

Self Study Guide



Management Acceleration Program

Introduction to ERSEA

Self Study Guide

This training self study guide was developed by: Region VII TA System; ICF International in partnership with OHS Region VII Office of Head Start and the Region VII Head Start Association.

6/2010

Learning Outcomes

- Review ERSEA requirements
- Review definitions related to ERSEA
- Review enrollment and attendance requirements

Additional information about the slides:

Learner Objectives:

- Participants will understand the ERSEA requirements and be familiar with the Performance Standards.
- Participants will be familiar with the definitions related to ERSEA.
- Participants will be familiar with how and when to recruit.
- Participants will understand enrollment and attendance issues

Participant:

What question do you currently have about ERSEA, write them down and review at the end of this training to see if the questions are answered. If not you may want to talk with your Regional Office Program Specialist or others within your program about your question(s) to get them answered.

ERSEA

ERSEA is a system that takes children and their families through a comprehensive process with the intent of providing Head Start services

Eligibility → Recruitment → Selection → Enrollment → Attendance



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Additional information about the slides:

What is ERSEA?

Review the slide on the previous page and note that ERSEA is a **System** that involves a process. This system involves all of the areas noted: eligibility, recruitment, selection, enrollment, attendance. If any of these areas are not functioning properly it will affect your ERSEA system overall.

Participants:

Think about the flow chart shown on the slide; note how each part of the system play or moves into the next.

Note any questions you have concerning the slide.

Definition of Eligibility

45 CFR 1305.2 (g)

“Eligibility means a child meets the requirements for age and family income as established in this regulation or, if applicable, as established by grantees that meet the requirements of section 645(a)(2) of the Head Start Act. Up to ten percent of children enrolled may be from families that exceed the low-income guidelines...”

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Comments From Slide:

The Head Start Performance Standards define each area of the ERSEA process: Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment and Attendance.

Participant:

What key information and/or questions do you have from the slide?

These are a list of some of the data sources that we utilize within our programs. Information is also gathered in other ways i.e. observations, surveys, professional development data, family partnership information

Definition of Eligibility

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Comments from the slide:

How do you target the population Head Start is intended for?

More on Eligibility

Poverty guidelines are published by the Federal Government and are used to define income eligibility.

At least 90% of enrolled children must be income eligible.

Reauthorization of the Head Start Act allows selection of families at or below 130% of poverty, but grantees must document that they are serving the most needy families in the community.

If a child's family income is below the poverty line, is receiving public assistance, or homeless, or the child is in foster care they are categorically eligible.

Comments on the slide:

Automatic Eligibility

- Low income children that are below the poverty line or receive Public Assistance
- Homeless children: Discuss McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistant Act. Review definition of homeless children (refer to Reauthorization questions ECLKC site.
- Children with disabilities:
 - A. 10% of enrolled children (Grantees will not be penalized if they are in the process of identifying their 10% of children. Note the change of language since reauthorization that it is no longer "opportunity" but "enrolled". Documentation important!)
 - a. If the program unable to meet can request waiver (limit of 3 years)
 - Programs may serve up to 30% of their enrollment with children whose income is between 100-130% of poverty. However must meet these requirements first:

- i. Must show how have served all eligible children
 1. outreach and enrollment policies and procedures for serving low income and homeless children first
 - ii. Must show how they addressed the homeless
 1. efforts to recruit and serve
 - iii. Must have served all over-income children with disabilities
 - iv. Have addressed serving low income, homeless and over-income with a disability prior to serving children up to 130% of poverty in the programs selection criteria.
 - v. Have policies and procedures for serving children between 100 and 130% of poverty
 - vi. Must have included in their Community Assessment number of children by income type
- b. Programs must be able to demonstrate they have met the needs of the low-income population
- Programs can serve 10% of enrolled children who are over-income
 - Head Start children must be at least 3 years of age or older by the date used to determine eligibility for public school in the community in which the Head Start Program is located.
 - Income must be verified by Program (signed verification statement by staff reviewing the document)
 - For income eligibility consider the 12 months immediately preceding enrollment or preceding calendar year, whichever more accurately reflects the families' current needs.
 - For income eligibility certain military pay and allowances are exempts:
 - a. duty to hostile fire or imminent danger
 - b. basic allowance for housing

Participants:

Some Optional Questions to think about:

: Eligibility

1. How do you get names of children on public assistance? Foster Care? Disabilities?
2. How do you determine what "Public Assistance" is?
3. How do you find children age appropriate for your Program?
4. How do you inform the Public of your eligibility requirements?
5. Who in your Organization is responsible for each of the activities above?
6. What timeframe are you operating under to get the information needed on eligible children to meet recruitment goals?
7. What documentation is necessary to complete the activities or verify the work?
8. What is your process for the above activities?

Definition of Recruitment

45CFR 1305.2(n)

“**Recruitment** means the systematic ways in which a Head Start program identifies families whose children are eligible for Head Start services, informs them of the services available, and encourages them to apply for enrollment in the program.”

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Comments on the slide:

The Recruitment process can include a variety of techniques, including, but not limited to: canvassing the local community, news releases, advertising, family referrals and public and private agency referrals.

During the Recruitment process....a Head Start Program must

- Solicit applications from as many Head Start eligible families within the recruitment areas as possible
- Assist families in completing the application form

Obtain a number of applications greater than the number needed to be fully

- enrolled at the beginning of the enrollment year and that the Program anticipates becoming available over the course of the next enrollment year.
- Actively recruit homeless children
- Maintain an “active waiting list”

Participants:

Optional Questions: Recruitment

1. What is your process for contacting families on the list of children receiving Public Assistance?
2. What is your process for recruiting homeless families/children? Children with disabilities? Families within the community?
3. What is your process for recruiting children between 100-130% of poverty level?
4. What is your process for monitoring recruitment?

Definition of Selection

45CFR 1305.2(q)

“**Selection** means the systematic process used to review all applications for Head Start services and to identify those children and families that are to be enrolled in the program.”



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Comments from the slide:

Read Performance Standard from slide and think about what it is saying to you.

- Programs establish selection criteria that assign point value to specific criteria the Performance Standards and/or the Program have identified. Such criteria may include but is not limited to:
 - a. low income
 - b. homeless
 - c. child with disabilities
 - d. children 100 – 130% of poverty
 - e. High Risk Family (Family in crisis)
 - f. Serious child health problem (diagnosed by a doctor)
 - g. Referral from another agency
 - h. Migrant/Native American Family

When criteria are used for all applications, there is consistency and the system ensures the neediest children receive priority enrollment in the Program.

Selection Process

45CFR 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.”

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Participants:

Read the performance standard on the slide and think about what it means to you.

Note: Governing Body and Policy Council must approve the Program's selection criteria

Selection Considerations

45CFR 1305.6 (b)

In selecting the children and families to be served, the Head Start program must consider the income of the eligible families, the age of the child, the availability of kindergarten or 1st 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)...

HS Act 640(d)(1)

...not less than 10 percent of the total number of children actually enrolled by each Head Start agency and each delegate agency will be children with disabilities who are determined to be eligible for special education and related services, or early intervention services as appropriate as determined under IDEA...

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Comments from the slide:

Read Performance Standard from slide and think about what it means to you.

Note that word “opportunities” was removed. 10% of Program enrollment must be children with disabilities. Programs will not be penalized if they are in the process of identifying their 10% of children with disabilities.

Programs should develop and implement strong partnership and written agreements with the local school systems and other Programs/Agencies that serve children with disabilities. These Partnerships and Agreements can be a source of identifying and recruiting children with disabilities.

Selection

45CFR 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.”

Selection Considerations (cont.)

45CFR 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.”

Comments from the slides:

Read the performance standards and think about what they mean to you.

Some optional questions to answer on Selection:

1. What is your formal process for establishing a selection criterion?
2. How do you assure “preference” for homeless children and disabled children?
3. How do you assure children are selected timely?
4. How do you communicate your selection process to families, community and governing board?
5. Who in your organization is responsible for the process?
6. What is the timeframe to complete the selection process to assure families do not enroll in other programs?
7. What documentation is necessary to explain selection criteria?
8. What documentation is necessary to assure children are selected in accordance with the established criteria?
9. What is your process for monitoring the selection process?

Definition of Enrollment

45CFR 1305.2(b)

“**Enrollment** means the official acceptance of a family by a Head Start program and the completion of all procedures necessary for a child and family to begin receiving services.”

The program is at full enrollment once it has accepted the number of children they are funded to serve and everything is complete that will allow the child and family to begin receiving services. The full enrollment is true even if not all of the children physically attend at the start of the program year.

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Comments from the slide:

Read Performance Standard from slide and think about what it means to you.

NOTE: The Program is at full enrollment once has accepted the number of children they are funded to serve and everything is completed that will allow the child and family to begin receiving services. **The full enrollment is true even if not all of the children physically attend at the start of the Program year.**

Definition of Enrollment Opportunities

45CFR 1305.2(c)

“Enrollment opportunities mean vacancies that exist at the beginning of the enrollment year, or during the year because of children who leave the program, that must be filled for a program to achieve and maintain its funded enrollment.”



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Comments from the slide:

Participants read the performance standard on the slide and think about what it means to you.

Once a program has a drop an enrollment opportunity is created. Prior to the summer enrollment of children for the coming school year there is opportunity equal to the number of slots your Agency submitted in the continuation grant application.

Definition of Enrollment Year

45CFR 1305.2(d)

“**Enrollment year** means the period of time, not to exceed twelve months, during which a Head Start program provides center or home-based services to a group of children and their families.”



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Comments from the slide:

Read Performance Standard from slide and think about what it means to you.

It is generally expected that all classrooms within a funded program will have the same start/stop dates; however, there are certain times when dates may vary. For example, Programs that partner with several school districts to provide services for blended school/HS classrooms may encounter different start/stop dates from district to district. The Program must identify this information within the Continuation Grant Application and maintain communication with the assigned Program Specialist concerning such situations.

Participants:

What questions or key points do you have from this slide?

Enrollment and Re-Enrollment

- 1305.7(a) “Each child enrolled in a Head Start program, ...must be allowed to remain in Head Start until kindergarten or first grade is available for the child in the child’s community,”
- 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”
- 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 --- (programs for families with infants and toddlers, or EHS) remain income eligible while they are participating in the program”

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Comments from the Slide:

Read Performance Standard from slide and think about what it means to you.

- Children who are Kindergarten eligible may not remain in Head Start unless an IEP reflects that the IEP Team met and determined Head Start is the appropriate placement.
- Discuss with Participants how they monitor the 30 day vacancy in their Programs.

Programs are now required to provide an annual report on:

- a. The Program is meeting the needs of low-income and homeless children
- b. Outreach and enrollment policies and procedures for serving low income and homeless first
- c. Efforts to serve low income and homeless children
- d. Policies and Procedures for serving children between 100-130% of poverty.
- e. Programs enrollment level for current and prior year
- f. Number of children by income type

- g. Eligibility criteria for children on the waiting list.

Programs are now required to report Enrollment

- a. Submit a monthly report of actual enrollment data to OHS
- b. Provide reasons Program is not fully enrolled
- c. OHS reviews enrollment data and develop, in collaboration with agency, a plan and timetable for corrective action. OHS will provide Technical Assistance.
- d. If chronic under-enrollment (97% or less) OHS may recapture, withhold or reduce funding.

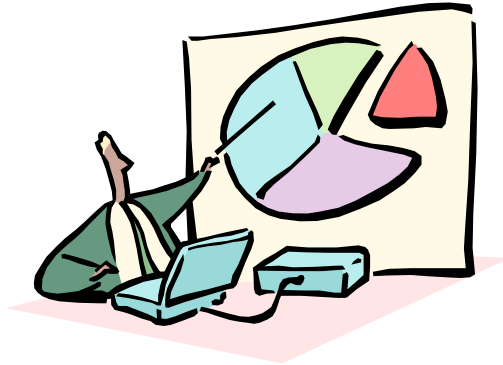
Optional Questions: Enrollment

- 1. What is your process for enrolling children?
- 2. How do you ensure all children are enrolled are the "most needy?"
- 3. What is your process for maintaining an active wait list?
- 4. Who is responsible for monitoring your programs enrollment?
- 5. What is the timeframe necessary to assure your program is fully enrolled from day 1?

Attendance

If average daily attendance falls below 85% the program **must** analyze and document the causes of the absenteeism.

[Refer to 45CFR 1305.8 (a)]



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Comments of Slide:

Read the Performance Standard on the slide and think about what it means to you.

The Performance Standards **describes expectations** they are associated with Attendance. There is no formal definition of attendance in the Performance Standards.

Attendance (cont.)

- Absences due to illness or documented reason - no further action necessary
- Absences due to other factors - program **must** initiate appropriate family support procedures for all children with 4 or more consecutive unexcused absences. Strategies to address absences may include:
 - Home visits or other direct family contact
 - Emphasize benefits of regular attendance to the family
 - Problem solve barriers to regular attendance
 - Document all contacts and family support services provided by program

[Refer to 45CFR 1305.8 (b)]

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Comment from the Slide:

Read the Performance Standard from the slide and think about what it means to you.

Attendance (cont.)

Programs must consider an enrollment vacancy in cases where there is chronic absenteeism and it does not seem feasible to include the child in either the same or a different program option

[Refer to 45CFR 1305.8 (c)]

Comments from the slide:

Read the slide and think about what the Performance Standard is saying.

Best practice is having a written policy describing the conditions in which a program would consider a slot vacant based on attendance. This policy should then be clearly addressed with all parents at enrollment, be included with the Parent Handbook, be written within the Program Policies and Procedures and be approved and reviewed annually by Policy Council.

Optional Questions: Attendance

1. What is your process to assure maximum attendance daily?
2. What is your process to assist families with barriers to attendance?
3. What is your process of informing Policy Council of attendance issues?
4. What is your attendance policy? How often is it reviewed?
5. Who is responsible for the process in your organization?
6. What documentation do you need to monitor daily attendance?
7. What documentation does your program generate noting family support around attendance issues?
8. Who is responsible for monitoring this process?

Resources

- Head Start Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center
 - <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc>
- Head Start Federal Performance Standards
 - <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/Program%20Design%20and%20Management/Head%20Start%20Requirements/Head%20Start%20Requirements>

Management Acceleration Program (MAP) 2008, Introduction to Data

***We encourage all participants to regularly check ECLKC website for information and updates.**

Note there are many resources to help you learn further about Head Start and data collection. Besides the Performance Standards ECLKC is an excellent place to start. Remember you also have access to your programs GPSS (Grantee Program Support Specialist) you can e-mail questions or requests for further information as well as your State Based Training Office and as always your Regional Program Specialist and Grants Specialist.

Participant:

Review the comments and questions noted as you read through this material. Think of who and/or what resources you might access to answer the questions and/or learn more. Go back and note the “who” and/or what within this document.

In the space below develop a goal to address your questions and/or further information seeking. Be sure and allow for a reasonable amount of time to complete your independent work.

Upon completion of this work return it to the Executive Director of the Region VII Head Start Association for training credit.