



**COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO
PRESCHOOL SERVICES DEPARTMENT
POLICY**

ERSEA

EFFECTIVE: 02-01-16

SUBJECT:

CHILD ATTENDANCE FOR HEAD START PROGRAMS

APPROVED: 02-25-16

Diana Alexander
BY: Diana Alexander, Director

PURPOSE

To establish child attendance policy and procedures including compilation, review, approval, coordination and management related to Federal Head Start Programs within Preschool Services Department (PSD).

POLICY

1. The Child's Daily Sign-In/Sign-Out sheet is the primary source document for audit and reimbursement.
2. Parent/Guardian is required to sign-in/sign-out (using full signature) the child each day the child attends preschool. Children not properly signed-in/signed-out (with times) may be considered absent without excuse and may be dropped from the program for excessive unexcused absences.
3. Only individuals listed on the child's emergency card who are at least 18 years of age (or teaching staff) can sign-in/sign-out the child.
4. If bus service is provided by PSD, the bus consent form and emergency card are required to be completed and signed by parent/guardian prior to the child using bus services. Only those listed on the bus consent form and emergency card will be allowed to drop-off/pick-up the child.
5. Parent/Guardian is responsible to contact site staff or Provider on the morning of or the day before the day child is expected to be absent. Parent/Guardian will provide reason for absence. Note: Staff makes determination of absence category based on specific reason for absence provided by the parent/guardian. Doctor's excuses are required in cases of communicable diseases and serious illnesses/injuries including fractured bones.
6. An absence will be considered excused under the section titled Absence Definitions for Head Start listed below. A child may also be considered excused under "family emergencies" as defined below. All other reasons will be considered unexcused.

NOTE:

If a child is attending both federal and state programs commonly referred to as dual enrollment, the attendance shall follow the attendance codes and reasons according to each program model.

REFERENCEHead Start Performance Standards **1304.51 (G)****PROCEDURE****ATTENDANCE CODES ARE AS FOLLOWS:**

ATTENDANCE CODES	ATTENDANCE DESCRIPTIONS	ATTENDANCE REASON
A	Absent (Pending Family Contact)	
E	Excused	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to Examples of Excused Absences
N	Not Scheduled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home based non visit days Child receives a direct service while pending completion of necessary documentation for attendance in a center-based or family child care program based on state and local licensing requirements.
P	Present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present Present Off Site (receiving referral related services outside the site such as Speech Therapy, TLC, etc.)
U	Unexcused	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any absence that does not qualify as excused.

PROGRAM CODES ARE AS FOLLOWS:

Program Codes	Program Descriptions
HS	Head Start – 100% Federal
HS FD	Head Start Full Day
HS PD –Co- Located	Head Start funded children in the same classroom with California State Preschool Program (CSPP) children
HS HB	Head Start Home Base
EHS FD CB	Early Head Start Full Day Center Based)
EHS – HB	Early Head Start Home Base
EHS-CCP/CCC	Early Head Start – Child Care Partnership Child Care Center
EHS-CCP/FCC	Early Head Start – Child Care Partnership Family Child Care

NOTES:

- Late, inaccurate or incomplete reports will be documented;
- Use PSD approved sign-in/sign-out sheets;
- Use PSD approved verification of absences slips.

ABSENCE DEFINITIONS FOR HEAD START PROGRAMS

Type of Absence	Examples of Absence
Excused Absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illness or quarantine of the child; • Illness or quarantine of the parent; • Child or parent appointments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Treatment; ○ Therapy; ○ Medical; ○ Dental; ○ Women, Infants, Children (WIC) if child is required at the appointment; ○ Awaiting completion of scheduled medical treatment due to chicken pox and other communicable diseases, etc. • Pending required medical screenings with a scheduled appointment (i.e. physical, TB, etc.); • Pending required medical screenings without a scheduled appointment (i.e. physical, TB, etc.); • Parent request to spend a day with the child; • Child has received a direct service and is pending completion of necessary documentation for attendance in a center according to state and local licensing requirements. • Court appearances or orders affecting child, including visitations (need copy of order); • Site closure for emergencies as determined by PSD; • Family vacation or parent's day off; • Family visits (non-court ordered); • PSD temporarily removes child from program; • Religious holiday; • Impromptu crisis; • Life threatening situations; • Unexpected transportation challenge; • Funeral; • Medical appointments for a sibling.
Unexcused Absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defined as days of non-attendance, which do not qualify for any of the excused absence categories listed above. Children are allowed a maximum of four (4) unexcused absences for a program year.

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS:

- Children that have four (4) consecutive unexcused absences for a program year will be evaluated to determine appropriate family support procedures. If these efforts are not successful and chronic absenteeism continues and it does not seem feasible to include the child in either the same or a different program option (i.e. home base), then the staff will designate the slot an enrollment vacancy and enroll an eligible child from the waiting list. An Unexcused Absence will be coded if parent contact is not made within five (5) days.
- A child may be dropped from preschool program for chronic absenteeism or exceeding the maximum of four (4) consecutive unexcused absences.
- Children may be dropped from the program after the third late pick-up.

HEAD START PROGRAM - CENTER BASED

ROLES	RESPONSIBILITIES
Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all children are signed-in/signed-out daily according to PSD policy; • Teaching staff will sign-in/sign-out children transported by bus.
Generalist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and verify all “absence verification slips” weekly with the Center Clerk for accuracy; • Track excused absences and four (4) total unexcused absence days. Appropriate follow-up will be documented in the Attendance follow-up in the Electronic Record Keeping System (ERKS); • Contact parents after two (2) consecutive unexcused absences and follow-up with a home visit after four (4) consecutive absences; • Review monthly attendance reports, sign-in/sign-out sheets and verify absence slips for completeness and compliance; • Sign the child attendance data summary to indicate approval; • Review and sign monthly attendance documents for the previous month two (2) working days prior to the 5th of each month.
Center Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare sign-in/sign-out sheets pre-typed with all names of children enrolled in each classroom daily; • Record the reason for absence on the sign-in/sign-out sheets; • Contact all families by phone in instances where a parent has not contacted the site regarding the absence of a child and/or when a verification of absence slip has not been submitted. Document all required information on the sign-in/sign-out sheets; • Notify the Generalist of two (2) consecutive unexcused absences. Make a note on the verification of absence slip and forward a copy to the Generalist. Keep

	<p>original slip for site records;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notify the Generalist of late pick-ups in excess of three (3) instances; • Forward completed attendance report to Generalist to verify beginning enrollment, adds, drops, transfers and ending enrollment for each class. Generalist will sign and date the bottom of each class Attendance Form upon completion and immediately return report to the clerk; • Provide the PSD Administrative Office, Finance Division, with the following monthly attendance documents (originals) on or before the 5th of each month for the previous month and maintain a copy for site records: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Child Attendance Data form; ○ Monthly Attendance Report; ○ All sign-in/sign-out sheets; ○ Head Start Absence Summary Reports. 	
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HEAD START PROGRAM – HOME BASED

ROLES	RESPONSIBILITIES	
Home Visitor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record the date of the home visit in the ERKS. Home visits at 1.5 hours each should be recorded as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Early Head Start Home Base – 48 weekly home visits; ○ Head Start Home Base - 32 weekly home visits. • Obtain proper documentation for an excused home visit if available; • Contact the family after each missed visit to verify the reason for the missed visit (this shall be done through a combination of phone calls and door knockers). If the Home Visitor is unable to contact the family after two (2) unexcused visits, the family may be dropped from the Home Base Program Option; • Direct parents to sign child's sign-in/sign-out sheets along with In-Kind sign-in/sign-out sheets at socialization visits. A minimum of 16 Basic Head Start Home Base and a minimum of 24 Early Head Start Home Base socialization visits will be pre-scheduled according to Traditional Home Based Calendar authorized by Home Based Supervisor and Program Manager(s). A sign-in sheet for each socialization day needs to be submitted even if no one attended; • Forward a copy of the ERKS Monthly Attendance Report, Home Based Weekly Lesson Plan Form, and 	

	<p>sign-in/sign-out sheets to Home Based Supervisor by the 5th of the following month.</p>
Home Based Site Supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the monthly attendance reports, Home Based Weekly Lesson Plan Forms and sign-in/sign-out sheets and sign forms to indicate approval. Check for four (4) visits per month; ensure that times are not overlapping and that there are Home Base Weekly Lesson Plans and sign-in sheets for all visits and socialization dates; • Forward all Monthly Attendance Reports, Home Based Weekly Lesson Plan Forms, and sign-in/sign-out sheets to Finance by the 8th of the following month.
Admin Office Finance Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit the sign-in/sign-out sheets, Home Visit Reports, and child attendance data forms; • Audit Monthly Attendance Reports in the ERKS for all sites; • Print and check reasonableness of the following reports generated from the ERKS. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Average Daily Attendance; ○ Meals Served to Enrolled Children; ○ Analysis – Part Day Attendance vs. Meals Served; and ○ Analysis – Full Day Attendance vs. Meals Served. <p>Note: These four (4) reports are required documentation for reporting claims for reimbursement for the Child and Adult Care Food Program to the California Department of Education before the 20th day following the month claimed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Print and verify monthly Attendance Recap generated from the ERKS for Attendance and Meals for programs: Head Start, Head Start Co-located, Full Day, Child Development and EHS-CCP. • Post Attendance Recap monthly totals on Attendance Summary sheet for each program.

NOTE:

If two (2) children are in one (1) home, a 1.5 hour visit will be provided as a minimum with more time being provided to meet the individual needs of the family and children. Home visit times will be recorded on the Home Based Weekly Lesson Plan form. Home Visitor or Department cancelled visits must be rescheduled by the end of the month when possible. Parent cancelled visits are not required to be rescheduled, but should be recorded on the Home Based Weekly Lesson Plan form.

ATTENDANCE PROCESS FOR EHS-CCP

ROLE	RESPONSIBILITIES
Generalist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect and check all sign-in/sign-out sheets from the provider weekly; • Record the reason for absence on the ERKS based on the sign-in/sign-out sheets; • Contact families by phone in cases where a parent has not contacted the provider regarding the absence of a child and document the reason on the ERKS; • Follow-up with a home visit after four (4) consecutive absences; complete the attendance report in the ERKS and submit the attendance report to the Program Supervisor for review.
Providers Role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notify the EHS-CCP Generalist after two (2) consecutive unexcused absences.
Program Supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide the PSD Administrative Office, Finance Division, with the following monthly attendance documents (originals) on or before the 5th of each month for the previous month: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Monthly attendance report from ERKS; ○ Copy of all sign in/sign out sheets. • Scan all copies into ERKS under Attendance module; • File each child's monthly attendance report from ERKS in section XVII of Child's file

HEAD START ATTENDANCE & ENROLLMENT MONTHLY ANALYSIS REPORTS

ROLE	RESPONSIBILITIES
Admin Office Finance Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide management via electronic file transfer with the attendance and enrollment analysis report for the previous month on or before the 20th of each month; • Add results of analysis directly on the report. If monthly average daily attendance rate by site falls below 85%, an analysis of the cause of absenteeism is required

This analysis shall include:

- A study of the pattern of absences for each child including reasons for absences and number of absences on consecutive days. No special action is required if absences are considered excused, family emergency, or best interest days.
- If absences result from four (4) or more consecutive, unexcused absences, the program must initiate appropriate family support procedures to include home visits or other direct contact with the child's parent.
- Excessive unexcused absences that persist and it is not feasible to include the child in either the same or a different program option, the child's slot will be considered an enrollment vacancy.

NOTES:

Head Start ADA (Average Daily Attendance) = Days Present (includes Excused Absences) / Current Enrollment. Do not factor in unexcused absences.