

Section # 16
ELIGIBILITY, RECRUITMENT, SELECTION, ENROLLMENT, AND ATTENDANCE

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ELIGIBILITY, RECRUITMENT, SELECTION, ENROLLMENT, AND ATTENDANCE

Policy ID: EL01

Subject: Selection Policy & Procedures

Policy: It is the policy of NFCD to select eligible applicants based on greatest need using the criteria and the rating scale approved by the Policy Council. To ensure that at least 10% of available slots are filled with children that have been diagnosed with a Disability.

1. When the applicant pool has reached 125% of the slots available, the Family & Community Partnership Specialist will run the ChildPlus program that prioritizes the applicants in the pool based on the approved rating scale. If the applicant pool does not reach the 125% threshold, the Family & Community Partnership Specialist may enroll the neediest income eligible children, to ensure full enrollment upon first day of services.
2. Prior to the selection, the Family & Community Partnership Specialist will evaluate the waitlist and ensure that the participant's documentation appears accurate and complete.
3. Applicant selection by the Family & Community Partnership Specialist will begin with the first name on the priority list, that is age appropriate for the vacant slot and proceed until the center's slots are 90% filled.
4. When 90% of the slots have been filled, the Family & Community Partnership Specialist will review the selected applicants and determine the % of children with disabilities selected to participate.
5. If the process at the 90% selection stage has not yielded the 10% of the slots being filled by applicants with a disability, the Family & Community Partnership Specialist will continue selection from the list, selecting only those applicant's who have a disability until the % of applicants with a disability reaches 10% of the center's slots.
6. If slots remain after applicants selected reaches 10% of the center's slots, the Family & Community Partnership Specialist will return to the next applicant on the list at the completion of step 3, and precede selection until applicants are selected to fill the slots remaining after completion of item 5.
7. If there are applicants remaining after all slots are filled, the remaining applicants will make up the center's waiting list.
8. If a vacancy occurs, the Family & Community Partnership Specialist will select the first age appropriate applicant on the waiting list to fill the vacancy.

Regulations: 1305.4, 1305.6, 1305.7

History: Adopted by: Policy Council and Board of Directors on 09/25/2003
Revision Date(s): Policy Council – 09/28/2010 Board of Directors 10/05/2010

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Policy ID: EL02

Subject: Eligibility

Policy: NFCD establishes these eligibility criteria, in accordance with the Performance Standards.

1. To be eligible for NFCD Pre-K services, a child must be at least three years old by September 1st (the date used to determine eligibility for public school in the community in which the Head Start programs are located). To be eligible for NFCD infant and toddler services, an applicant must be pregnant or the child must be less than 3 years of age.
2. At least 90 percent of the children who are enrolled in each NFCD program must be from low-income families. The definition of “family” to be used in determining eligibility is found in 45 CFR 1305.2(e), which defines family as 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 parents(s) or guardian(s) by blood, marriage, or adoption.
3. Up to ten percent of the children in NFCD and ten percent of the children in NFCD who are enrolled may be children from families that exceed the low-income guidelines but who meet the criteria that NFCD has established for selecting such children and who would benefit from NFCD services. The criteria include:
 - a) Parental Status
 - b) Disability Status
 - c) Income Status
 - d) Other
 - e) Head Start Age
 - f) Early Head Start Age
 - g) Family Size Income Guidelines
4. To be eligible for acceptance an application must be completed and required verifications and documentation attached. Staff will assist families in completing the application and Child Plus documentation. Child Plus documentation must be complete and accurate, with all areas filled in; if items do not apply, leave them blank. A parent/guardian must complete one application per child.
5. Parents/Guardians must submit copies of income verification; birth certificate, social security card, Medicaid or insurance card, and food stamp card (if applicable). If the child has a disability, documents supporting such disability must be submitted. The application is not official until signed and dated by the parent/guardian and Family Case Manager.

6. The family income must be verified before determining a child is eligible to participate in the program. If there is no income, please have the parent/guardian complete the “No Income Verification Form”. Income 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.
7. An employee of the NCFD programs must sign as indicated on the enrollment application, verifying and identifying which of these documents was examined, and stating that the child is eligible to participate in the program. The eligibility verification worksheet will be completed, during the eligibility determination.

Regulations: 1305.4; 1305.4 a; 1305.4 b 1; 1305.4 b 2; 1305.4 b 3; 1305.4 b 3 i; 1305.4 b 3 ii; 1305.4 b 3 iii; 1305.4 b 3 iv; 1305.4 b 4; 1305.4 c; 1305.4 d; 1305.4 e

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Policy ID: EL03

Subject: Recruitment of Children

Policy: NFCD reaches out to those most in need of Head Start and Early Head Start services.

1. In order to reach those most in need of Head Start and Early Head Start services, NFCD develops and implements a recruitment process that is designed to actively inform all families with Head Start and Early 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 includes:
 - a) Canvassing the local community;
 - b) use of news releases and advertising;
 - c) use of family referrals and referrals from other public, private agencies and community partners.
2. During the recruitment process that occurs prior to the beginning of the enrollment year, NFCD solicits applications from as many Head Start and Early Head Start eligible families within the recruitment area as possible. Family Case Managers assist families in the completion of the application process, by entering the information directly into Child Plus in the presents of the Parent or Guardian to ensure accuracy, rapport and all information needed for selection is completed.
3. NFCD obtains a number of applications during the recruitment process, 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 and Early Head Start services.

Regulations: 1305.5; 1305.5 a; 1305.5 b; 1305.5 c

History: Adopted by Policy Council and Board of Directors on 09/25/2003

ELIGIBILITY, RECRUITMENT, SELECTION, ENROLLMENT, AND ATTENDANCE

Policy ID: EL04

Subject: Selection Process

Policy: NFCD implements this formal process for selection of children.

1. All eligible applicants are considered for child development services.
2. The selection criteria is based on the greatest need using the criteria and rating scale (Priority Grid) approved by the Policy Council.
3. NFCD maintains an active waiting list at all times with ongoing outreach to the community and activities to identify underserved populations.

Regulations: 1305.2 a; 1305.3 c 6; 1305.6; 1305.6 a; 1305.6 b; 1305.6 c; 1305.6 d
Section 642(g) of the Head Start Act, 42 U.S.C. 9837(g) ACF-PI-HS-08-05

History: Adopted: Policy Council and Board of Directors on 09/25/2003
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Policy ID: EL05

Subject: Re-enrollment

Policy: NFCD re-enrolls eligible children, as vacancies become available.

1. Each child who turns 3 years of age prior to the school cutoff date, must reapply to participate in the program for 3-4 years olds.

Regulations: 1305.7; 1305.7 a; 1305.7 b; 1305.7 c;
Section 642(g) of the Head Start Act, 42U.S.C. 9837(g) ACF-PI-HS-08-05

History: Adopted: Policy Council and Board of Directors on 09/25/2003
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ELIGIBILITY, RECRUITMENT, SELECTION, ENROLLMENT, AND ATTENDANCE

Policy ID: EL06

Subject: Attendance

Policy: NFCD keeps track of attendance and absenteeism.

1. When the monthly average daily attendance rate in a center falls below 85 percent, NFCD analyzes the causes of absenteeism. The analysis includes 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.
2. 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, NFCD initiates appropriate family support procedures for all children with two or more consecutive unexcused absences. These procedures include home visits or other direct contact with the child's parents. Contacts with the family emphasizes 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 are documented in Child Plus.
3. 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 is considered an enrollment vacancy.
4. A "Daily Sign-In/Out Form" for children will be maintained at the designated location at each center. Children being transported by parents, guardians, or other designated persons must be accompanied in to and out of the center and the person must sign the "Daily Sign-In/Out Form". The Lead Teacher / Care-Giver will file the present day's completed "Daily Sign-In/Out Form" in their attendance book at the end of each school day. The family case manager will document in Child Plus at the end of that week.
5. A child will not be released under any circumstances to anyone who is not listed on the application as approved to pick up and Child Plus emergency contacts list. The program staff must receive prior written authorization from the parent/guardian, to change or make additions to the contact and pick up lists. If the teacher does not know the person picking up the child, program staff must ask for identification. Classroom volunteers may not release children to anyone.
6. If the person is with a government agency, they will need to provide proper identification and verification of the order for the removal of the child from the center. Program staff must verify this information prior to the child's removal.
7. Daily Attendance is record daily on the appropriate form and entered by the family case manager into Child Plus, by the end of that week.

8. The first day a child is absent, the teacher will contact the child's parent to determine the cause for the child's absence. The teacher will remind the parent to send a written explanation when the child returns to class. If information gathered during the initial conversation reveals the child has a communicable disease or prolonged illness, daily contacts are not necessary until the expected date for the child to return to school.
9. If the child does not return to school on the 2nd day, or the day of expected return, the teacher will complete and submit to the Family Case Manager for follow up.
10. The Family Case Manager will follow-up daily and will document contact attempts in Child Plus until the child returns. The Family Case Manager will also provide the necessary assistance and referrals for community resources, in order for the child to return to school, if needed.
11. When the child returns to school, the teacher will require a written note from the parent explaining the absence. This note will be submitted to the Family Case Manager, filed in the child's file and documented in Child Plus. Upon receipt of the note the absence will be considered excused, if it meets the criteria.
12. Children who have six unexcused absences in one month may be terminated from the program.
13. It is the responsibility of the Family Case Manager to file Attendance Referrals and documentation in the child's file and enter all obtained information into ChildPlus.
14. See also the USDA section
15. The absence of children receiving services, who are under court ordered supervision, will be reported to the Department of Children and Families, by the end of the business day, per Rilya Wilson Act.

Regulations: 1305.8, 1305.8 a, 1305.8 b, 1305.8 c, Riyla Wilson Act

History: Adopted by Policy Council and Board on 07/25/2003
Revision Date(s): Updated by Board on 07/28/2005

ELIGIBILITY, RECRUITMENT, SELECTION, ENROLLMENT, AND ATTENDANCE

Policy ID: EL07

Subject: Policy on Fees for Head Start and Early Head Start programs

Policy: NFCD *does not* charge any fees for participation in the *Early Head Start and Head Start programs*.

1. NFCD *does not* prescribe any fee schedule or otherwise provide for the charging of any fees for participation in the Early Head Start and Head Start programs.
2. If the family of a child determined to be eligible for participation by a Head Start or Early Head Start program volunteers to pay part or all of the costs of the child's participation, NFCD may accept the voluntary payments and records the payments as program income.
3. Under no circumstances does NFCD solicit, encourage, or in any other way condition a child's enrollment or participation in the Early Head Start or Head Start programs upon the payment of a fee.

Regulations: 1305.9

History: Adopted by Policy Council and Board on 09/25/2003
Revision Date(s):

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Policy ID: EL08

Subject: Enrollment

Policy: Enrollment is done in accordance with these procedures.

1. The same policies governing the Head Start and Early Head Start program's eligibility for other children apply to children with disabilities.
2. NFCD's enrollment procedures take into account:
 - a) The number of children with disabilities in the service area, including types of disabilities and their severity.
 - b) The services and resources provided by other agencies.
 - c) State laws regarding immunization of preschool children. The program observes applicable State laws (which usually require that children entering State preschool programs complete immunizations prior to or within 30 days after entering to reduce the spread of communicable diseases).
3. The enrollment process.
 - a) All applications for enrollment will be entered into the ChildPlus system by the Family Case Manager. (All sections must be completed in ChildPlus.)
 - b) The Family & Community Partnership Specialist will review monthly (by the 10th of month) with the management team. The management team will evaluate levels of enrollment based on the enrollment priority listing provided by ChildPlus.
 - c) ChildPlus reports showing the accepted children will be available to the Family Case Managers and Center Managers for their service area, through their ChildPlus Access. The Family & Community Partnership Specialist will send acceptance letters to the families.
 - d) The acceptance letters will inform the parents of the Parent Orientation date, time, and place. The acceptance letters will also serve as a reminder to the parents that all accepted children must have a current physical and up-to-date shot record, within forty-five (45) days of the first day of attendance at school. During the first thirty (30) days of enrollment, the Family Case Manager must contact the parents to find out the status of the needed documents and provide assistance if needed.

4. **Enrollment Priorities.** The program enrolls children based on the following priorities.

- a) First, the child must be determined eligible for services.
- b) Second, children with disabilities are given priority over non-disabled children.
- c) Third, children from the lowest-income families are given priority.

Regulations: 1304.50 d 1 vii; 1308.5 e

History: Adopted by Policy Council and Board of Directors on 09/25/2003
Revision Date(s):

SOCIAL SERVICES

Policy ID: SS01

Subject: Recruitment and Enrollment of Children with Disabilities

Policy: NFCD's outreach and recruitment activities incorporate specific actions to actively locate and recruit children with disabilities.

1. NFCD insures that staff engaged in recruitment and enrollment of children are knowledgeable about the provisions of 45 CFR Part 84, Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap in Programs and Activities Receiving or Benefiting from Federal Assistance, and of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101).
2. The grantee does not deny placement on the basis of a disability or its severity to any child when:
 - a) The parents wish to enroll the child;
 - b) The child meets the Early Head Start or Head Start age and income eligibility criteria;
 - c) NFCD is an appropriate placement according to the child's IEP.
3. NFCD accesses resources and plans for placement options, such as dual placement, use of resource staff and training so that a child with a disability for whom Early Head Start or Head Start is an appropriate placement according to the IEP is not denied enrollment because of:
 - a) Staff attitudes and/or apprehensions;
 - b) Inaccessibility of facilities;
 - c) Need to access additional resources to serve a specific child;
 - d) Unfamiliarity with a disabling condition or special equipment, such as a prosthesis;
 - e) Need for personalized special services such as feeding, suctioning, and assistance with toileting, including catheterization, diapering, and toiled training.
4. The same policies governing NFCD programs eligibility for other children, such as priority for those most in need of the services, apply to children with disabilities.

5. NFCD takes the following factors into account when planning enrollment procedures:
 - a) The number of children with disabilities in the Early Head Start or Head Start service area including types of disabilities and their severity;
 - b) The services and resources provided by other agencies; and
 - c) State laws regarding immunization of preschool children. The Grantee observes applicable State laws which usually require that children entering State preschool programs complete immunizations prior to or within thirty days after entering to reduce the spread of communicable diseases.
6. The recruitment effort includes recruiting children who have severe disabilities, including children who have been previously identified as having disabilities.

Regulations: 1308.5; 1308.5 a; 1308.5 b; 1308.5 c; 1308.5 c 1; 1308.5 c 2; 1308.5 c 3; 1308.5 c 4; 1308.5 d; 1308.5 d 1; 1308.5 d 2; 1308.5 d 3; 1308.5 d 4; 1308.5 d 5; 1308.5 e; 1308.5 e 1; 1308.5 e 2; 1308.5 e 3; 1308.5 f.

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