



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

TRANSPORTATION ISSUE 1
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Updated

SUBJECT: TRANSPORTATION POLICY

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PURPOSE

To comply with transportation regulations regarding safety features and safe operation of vehicles used to transport children participating in Head Start, Early Head Start, and California State Preschool programs. To provide training in pedestrian safety and to make reasonable efforts to coordinate transportation resources to control costs and to improve quality and availability of transportation services.

POLICY

Preschool Services Department (PSD), delegate agencies, and contracted agencies provide transportation services and are required to ensure each vehicle used in providing transportation services is equipped with the appropriate safety features, maintained regularly, and operated in a safe manner. Moreover, PSD, delegate agencies, and contracted agencies must ensure that drivers meet safety qualifications and drivers and buses are monitored consistent with the children’s best interest with regard to child safety.

REFERENCE

Head Start Performance Standards 1310.10, 1310.12, 1310.13, 1310.14, 1310.15, 1310.16, 1310.17, 1310.20, 1310.21, 1310.22

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GENERAL INFORMATION (1310.10G)

Each agency providing transportation services must ensure that each vehicle used in providing such services is equipped with:

1. A communication system to call for assistance in case of an emergency;
2. Safety equipment for use in an emergency, including a fire extinguisher that is properly mounted near the driver's seat and a sign indicating its location;
3. A first aid kit and a sign indicating the location of such equipment; and
4. A seat belt cutter for use in an emergency evacuation and sign indicating its location.

Each agency must ensure that children are only released to parent or legal guardian, or other individual identified in writing by the parent or legal guardian. This applies when children are not transported and are picked up from the classroom, as well as when they are dropped off by a vehicle. Agencies must maintain lists of the persons, including alternates in case of emergency, and up-to-date child rosters must be maintained at all times to ensure that no child is left behind.

PROCEDURES FOR CHILDREN BOARDING AND EXITING BUSES

PSD Staff Role: Boarding and Exiting the Bus

Step	Action
1	Ensure drivers are provided the Bus Consent, Emergency Card(front and back), and Child Name Tag;
2	Count number of children;
3	Conduct walk-thru of bus and verify head counts of children with transportation staff.

Transportation Agency Role: Boarding and Exiting the Bus

Step	Action
1	Ensure the authorized adults are listed on the child's Emergency Card and Bus Consent form to drop off and pick up the child (Photo I.D. is required);
2	Ensure that all children are signed in/out using the bus sign in/out form;
3	Maintain copies of Emergency Cards (two-sided) and Bus Consent forms at all times;
4	Contact the preschool when the bus has cleared.

Notes:

- Notify school when unable to maintain the schedule (accidents, delays, etc.);
- Obtain prior approval to change bus stops from designated PSD staff;
- Notify preschool of returning children if no one is at the child's bus stop;
- Site Supervisor to notify Program Manager of change or delay in schedule.

REQUIRED USE OF SCHOOL BUSES OR ALTERNATE VEHICLES (1310.12)

Vehicles used for transporting children must be equipped with:

1. Height and weight appropriate child restraint systems and;
2. A reverse beeper.

Exception: This does not apply to vehicles used in transporting children served under the home-based option for Head Start or Early Head Start.

MAINTENANCE OF VEHICLES (1310.13)

Vehicles used for transportation must be maintained and in safe operating conditions.

1. A thorough safety inspection of each vehicle on at least an annual basis through an inspection program licensed or operated by the State;
2. Systemic preventive maintenance on such vehicles; and
3. Daily pre trip inspection of the vehicles by the driver.

OPERATION OF VEHICLES (1310.15)

PSD transportation vehicles must meet the following requirements:

1. Child restraint system appropriate to the child's height and weight while the vehicle is in motion;
2. Baggage and other items transported in the passenger compartment are properly stored and secured and the aisles remain clear and the doors and emergency exits remain unobstructed at all times;
3. Minimum of one bus monitor on board at all times, with additional bus monitors provided as necessary, such as when needed to accommodate the needs of children with disabilities;
4. Except for bus monitors who are assisting children, all vehicle occupants must be seated and wearing height and weight appropriate safety restraints while the vehicle is in motion.

DRIVER QUALIFICATIONS (1310.16)

All persons who drive vehicles used to provide transportation services are required to:

1. Have a valid Commercial Driver's License (CDL) for vehicles in the same class as the vehicle the driver will operating; and
2. Meet any physical, mental, and other requirements established under applicable law or regulations as necessary to perform job-related functions with any necessary reasonable accommodations.

DRIVER AND BUS MONITORING (1310.17)

Persons who drive vehicles used to provide transportation services must receive training prior to transporting children enrolled in the program and at least one time annually each year. The ongoing annual training must include an on-board observation of road performance and training on transporting children with disabilities.

Driver may receive a combination of classroom instruction and behind the wheel instruction that enables each driver to:

1. Operate the vehicle in a safe and efficient manner;
2. Safely run a fixed route, including loading and unloading children, stopping at railroad crossings and performing other specialized driving maneuvers;
3. Administer basic first aid in case of injury;
4. Handle emergency situations, including vehicle evacuation procedures;
5. Operate any special equipment, such as wheelchair lifts, assistance devices or special occupant restraints;
6. Conduct routine maintenance and safety checks of the vehicle; and
7. Maintain accurate records as necessary.

TRIP ROUTING (1310.20)

Each agency must ensure that in planning fixed routes the safety of the children being transported is the primary consideration. Each agency must also ensure that the following basic principles of trip routing are adhered to:

1. The time a child is in transit to and from the Head Start or Early Head Start program must not exceed one hour unless there is no shorter route available or any alternative shorter route is either unsafe or impractical;
2. Vehicles must not be loaded beyond the maximum passenger capacity at any time;

3. Vehicles must not be required to back up or make "U" turns, except when necessary for reasons of safety or because of physical barriers;
4. Stops must be located to minimize traffic disruptions and to afford the driver a good field of view in front of and behind the vehicle;
5. When possible, stops must be located to eliminate the need for children to cross the street or highway to board or leave the vehicle;
6. If children must cross the street before boarding or after leaving the vehicle because curbside drop off or pick up is impossible, they must be escorted across the street by the bus monitor or another adult;
7. Specific procedures must be established for use of alternate routes in the case of hazardous conditions that could affect the safety of the children who are being transported, such as ice or water build up, natural gas line breaks, or emergency road closing. In selecting among alternatives, transportation providers must choose routes that comply as much as possible with the requirements.

SAFETY EDUCATION (1310.21)

Each agency must provide training for parents and children in pedestrian safety. The training provided to children must be developmentally appropriate and an integral part of program experiences. The need for an adult to accompany a preschool child while crossing the street must be emphasized in the training provided to parents and children. The required transportation and pedestrian safety education of children and parent must be provided within the **first thirty (30) days** of the program year.

Each agency must ensure that children who receive such services are taught:

1. Safe riding practices;
2. Safety procedures for boarding and leaving the vehicle;
3. Safety procedures in crossing the street to and from the vehicle at stops;
4. Recognition of the danger zones around the vehicle; and
5. Emergency evacuation procedures, including participating in an emergency evacuation drill conducted on the vehicle the child will be riding.

Training shall emphasize the importance of escorting their children to the vehicle stop and the importance of reinforcing the training provided to children regarding vehicle safety and complements the training provided to their children so that safety practices can be reinforced both in Head Start and at home by the parent. Each agency providing transportation services must ensure that at least two (2) bus evacuation drills are conducted during the program year.

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES (1310.22)

Each agency must specify any special transportation requirements for a child with a disability when preparing the child's Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP), and ensure that in all cases special transportation requirements in the child's IEP or IFSP are followed.

IEPs and IFSPs must include the following transportation requirements:

1. Special pick-up and drop-off requirements;
2. Special seating requirements;
3. Special equipment needs;
4. Any special assistance that may be required; and
5. Any special training for bus drivers and monitors.