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**Subject : Attendance Policy**

**Source: This policy complies with Head Start Performance Standard 45 CFR 1305.8 (a)-(c) and 1306.32 (b)(5).**

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**Policy**

All families are encouraged to maintain regular attendance in Early Head Start activities. Head Start staff will support families in identifying barriers to regular attendance and will be given the opportunity to attend the program.

**Procedure**

- Social Service manager and Family Service worker are responsible for investigating and documenting the causes of absenteeism if the average daily attendance in a center-based classroom falls below 85%.
- The Center Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that the Daily Sign In/Out forms are completed completely and correctly.
- The Social Services manager and teacher is responsible for follow up and family support on attendance issues and for documenting these activities.
- The Center Coordinator is responsible for entering information from the Daily Sign In/Out forms in the electronic data management system.

**Absences**

Parents are encouraged to call or send a note to account for each day that their child cannot attend class and to explain the reasons for the absence. Attendance will be recorded daily in the classroom and entered into our database system.

**Analysis of the causes of absenteeism**

If the monthly average daily attendance rate in a center-based program falls below 85%, the Social Services manager 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. This analysis will be included in the Social Services manager's monthly report.

**Attendance plans**

If a child has four or more consecutive unexcused absences, staff will contact the family to develop an attendance plan. The Parents are allowed to present an excused absence letter five times a year without a doctor's excuse.

The attendance plan will be designed to help the family to establish regular attendance or, if necessary, to plan for alternative services. The attendance plan will be developed by the family and the Social Services manager or teacher, typically during a home visit or face-to-face meeting. It must:

1. Identify the reasons for the absences, and;

2. Include a specific plan and date for establishing regular attendance or alternative services such as teacher home visits or “home work bags” containing appropriate books and activities.

### **Home Based Plan**

Make up visits will be designed to ensure that all children enrolled in Early Head Start receive services and continue to make progress on their educational goals. Make up visits will be provided by the home visitor and will typically occur on a make up date which is different from the regular home visit date.

### **All options (Home based and Center based)**

Staff must document all contacts (e.g. telephone calls, letters) with the child’s family and any special family support activities which are provided as part of the attendance plan in the database system.

### **Withdrawal from the program**

If regular attendance cannot be established either by classroom participation or by participation in home based program, another child on the waiting list must be given the opportunity to enroll in the program. Families should be given every opportunity to establish regular attendance, and should be withdrawn from the program only when they are unwilling or unable to participate.

### **Vacations**

One scheduled vacation, family visit, or other planned absence of up to 2 calendar weeks will be permitted each program year. Families who do not reestablish regular attendance within 2 calendar weeks will be withdrawn from the program.