

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

Part: 1302 Program Operations
Subpart: D Health Program Services
Section: 1302.47 Safety Practices
Subject: Fire Drills/Fire Extinguishers

Policy:

It is the policy of Tri-County Community Council, Inc. Head Start /Early Head Start that all Head Start/ Early Head Start Centers will monthly conduct organized fire drills. Home based families will conduct (2) fire drills in a program year, once within (30) calendar days of (enrollment) entry into the program and once in the month of January (at the end of the program year). If the family relocates during the school year, the home visitor will assist the family in developing a new plan.

Procedure:

1. Fire drills will be performed one time per month at different times during the program day to ensure staff and children know what to do in different situations. Two (2) Fire drills must be performed during the established nap/rest time and Two (2) must be performed using alternate evacuation routes. One (1) will also be in the presence and at the request of the licensing authority in coordination with the operator or designee.
2. All staff and children present at the time of the fire drill will participate.
3. Teaching staff will ensure that all children are accounted for by performing a head count (visual sweep) prior to leaving the room and upon arriving at the designated meeting site outside the building. The teacher will scan, count, and gather children while the teacher assistant scans, counts, and sweeps the classroom to ensure that no child is left behind. If the fire drill or fire takes place during rest time, the lights must be turned on; the teacher assistant will pick up each blanket on the mat to ensure that no child is under the blanket and check all closets and bathrooms (entire classroom) must be swept for children. The teacher will then lead the children out of the classroom to the designated meeting place. If the teacher is absent, the teacher assistant will take the teacher's role and the floater/substitute will take the teacher assistant's role for Head Start. At Early Head Start, the Teachers will decide who will lead the children and who will sweep the classroom. If the drill or fire takes place during naptime, the sweeper must turn on the lights and lift up each blanket to ensure no child is under the blanket. This must be posted in classrooms. When a floater/substitute is in the room, they will always be the sweeper. Teachers will take their sign in/out sheet with them when they leave the room. Teaching staff will call roll for their classroom at the designated meeting place.
4. If staff and children are in another section of the center and are unable to reach the designated place, staff will lead children to an alternate designated place. Once all children are accounted for, staff will contact the Center Director and confirm all children and staff are accounted for.
5. The family service advocate or the designated staff member will take the file box (or book) containing emergency contact information, the first aid kit, and the center cell phone with him/her when he or she leaves the office. He or she will report to the designated meeting place to assist with the children as needed.

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6. The cook will ensure that everything in the kitchen is turned off and that there are no children present in the kitchen or dining room prior to leaving the kitchen. The dining room door and the kitchen door will be closed, and the cook will then go to the designated meeting place to assist with children as needed.
7. The Center Director or the designated staff member will check (visual check) all bathrooms and classrooms to make sure all children are out. The center assistant/family service advocate will investigate the fire to determine if the fire department will need to be notified, and then proceed directly to the designated meeting place.
8. The Center Director or designated person will observe the fire drill and record it on the fire drill record. The record of each fire drill will be kept in the Center Director's office. The written record of the fire drill will include:
 - a. Date of the drill
 - b. Time the drill was conducted
 - c. Number of adults who participated
 - d. Number of children who participated
 - e. Length of time it took to clear all buildings
 - f. Any comments pertinent to the drills
 - g. Initials of the recorder
 - h. Evacuation route used
 - i. Test smoke alarms
 - j. Test carbon monoxide alarms
 - k. Check fire extinguishers and date/initial
9. Any additional staff or visitors at the center will report directly to the Center Director to receive assignments.
10. No staff member or child will be permitted to enter the building until all clear has been issued by the Center Director.
11. An evacuation crib must be positioned near the exit for all non-walking infant/toddlers.
12. The Head Start/ Early Head Start facility must properly maintain fire extinguishers at all times. Must be dated and initialed on form in Center Director's office.
13. Home visitors must assist home based families in establishing a plan for fire drills using the following steps:
 - a. Assist the family in developing a home fire escape plan
 - b. Test smoke alarms
 - c. Assist the family in clearing a path of exit
 - d. Walk through the plan with family members
 - e. Do the drill
 - f. Talk about the drill
 - g. Document the drill
 - h. List any comments and initial
14. All staff will be trained annually and with new employee orientation on how to perform a fire drill.