


Performance Standard:	Part 1302 Program Operations ERSEA	<h2 style="color: #800040; text-align: center;">INCA Community Services</h2> <h3 style="text-align: center;">Head Start & Early Head Start Policies and Procedures</h3> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>
Sub Category:	1302.16 Attendance (ERSEA)	
Policy Council Approval Date:	10/17	
Governing Board Approval Date:	10/17	
Responsible:	ERSEA Team: Area Supervisor/Family Engagement Coordinators, and Head Start Director	

Attendance, Absenteeism, and Withdrawal of Children

Policy

INCA promotes regular attendance for enrolled children.

Attendance of Children

- INCA tracks the attendance of each enrolled child.
- INCA implements a process to ensure children are safe when they do not arrive at school.
 - If a child is unexpectedly absent and a parent has not contacted the classroom within one hour of program start time, classroom staff attempts to contact the parent to ensure the child's well-being.
- To promote child attendance, INCA:
 - Provides to parents information about the benefits of regular attendance;
 - Supports families to promote the child's regular attendance;
 - Conducts a home visit or makes other direct contact with a child's parent if a child has multiple unexplained absences (such as three consecutive unexplained absences); and
 - Within the first 60 days of program operation, and on an ongoing basis thereafter, uses individual child attendance data to identify children with patterns of absence that put them at risk of missing 10% of program days per year.
 - Area Supervisors/Family Engagement Coordinator uses Absence Reason report from electronic record keeping system to determine strategies to improve individual attendance among identified children, including direct contact with parents or intensive case management, as necessary.
- If a child ceases to attend, the program makes appropriate efforts to re-engage the family to resume attendance(see above)
 - If the child's attendance does not resume, then the program considers that slot vacant.
 - This action is not considered expulsion as described in 1302.17

Managing Systematic Program Attendance Issues

- If INCA's monthly average daily attendance rate falls below 85%, INCA ERSEA Team analyzes the causes of absenteeism to identify and systemic issues that contribute to INCA's absentee rate.
 - INCA uses this data to make necessary changes in a timely manner as part of ongoing oversight and correction and inform its continuous improvement efforts. 1302.102(b) and 1302.102(c)

Supporting Attendance of Homeless Children

- If INCA determines a child is eligible under 1302.12 (c)(1)(iii), it allows the child to attend for up to 90 days or as long as allowed under state licensing requirements, without immunization and other records, to give the family reasonable time to present those documents.
 - INCA works with families to get children immunized as soon as possible in order to comply with state licensing requirements.
- If a child experiencing homelessness is unable to attend classes regularly because the family does not have transportation to and from the classroom facility, INCA utilizes community resources, where possible, to provide transportation for the child.

Child Attendance, Absenteeism, and Withdrawal

- Before enrollment, Area Supervisor/Family Engagement Coordinator inform parents that children are expected to maintain regular attendance at their Head Start classroom.
 - Parents/guardians are given copies of this policy and procedure at Welcoming Home Visit and/or Orientation.
 - Classroom Teaching staff and Area Supervisor/Family Engagement Coordinator receives training on the absenteeism procedure during the program year.
- Facility Closing
 - Head Start Director contacts Area Supervisors/Family Engagement Coordinator of closing wh:
 - advise Classroom Teachers who
 - is responsible for notifying parents of any facility closings.
- Area Supervisor/Family Engagement Coordinator informs parents that they are to contact the child's center if the child will be absent.
 - Classroom staff document parent communication and reason for child's absence on the entry express attendance on electronic record keeping systems.
- After three consecutive days of unreported absence, Classroom Teaching staff contact the family by phone, written notice, email, text message, and /or visit.
- If no response or contact has been made on the third consecutive day of absenteeism, Classroom Teaching staff makes a referral Area Supervisor/Family Engagement Coordinator to arrange a home visit to follow-up with the family.
- Teaching staff and/or Area Supervisor document referrals and follow-ups in the electronic record-keeping system.
- Two attempts to conduct a home visit, and document the attempts in the electronic record-keeping system.
- On determining the reasons for the child's absence, Area Supervisor/Family Engagement Coordinator offers to assist the parent or guardian in finding a solution.
- ERSEA Team monitor and document the daily attendance and absenteeism, follow-up, and withdrawal status of children in the electronic record-keeping system.
- A child may be withdrawn from the program:
 - After ten consecutive days of unreported absence; or
 - If the child has irregular attendance and if every possible step has been taken to assist the family.

- ERSEA Team conference may be held prior to decision to withdraw a child.
 - The decision to re-admit a family into the program is at the discretion of INCA.
 - If a child does not attend class due to a required service related to a Head Start mandate (e.g, medical/dental exams, treatment, follow-up, screenings, immunizations), then Area Supervisor/Family Engagement Coordinator mark the child present/off site on the attendance sheet.
 - In the electronic record-keeping system this is documented.
 - When the absenteeism rate falls below 85% at any classroom, ERSEA Team reviews monthly Attendance Report and the absence reason report to analyze the cause of absenteeism and formulates a corrective action plan.

Child Attendance/Absenteeism Tracking and Communication

- Teaching staff keep track of attendance and absenteeism
- Teaching staff and/or Area Supervisors/Family Engagement Coordinator communicate with families when children's absenteeism falls below 85%
- When the monthly average daily attendance rate in a center-based falls below 85%, ERSEA Team 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.
- If the absences are a result of illness or if they are well documented absences for other reason, no special action is required.
 - If, however, the absences result from other factors, including temporary family problems which affect a child's regular attendance, INCA initiates appropriate family support procedures for all children with three 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 contact with the children's family, as well as special family support service activities provided by the Area Supervisor/Family Engagement Coordinator are documented.
 - When families cannot be contacted by telephone, Area Supervisor/Family Engagement Coordinator shall reach out to them by use of other means, such as postal mail, home visits, email, text messages, notes sent home with the child or other methods.
 - When absences result from temporary family situations, INCA offers support to the affected family
 - In circumstances where chronic absenteeism persists and it does not seem feasible to include the child in the same or different classroom, the child's slot is considered an enrollment vacancy.

Recording Daily Attendance

- Classroom Teaching staff record the daily attendance of each child on the Entry Express in electronic record keeping system.
 - If the child arrives on the opening day, the Teacher write "P" in Entry Express.
 - If the child does not arrive on the opening day, the teacher writhes an "A" on the Entry Express.

- The symbol "A" can only be carried for a maximum of ten days from the opening date.
 - The Teacher initiates the absenteeism policy.
 - After ten days of child absence the Area Supervisor/Family Engagement Coordinator writes a "D" on the Enrollment in electronic record-keeping system.
- Classroom Teaching staff or designee maintain a daily attendance roster (Sign in sheet) for each class of children, using the attendance to document each child's attendance and absences.
 - Classroom Teaching staff use these codes on the Entry Express as appropriate:
 - "E" for Entry in the appropriate day's box for the first day of a child's attendance in the program.
 - "W" for Withdrawal in the appropriate day's box for the last day of attendance to record a child's withdrawal the program
- Electronic record-keeping system attendance entry:
 - "P" – marked when a child is Present.
 - "A" – marked when a child is Absent.
 - "O" - present off site - scheduled appointment – When a child is not physically present in a classroom due to a screening or other Head Start/Early Head Start activity.

Definitions/Acronyms

Children with Disabilities - Children with mental retardation, hearing impairments (including deafness,) speech or language impairments, visual impairments (including blindness,) serious emotional disturbance, orthopedic impairments, autism, traumatic brain injury, other health impairments, other or specific learning disabilities who, by reason may need special education and related services. The term "children with disabilities" for children age 3 to 5, inclusive, may, at a State's discretion, include children experiencing developmental delays, as defined by a State and as measured by appropriate diagnostic instruments and procedures, in one or more of the following areas: physical development, cognitive development, communication development, social or emotional development, and adaptive development; and who, by reason thereof, need special education and related services.

Enrolled (or any variation of) A child has been accepted and attended at least one class for center-based option.

Funded Enrollment - The number of participants which the Head Start grantee is to serve, as indicated on the grant award.

EHS - Early Head Start program - A public or private non-profit or for-profit entity designated by ACF to operate an Early Head Start program to serve pregnant women and children from birth to age three, pursuant to Section 645A(e) of the Head Start Act.

ERSEA - Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment and Attendance

Family

All persons living in the same household who are supported by the child's parent(s)' or guardian(s)' income; **and** are related to the child's parent(s) or guardian(s) by blood, marriage, or adoption; or are the child's authorized caregiver or legally responsible party.

Foster Care - 24-hour substitute care for children placed away from their parents or guardians and for whom the state agency has placement and care responsibility. This includes, but is not limited to, placements in foster family homes, foster homes of relatives, group homes, emergency shelters, residential facilities, child-care institutions, and pre-adoptive homes. A child is in foster care in accordance with this definition regardless of whether the foster care facility is licensed and payments are made by the state or local agency for the care of the child, whether adoption subsidy payments are being made prior to the finalization of an adoption, or whether there is

federal matching of any payments that are made.

INCA - Head Start and Early Head Start programs

HS - Head Start program - A public or private non-profit or for-profit entity designated by ACF to operate an Head Start program to serve pregnant women and children from birth to age three, pursuant to Section 645A(e) of the Head Start Act.

Homeless Children - Means the same as homeless children and youths in Section 725(2) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act at 42 U.S.C. 11434a (2).

As follows:

(2) The term homeless children and youths' —

(A) means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence (within the meaning of section 103(a)(1)); and

(B) includes —

(i) children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement;

(ii) children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings (within the meaning of section 103(a)(2)(C));

(iii) children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and

(iv) migratory children (as such term is defined in section 1309 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965) who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii).

Income - Gross cash income and includes earned income, military income (including pay and allowances, except those described in Section 645(a)(3)(B) of the Act), veteran's benefits, Social Security benefits, unemployment compensation, and public assistance benefits. Additional examples of gross cash income are listed in the definition of "income" which appears in U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, Series P-60-185 (available at <https://www2.census.gov/prod2/popscan/p60-185.pdf>).

Parent - A Head Start or Early Head Start child's mother or father, other family member who is a primary caregiver, foster parent or authorized caregiver, guardian or the person with whom the child has been placed for purposes of adoption pending a final adoption decree.

Recruitment Area - That geographic locality within which a Head Start program seeks to enroll Head Start children and families. The recruitment area can be the same as the service area or it can be a smaller area or areas within the service area.

Relevant Time Period - (1) The 12 months preceding the month in which the application is submitted; or (2) During the calendar year preceding the calendar year in which the application is submitted, whichever more accurately reflects the needs of the family at the time of application.

Service Area - The geographic area identified in an approved grant application within which a grantee may provide Head Start services.

Verify - (or any variance of the word) To check or determine the correctness or truth by investigation or by reference.

Dissemination of Policy

The policy will be made available to all Head Start employees through the agency's website @ www.incaciaa.org. The agency will educate and train applicable employees and supervisors regarding the policy and any conduct that could constitute a violation of the policy.