

Tri-County Community Council, Inc.
Head Start/Early Head Start

Part: 1302 Program Operations

Subpart: A- Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment and Attendance

Section: 1302.16 Attendance

Subject: Attendance, Tracking, and Addressing Chronic Absenteeism & Tardiness

Policy

Tri-County Head Start/Early Head Start will promote regular attendance for each child. Attendance will be tracked to ensure that each child is receiving the maximum benefit of HS/EHS services. Absenteeism will be addressed with the family when a child's attendance drops to 90%.

Procedure

Part A: Attendance

1. Before enrollment, staff inform parents that children are expected to maintain regular attendance.
 - a. Parents/guardians are given copies of this policy and procedure at enrollment and sign a copy in the enrollment packet.
 - b. Parents/guardians will also sign an attendance agreement.
2. Center staff is responsible for notifying parents of any facility closings.
3. Parents are informed by staff, at orientation and in the Parent Handbook, that they are to contact the center if the child will be absent.
 - a. Staff documents parent communication and reason for child's absence on the attendance report and updates Child Plus with absence information.
 - b. If a child does not arrive to the center and a parent has not given notice, staff is required to contact the family to determine that the child is safe within the first hour of the program's start time.
4. If a child is absent two consecutive days, and if no contact is made, or there are two consecutive unexplained absences the Family Service Advocate will conduct a home visit.
5. Staff makes a minimum of three attempts to conduct a home visit and documents the attempts on the tracking form or in Child Plus.
6. Staff should consult with their Center Director regarding any concerns related to completing a home visit.
7. Weekly attendance reports will be turned in to the Family Services Coordinator by 9 am the following Monday for tracking and monitoring purposes.

Tri-County Community Council, Inc.
Head Start/Early Head Start

8. If a homeless family is having transportation issues, the program will utilize community resources, if possible, to provide transportation for the child.

Part B: Tracking

1. The Family Service Advocate enters the day's attendance into Child Plus, they will mark the child as tardy or absent using the drop-down box and enter the time the child arrived at school. This information will also be documented on the Daily Attendance Form.
2. Center staff will use Child Plus report #2336 to identify children who are at risk of chronic absenteeism.
 - a. Report should be run monthly using the moderate selection (10-20%) to identify children who are at risk.
 - b. When a child's attendance falls below 80% for a 30-day period they are considered to have irregular attendance.
3. The weekly attendance report is turned in to the Family Service Coordinator then compared to the entries in Child Plus to ensure data matches.
 - a. When the weekly average falls below 85%, it is reported to the Director along with the causes for absenteeism.
 - b. If the absences are a result of illness or other well documented reasons, no special action is required.
 - c. If the absences result from other factors, it will be addressed using Part C of this policy.
4. Attendance is monitored monthly.
5. If the program's monthly average daily attendance falls below 85%, the program will review causes of absenteeism to determine a possible cause and solution to improve attendance.

Part C: Addressing Chronic Absenteeism

1. When a child's attendance drops below 90%, a notice will be given to the family.
 - a. The Family Service Advocate will contact the family to advise them of the child's absenteeism and determine the reason. Staff will support the parent or guardian in finding a solution to improve attendance.
 - b. Any time a child has more than three (3) unexcused late arrivals, staff will contact the family to determine the reason for the child's late arrivals and see if the family needs any assistance to ensure the child arrives at school on time.
 - c. All contact with the family will be documented in Child Plus and the family file.
2. If chronic attendance issues persist, the Family Service Advocate will schedule a meeting with the parent or guardian, Center Director and Family Services Coordinator to discuss the issues surrounding the child's absenteeism.
3. An attendance action plan will be developed that identifies the steps the parent/guardian will take to ensure their child is in attendance and how the program will initiate proper support procedures.

Tri-County Community Council, Inc.
Head Start/Early Head Start

4. Contacts with the family must emphasize the benefits of regular attendance, while at the same time remaining sensitive to any special family circumstances influencing attendance patterns. All contacts with the child's family—as well as special family support service activities provided by program staff—must be documented.

5. If the tardiness/attendance issue does not improve and the child is no longer attending regularly even after efforts of reengagement has been made, then the slot will be considered vacant and can be filled from the waiting list.