Year

Applications received during the enrollment year are assigned to the classroom with the opening.



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Waiting List	ERSEA
Regulations & Guidance	

1305.6 (d)	Each Head Start program must develop at the beginning of each enrollment year and maintain during the year a waiting list that ranks children according to the program's selection criteria to assure that eligible children enter the program as vacancies occur.
PC – I – 038	<p>Question: How long does an application for Head Start enrollment remain in effect?</p> <p>Answer: The application, including data on income, remains valid throughout the program year for which the family has applied. Should the child not be selected for enrollment during that program year, the family must submit a new application, with updated income data, if the family wishes to apply to have their child considered for enrollment in the succeeding program year.</p>

Policies

1. Efforts will be made to maintain a waiting list of 20% of funded enrollment
2. Families who enroll then drop do not get any special priority over other families on the waiting list when another vacancy arises unless the drop was due to issues outside the family's control, such as medical needs requiring extended absence.
3. Families who repeatedly decline enrollment opportunities will be removed from the waiting list after the third time. The Family Service staff must first warn the family and offer to put them on a different waiting list.
4. Families on the waiting list who cannot be contacted when an enrollment opportunity arises will be abandoned if they do not respond within three days of initial contact by the Family Service Staff.

Procedures

Waiting List Development: When applications are determined to be both complete and eligible they are placed on the waiting list and notified in writing. Eligible children not selected to fill initial class slots will be maintained in order of selection on a waiting list roster. Roster will include program option, site and child's name, date of birth, and disability if applicable. Newly assessed children will be placed at the end.

- Priority will be given to income eligible families.
- Over income children will not exceed 10% of funded enrollment maximum. Over income children will only be allowed to enroll in the ECAP program if there not income eligible children on the waiting list.

Waiting List Maintenance: If the waiting list falls below 10% of funded enrollment the Family Service staff will focus on processing new and incomplete applications. If an insufficient number



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of incomplete applications are on file a localized recruitment plan may be implemented (see "Recruitment" section policies).

Enrollment	ERSEA
Regulations & Guidance	

1305.7 (a)	Each child enrolled in a Head Start program, except those enrolled in a migrant program, must be allowed to remain in Head Start until kindergarten or first grade is available for the child in the child's community, except that the Head Start program may choose not to enroll a child when there are not compelling reasons for the child to remain in Head Start, such as when there is a change in the child's family income and there is a child with a greater need for Head Start services. Families that qualify for Head Start, remain in the program until eligible for Kindergarten.
1305.7 (b)	A Head Start grantee must maintain its funded enrollment level. When a program determines that a vacancy exists, no more than 30 calendar days may elapse before the vacancy is filled. A program may elect not to fill a vacancy when 60 calendar days or less remain in the program's enrollment year.
1305.7 (c)	If a child has been found income eligible and is participating in a Head Start program, he or she remains income eligible through that enrollment year and the immediately succeeding enrollment year. Children who are enrolled in a program receiving funds under the authority of section 645A of the Head Start Act (programs for families with infants and toddlers, or Early Head Start) remain income eligible while they are participating in the program. When a child moves from a program serving infants and toddlers to a Head Start program serving children age three and older, the family income must be re-verified. If one agency operates both an Early Head Start and a Head Start program, and the parents wish to enroll their child who has been enrolled in the agency's Early Head Start program, the agency must ensure, whenever possible, that the child receives Head Start services until enrolled in school.

Policies

1. Vacancies will be filled within 30 days or sooner.
2. Vacancies will not usually be filled during the last 60 calendar days of the enrollment year.

Procedures

Full Enrollment and Timely Replacement

The Family Service staff will make enrollment changes. The Family Service staff will notify the Director of vacancies via email and will identify children to fill vacancies as soon as possible. The Family Service staff will contact the family to offer the slot, perform an intake interview, and coordinate a start date with the family and teaching staff. The Family Service staff will document enrollment dates and changes on the child's folder. The Family Service staff maintains enrollment records in student file. The Director monitors the process to ensure timely replacement of children and full enrollment.

Changes in Student Information

The Family Service staff will assist the family to complete a new Emergency Form when change of information is received. The Family Service staff will ensure that changes in address, phone number, name, guardianship, etc. are recorded in ETO and that this information is shared with teachers.



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Attendance	ERSEA
Regulations & Guidance	

1305.8 (a)	When the monthly average daily attendance rate in a center based program falls below 85%, a Head Start program must analyze the causes of absenteeism. The analysis must include a study of the pattern of absences for each child, including the reasons for absences as well as the number of absences that occur on consecutive days.
1305.8 (b)	If the absences are a result of illness or if they are well documented absences for other reasons, no special action is required. If, however, the absences result from other factors, including temporary family problems that affect a child's regular attendance, the program must initiate appropriate family support procedures for all children with four or more consecutive unexcused absences. These procedures must include home visits or other direct contact with the child's parents. Contacts with the family must emphasize the benefits of regular attendance, while at the same time remaining sensitive to any special family circumstances influencing attendance patterns. All contacts with the child's family as well as special family support service activities provided by program staff must be documented.
1305.8 (c)	In circumstances where chronic absenteeism persists and it does not seem feasible to include the child in either the same or a different program option, the child's slot must be considered an enrollment vacancy.
PC – I – 012	<p>Question: If a child will be absent from the Head Start program for an extended period of time because, for example, the child is traveling out of the country with his family to visit the child's grandparents, can the Head Start program keep that child's enrollment slot vacant so the child will be able to return to Head Start upon his/her return?</p> <p>Answer: Head Start programs need to be sensitive to each family's culture and allow that, as part of their culture, some families may make overseas trips to visit family members that could result in a Head Start child being absent from the Head Start program for a period of several weeks. Such an absence does not necessarily mean that child must lose his/her Head Start enrollment. Rather, each situation of this nature needs to be considered on its own merits and programs are encouraged to discuss any such situation with their responsible Regional Office. If it is determined that the situation does not constitute a "vacancy" the reasons for reaching that conclusion should be included in the child's file.</p>
PC – I – 018	<p>Question: Under what conditions may a Head Start agency terminate the enrollment of a child due to sporadic attendance or extended absences?</p> <p>Answer: If a child is absent for an extended period, such as 30 days or more, or attends only sporadically, for example one or two days per week, the Head Start agency should determine why this is occurring.</p> <p>When absences are due to a documented medical condition, the program should continue to provide family support and interim home visiting as appropriate until the child is able to return to the program.</p> <p>If there are family problems affecting the child's attendance appropriate family support procedures should be initiated. The procedures must include home visits or other direct contact with the parents.</p> <p>All contacts and services offered and provided should be documented. If these efforts are not successful, and chronic absenteeism continues, the agency should determine whether it is able to provide the child with appropriate services in another program option. If that is not feasible, the agency may, after informing the family, designate the slot as an enrollment vacancy and proceed to enroll an eligible child from their waiting list.</p>

Attendance Values

- We believe regular attendance ensures children benefit from participating in quality early education: Research shows that students who miss too many days of preschool have weaker literacy and numeracy skills entering kindergarten. This is especially true for children from low-income families, who gain the most when they attend but lose out more when they are absent.

Policy Council Approval: May 16, 2016
Governing Board Approval: pending



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- A habit of attendance is a school readiness skill: An important role of early education programs is helping children to develop important social-emotional skills, including forming a habit of attendance. Children who are chronically absent in preschool are far more likely to be chronically absent in later grades.
- Good attendance is a measure of parent engagement: Attendance improves when families understand what their children are learning while they are in a program as well as feel welcome and supported. Early childhood educators can use attendance to assess how well they are doing with engaging and supporting families and their children.

Policies

1. Excused Absences may not exceed 10 consecutive school days. However, the program understands that in certain situations some children may require medical treatment or care in excess of 10 consecutive days. Furthermore, the program understands in some cases the need for such an allowance may result from an unforeseen medical emergency. In such instances, and under case by case review, there may be exceptions to the 10-day Excused Absences policy. Consultation with the program's Family Service staff and Director, Compliance/ERSEA will be required in all instances before such an allowance is granted. Other than as noted above, if an absence exceeds 10 days the child will be dropped. Excused absences include:
 - Illness of child or parent (a doctor's note may be required if absent 3 or more days; otherwise, they may be treated as unexcused.)
 - Family emergency (medical emergency or other circumstance excused by supervisory staff)
 - Death in the immediate family
 - Court-ordered visitation (a copy of the court order is required)
 - Medical or dental appointment for child
 - Trips out of the area to visit family members (must be requested in writing, approved by supervisory staff, and may not exceed 10 consecutive school days and used only once per program term OR twice, if used separately in two 5-day increments per program term).
 - Other reasons which are clearly in the best interest of the child as determined and agreed upon EDC staff
2. Unexcused absences (consecutive or not) may not generally exceed 10 days throughout the school year. If a family exceeds 10 unexcused absences despite the efforts of program staff to offer support to the family, the child will be dropped from the program unless an exception is approved in consultation with the Director. Unexcused absences include any reason not listed as "Excused" above.
3. Children with special needs may have adjusted schedules according to their need.



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Procedures

The EDC at the Latin American Community Center is open daily from 6:45am to 5:30pm. Students must arrive before 8:30am.

Tardiness

Breakfast is served 8:35am until 8:50am and any student reporting to school after 8:30am is considered to be late and must be signed in by a parent/guardian in the 1st floor EDC office. The EDC Leadership on duty will give the student a Tardy Slip to present to their teacher for admittance into the classroom.

Parents/guardians of the student who is late to school should present a written explanation for the tardiness. Reasons as car trouble, personal business, heavy traffic, home obligations, etc., while understandable, are not acceptable excuses and will be listed as unexcused. Reasons such as personal illness, medical appointments, and appearances in court will be considered as excused tardiness when verified by a note.

Sign In

The Teaching Staff ensures that a responsible adult (parent/guardian, friend or relative) uses his/her full signature to sign in each child every day. Time of arrival must be clearly indicated for each child next to the parent's signature, as well as a working telephone number in case of an emergency. If a child arrives unaccompanied by an adult to the center, the teaching staff brings the child into the center and contacts the parent immediately to request that they return to properly sign in the child.

The Teaching Staff performs a health check on each child and documents his/her attendance at the time of arrival on the Health Check form.

Authorization to Release Children

The following procedures will be followed when releasing child(ren) from our Center.

1. Children must be signed in and out daily on the "Sign-In / Sign-Out classroom clipboards located at the entrance of the EDC (Infants, Toddler 1 & Toddler 2A & B), entrance of 402 N Van Buren (PreK3A & B), and the second floor (Toddler 2C, PreK3C, PreK4A & B).
2. During drop off in the morning: It is imperative that Teachers have a brief conversation with the parent: "Hello! How are you? How was the morning? Anything I need to know about?"



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3. Only authorized individuals, authorized by parent/guardian, will be permitted to pick-up children registered at the Center. Authorized pick-ups will be provided access through the security doors.
 4. When an authorized person removes a child from the Center, all responsibility for that child is released to the authorized person upon pick-up from the classroom/supervising teacher.
 5. Proper identification must be made available should an authorized person notify the Center about the release of a child to a person unknown to the Center staff. If a person is not listed as an authorized person for pick-up in the child's file, the Teacher or Family Service Worker must call the parent/guardian to verify pick-up information given over the phone.
 6. Authorized individuals must be 18 years of age and provide a valid driver's license to verify parent/guardian's information.
 7. No child will be released to persons showing a clear sign of drug or alcohol intoxication. The next authorized person will be called to pick up the child.
 - Call 9-1-1 immediately to notify the police. If the police arrive at the center while the adult is still present, they will determine what further action should be taken. Only a police officer can officially determine if an adult is intoxicated.
 - Try to keep the adult at the center by discussing the child's day, etc., until the police arrive.
 - Call the Director to inform about the situation.
 - Allow the adult to take the child if he/she insists on leaving or if the staff and children are physically being threatened.
 - Should the parent leave with the child prior to the arrival of the police, the teaching staff should be prepared to provide a description of the person, the car, and the license plate number.
 - Call the Child Protective Services Agency and file a child abuse report.
- The Teaching Staff will only release children to adults listed on the Emergency Card unless the parent has notified the Teaching Staff or Family Service staff in advance, either verbally or in writing, that another adult is authorized to pick up the child. All such authorizations are documented in the student's file with the date, time, and name of the person who authorized the pick-up of the child.
 - The Family Services staff will also ensure that at least two people are listed on the emergency card and that emergency numbers are current.
 - If a parent or legal guardian requests that his/her spouse not be allowed to remove their child from the center, the Family Services Staff will:
 - Notify the Teaching Staff of the situation.



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- Request a copy of the court order and place it in the child's file in the locked cabinet.
- If there is no court order, the teaching staff may release the child to the parent as long as the parent is listed on the Emergency Card and provides proper identification such as Driver's License or valid identification.
- Inform the parent that Head Start is not a law enforcement agency and cannot undertake that role.
- If a dispute over custody should occur in the classroom, the Teaching Staff will:
 - Deal with the family calmly
 - Ask the parent(s) if they would like to talk to the EDC Leadership.
 - If it seems like the parent(s) may become violent, the teaching staff should release the child and inform the parent that they must call the police.
 - Contact the police as soon as the likelihood of violence becomes apparent.
 - Should the parent leave with the child prior to the arrival of the police, the teaching staff should be prepared to provide a description of the person, the car, and the license plate number. The teaching staff will call the Director to report and document the incident.

Late Pick Up/Sign-Out

If a parent has not signed out their child by the time the center is closed, the Family Services staff will call the parents or other people listed on the Emergency Card to pick up the child. They will also inform the EDC Leadership (Director or Instructional Manager). When the parent arrives, the Family Services staff will inform parents of the importance of picking up their child on time and give the parent a written notice to reinforce the late pick up procedure.

If no one can be reached to pick up the child, the Family Service staff will call the Director who will:

- Develop a plan of action
- Stay with the child until the authorities take the child to the shelter.
- Head Start staff is not authorized to transport children from the center

If abuse and/or neglect is suspected as part of the late sign out, the Director will:

- Call the Police Department and/or Child Abuse Reporting Center to report the situation to the authorities
 - A social worker or police officer may go to the classroom and take further action if necessary.
 - If the child is taken to the children's shelter, post a note with directions to the shelter on the EDC's door.



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- Complete a child abuse report.

If late pick up is a recurring problem the Family Service staff, after 3 late pick-ups notices have been given to the parent, will work with the family to develop strategies to pick up the child on time.

Attendance Tracking and Absences

1. Teachers will record the child's attendance status using the on the Child Tracking Form and the ETO forms

Attendance codes will be used as appropriate:

- P = Present
 - EX = Excused Absence (documented reasons: serious illness/injury; death in the family; temporary family situation; trainings/conferences; medical appointments)
 - A – Absence (unsure of reason)
 - T = Tardy (child arrived later than 9:30 am)
 - L = Left Early (this will be used to confirm a meal for either Excused or Unexcused Absence) Also, it is very important to enter in attendance reasons why they are absent for both excused and unexcused absents; why they were tardy, or left early.
2. Teachers will call the family to inquire as to why the child is absent. Make a note of the reason on the Child Tracking Form.
 3. When a child is absent, Teachers will email the Family Service staff to inform them. The Family Service staff will assist families in identifying and eliminating barriers to achieving regular attendance by providing appropriate support services.
 4. Family Service staff is required to contact the parent/guardian by phone or in person (when phone is not an option) after two days of consecutive absences and contact will be documented in ETO.
 5. Absentees due to illnesses
 - a. If the child is absent two (2) days in a row due to an illness or health concern the staff will request parents to write a Statement to excuse the absence(s).
Required on the statement
 1. Reason for keeping the child home
 2. How they were treated



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3. How many days absent
4. Parent/Guardian's signature
- b. If the child is absent three (3) days or more in a row due to an illness or health concern, the staff will request a doctor's statement to excuse the absences.
6. A home visit will be made by the Family Service staff after three days of unexcused absences and will include:
 - a. Determination as to the cause of absenteeism (while being sensitive to possible family circumstances)
 - b. Emphasizing the need for regular attendance
 - c. Offering family support, referrals, or resource information
 - d. Determining when child will returnFamily Service staff will document home visit in the ETO system and will communicate back to Teachers and Director.
7. Family Engagement Specialist will be responsible to enter daily attendance & meals into the program's tracking system ETO (daily).
8. The Director will monitor attendance via ETO & attendance reports send by the Family Engagement Specialist, will analyze trends, and evaluate causes of absenteeism.
9. The last working day of the month, all attendance forms need to be filed in the Family Service Office in the appropriately labeled files (ETO, Child Tracking Forms, and Parent Sign in / out Forms).
10. If the Family Service staff cannot find the family at home, the Family Service staff will make a third attempt to contact the family no later than the 10th day of absence. This final attempt may be a phone call to the family and also a call to the contact persons listed on the emergency card. If no contact can be made after these efforts, the family is dropped and the enrollment slot is filled with another child. The Family Service staff will document all attempts at making contact in ETO.
11. Once a child is "dropped from the program", the parent/guardian may re-enroll that child with an Action Plan in place to remove/diminish attendance barriers and ensure consistent attendance.
12. The Family Services staff notifies the appropriate LACC staff (Accounting Assistant) of the child withdrawing from the program and will attempt to fill vacancies immediately.



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Policy on Fees ERSEA

Regulations & Guidance

1305.9 A Head Start program must not prescribe any fee schedule or otherwise provide for the charging of any fees for participation in the program. If the family of a child determined to be eligible for participation by a Head Start program volunteers to pay part or all of the costs of the child's participation, the Head Start program may accept the voluntary payments and record the payments as program income. Under no circumstances shall a Head Start program solicit, encourage, or in any other way condition a child's enrollment or participation in the program upon the payment of a fee.

Policies

1. The ECAP program will not solicit, encourage, or impose any fee for providing services to families.
2. ECAP Staff will never ask parents for money for program activities. This includes classroom celebrations or field trips.

NOTE: Families being served full day will be required to pay fees to the LACC agency for the non-state-funded portion of the services they are receiving, but never for ECAP services.