

**HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START
DISABILITIES POLICIES**

InclusionDS-1
Provisions of Special Education and Related ServicesDS-2

REGION 16 EDUCATION SERVICE CENTER
Head Start/Early Head Start

Subject: Inclusion	Section: Disabilities
Program: Head Start/Early Head Start	Date Revised: March 10, 2022

Policy Council Approval: March 23, 2022

Regulation Reference: 45 CFR Part(s): 1302.60, 1302.61, 1302.62

Policy:

To the greatest extent possible, children with disabilities will be included in the full range of activities and services provided to all Head Start/Early Head Start children by making necessary modifications to meet the special needs of a child.

Procedure:

Early Head Start

1. For students who enter the Early Head Start program, who are eligible for Early Childhood Intervention or determined eligible during the program year, the student's Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) is reviewed by the Disability Coordinator and/or Disability Specialist.
2. The disabilities staff will assist daycare/centers in making the necessary modifications to the environment and instructional strategies. The disabilities staff will assist in determining individualized accommodations and supports to ensure that students fully participate in the environment.
3. The Disabilities Specialist will make classroom visits as needed to monitor the ongoing needs and provide consultation to the staff providing services.
4. Parent involvement and awareness will be facilitated through individual consultations.

Head Start

1. For students who enter the Head Start program, who are eligible for Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) services through the Local Education Authority (LEA) or determined eligible during the program year, the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) is reviewed by the Disabilities Coordinator and/or Disabilities Specialists.
2. The Disabilities Specialist will assist teachers in the classrooms making necessary modifications to the environment and instructional strategies. The Disabilities Specialist will assist in implementing individualized accommodations and supports designated by the LEA to include students as appropriate.
3. The Disabilities Specialist will make classroom visits as needed to monitor the ongoing needs and provide consultation to the staff providing services.
4. Parent involvement and awareness will be facilitated through individual consultations.

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Regulation Reference: 45 CFR Part(s): 1302.63(a)(b)

Policy:

The Grantee or delegate agency must coordinate with Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) and the Local Education Agency (LEA) to identify children enrolled or who intend to enroll who may be eligible for services.

Procedures:

Early Head Start

1. For birth to three-year-old students, the Early Head Start (EHS) program has a collaborative agreement, a Memorandum of Understanding with ECI. The Memorandum of Understanding is one way we coordinate referrals, services, and implementation of interventions and Individual Family Services Plans (IFSP).
2. Students not referred based on assessment data can be brought to the regularly scheduled staff meetings made up of a team of Specialists (Education, Disability, Mental Wellness, and Registered Nurse). For the student to be discussed, the Early Head Start Referral for Services form (EHS.111) and the Release of Information form (HS.09) must be completed by the teacher, home educator and/or appropriate specialist from EHS. Forms can be hand delivered or faxed to the disability staff.
 - a. The purpose of the meeting is to participate in a multi-tiered system of supports based on parent concerns, teacher concerns, lack of progress, challenging behaviors, social emotional concerns, or medical issues.
 - b. The team of specialists will make internal referrals, ECI referrals, and consider interventions/strategies to ensure that the student's needs are being met.
4. Children with non-educational needs for related services will be referred to private providers.
5. Staff at daycares and centers can always refer directly to ECI without EHS assistance or following this process; notifying the disability staff is recommended.

Head Start

1. Head Start has a Shared Service Arrangement through a Memorandum of Understanding with each of the school districts or Local Education Agency (LEA) that partner with Head Start. This agreement is utilized to promote communication and support between the parent(s), student, Head Start, and the LEA.

Provision of Special Education and Related Services

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2. Head Start will refer, with parent written consent, students to the LEA who have verified deficits through classroom observation, work samples, and/or specialist consultation on any of the following child assessment data:
 - a. Developmental screener
 - b. Social Emotional screener

3. Students not referred based on assessment data can be brought to regularly scheduled student staff meetings. For the child to be discussed at the meeting, the Head Start Request of Support Services form (HS.111) and the Release of Information form (HS. 09), when applicable, must be completed by the teacher/home educator or appropriate specialists from Head Start and faxed to the disabilities staff (806) 677-5442 or hand delivered to the disability staff.
 - a. The purpose of the meeting is to participate in a multi-tiered system of supports to address concerns not identified by the screeners.
 - b. Discussion may include parent concerns, teacher concerns, ongoing progress monitoring, challenging behaviors, or medical issues.
 - c. The team discusses interventions to address concern in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), using universal targeted and/or intensive strategies to make sure that the child's needs are met.
 - d. Depending on the child's needs the student can be:
 - i. Referred to the LEA,
 - ii. Referred to a developmental pediatrician,
 - iii. Progress monitored regularly through monthly student staff meetings,
 - iv. Dismissed from the meeting process because the child is making adequate progress towards expectations and Head Start program can meet the need of the child.

4. Teachers, principals, and other staff at the LEA can always refer directly to the special education department for an evaluation without Head Start assistance or following this process.