
	DHS Early Head Start Program Policy		
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY 1			
SUBJECT	Safe Environments		
REFERENCE	Environmental Health and Safety		
EFFECTIVE	8/1/2016		
Policy Council Approval: 7/26/16	Policy Council Revision: 4/24/18	Governing Body Approval: 9/19/16	Governing Body Revision: 8/17/18
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Policy:



Early Head Start (EHS) Program, Service Providers will maintain indoor/outdoor environments and facilities to ensure they are safe, clean and in quality condition so as to prevent injury to a child. Service Provider will develop a system to maintain safe environments and to correct issues identified as unsafe and/or hazardous through the monitoring process.

Service Providers will maintain Head Start group sizes and ratios. Service Providers will also be responsible for safety drills, maintenance of first aid kits, training of staff, and accommodation of children with disabilities, food safety, and sanitation. In addition, Service Providers will maintain compliance with Texas Health and Human Services Commission Child Care Regulations requirements.

Service Providers will ensure the maintenance log is current and safety concerns are addressed.

Performance Standard(s):

1302.47b(1)(2); 1302.21; 1302.102(d)(ii)

	DHS Early Head Start Program Policy		
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY 2			
SUBJECT	Staffing and Class Size Requirements		
REFERENCE	Environmental Health and Safety		
EFFECTIVE	8/1/2016		
Policy Council Approval: 7/26/16	Policy Council Revision: 7/28/20	Governing Body Approval: 9/19/16	Governing Body Revision: 8/13/20
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Policy:

Early Head Start (EHS) Program, Service Providers will ensure that EHS classes are designed with no more than eight children and staffed by two paid teachers. It is recommended, whenever possible, that a third person be in the classroom, such as a volunteer.

Classroom Design

Ages	Classroom Design
6 Wks -36 Months	All EHS classrooms, by design, will have no more than eight children enrolled per class. The integration of EHS enrolled children and non EHS children per classroom is encouraged.

Group Size

Ages	Group Size
6 Wks -36 Months	Maximum of eight children enrolled per class. Two teachers with no more than eight children. Two teachers must be in the classroom at all times.

Ratios

Ages	Ratios
6 Wks -36 Months	One teacher to four children with two teachers in the classroom at all times.

Class sizes are determined based on square footage, with a minimum of 35 square feet/child. Service Providers must seek prior approval before any change to a classroom age group designation. As children age throughout the program, they may remain in their current classrooms until room becomes available in the next age-appropriate classroom.

Classroom management entails both teachers meeting the needs of all children. However, Service Providers must ensure that each teacher working exclusively with infants and toddlers has the responsibility for no more than four infants and toddlers when meeting home visits, parent/teacher conference expectations and developmental needs of the children. All EHS sites must comply with the above stated staffing, group and class size requirements.



Ratios must be maintained during EHS hours. Program hours vary by site and are set and approved at the beginning of the program year as part of the EHS Program Design.

Volunteers being counted in classroom ratios

A volunteer may be used to supplement the required adult/child ratio only for short periods of time, 10-15 minutes to accommodate for unscheduled interruptions/emergencies. Volunteers may be used to supplement for restroom breaks, children's needs and to cover lunch hours as long as a qualified EHS teacher is in the classroom. **A volunteer must never be left alone with a child or group of children and must remain with a qualified EHS teacher at all times.** All volunteers must sign the Head Start Standards of Conduct, pass a background check, and receive volunteer training. Providers must keep documentation of volunteer training and comply with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission Child Care Regulations.

Performance Standard(s):

1302.21(b)(1)(2); 1302.94(a)(b)

	DHS Early Head Start Program Policy		
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY 3			
SUBJECT	Hygiene & Cleaning Practices		
REFERENCE	Environmental Health and Safety		
EFFECTIVE	8/1/2016		
Policy Council Approval: 7/26/16	Policy Council Revision: 5/25/21	Governing Body Approval: 9/19/16	Governing Body Revision: 5/27/21
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Policy:

Early Head Start (EHS) Program Service Providers will develop and implement systems that promote hand washing, hygiene and sanitation and disinfecting of the classroom including equipment and materials. Providers must ensure staff is trained on the procedures and documentation of training must be maintained.

Service Providers will follow guidance from the Office of Head Start (OHS) or recommendations made by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Child Care Regulation, the City of San Antonio Metro Health Department, and/or Caring for Our Children National Health and Safety Standards Guidelines for Early Care and Education Programs when establishing procedures for hygiene, cleaning, disinfecting, and sanitation practices.

Hand washing

- Staff, volunteers, and children must wash their hands with soap and running water at a minimum during the following times:
 - Upon arrival,
 - Before and after diapering or toilet use
 - Before food preparation, handling, or any other food-related activity
 - Before and after eating
 - Whenever hands are contaminated with blood or other bodily fluids
 - After handling pets or other animals
 - After outdoor activities
 - Before and after playing in a water/sand play table
 - Any other time there is reason to believe the child has come in contact with substances that could be harmful to the child

- Staff and volunteers must also wash their hands with soap and running water:
 - Before and after giving medication
 - Treating or bandaging a wound
 - After assisting a child with toilet use
 - After using any cleaners or toxic chemicals; and
 - After removing gloves

Hygiene



- Easily accessible nonporous, on-latex, disposable gloves are to be worn by all staff when they are in contact with blood or bodily fluids.
- Bodily fluids should be cleaned and disinfected immediately in keeping with Head Start Performance Standards and Texas Health and Human Services Commission Child Care Regulations.
- Any tools and equipment used to clean bodily fluids should be cleaned, disinfected immediately, and blood-contaminated materials must be disposed of properly.
- Hand Sanitizers, pre-moistened towelettes, and waterless hand cleaners are not allowed to replace handwashing and should not be accessible or used on children.

Sanitation

- Toys and equipment that are placed in a child's mouth, or otherwise contaminated by body secretion or excrement, must be sanitized before handling by another child
- Cloth toys must be washed at least weekly and when contaminated
- All linens must be washed at least weekly and when soiled or before another child uses them
- All sleeping equipment must be sanitized before a different child uses it and when soiled
- Water play tables must be empty, and toys used in water tables must be sanitized daily, children and caregivers must wash their hands before using the watertable
- Sand boxes and tables must be maintained in a sanitary manner
- All garbage must be inaccessible to children and managed to keep the child-care center inside and outside, free of insects, rodents, and offensive odors and disposing of it according to local and state requirements
- All floors, ceilings and walls must be kept in good repair and clean. Paint used at the center must be lead-free
- All areas in the center used by children will be kept heated, lighted and ventilated
- All tabletops, furniture and other similar equipment used by children when soiled or contaminated with matter such as food, body secretions or excrement will be sanitized
- All cleaning supplies and other toxic materials will be marked and kept separate from food and inaccessible to children
- Hazardous materials will be stored and disposed of as recommended by the manufacturer

Performance Standard:

1302.47(b)(6)(i)(ii)(iii)

	DHS Early Head Start Program Policy		
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY 4			
SUBJECT	Health & Safety Practices		
REFERENCE	Environmental Health and Safety		
EFFECTIVE	01/03/2022		
Policy Council Approval: 7/26/16	Policy Council Revision: 1/25/22	Governing Body Approval: 9/19/16	Governing Body Revision: 2/24/22
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Policy:

Early Head Start (EHS) Service Providers will develop and implement procedures for children and staff to ensure protection from contagious disease. Procedures should include:

- Practices to control an infectious disease outbreak
- Notification of any reportable illnesses to include local or state public health agencies
- Training on accommodations that must be made for children with specific health and safety needs
- Practices to ensure confidentiality of children's health and safety needs
- Exclusion criteria
- Mask wearing and safety practices

A child cannot be denied enrollment based on a disability, illness or chronic health condition or its severity.

Early Head Start (EHS) Program Service Providers may temporarily exclude a child with an acute injury or illness from program participation for a short-term period when the child's needs cannot be readily accommodated or if they pose a significant risk to the health and safety to themselves or anyone that may come in contact with them.

The following requirement regarding mask is pending final action and/or court ruling as of December 31, 2021.

The Office of Head Start requires all individuals two (2) years old and older to wear a mask during the following: indoors when Head Start services are provided; when two or more individuals are in a vehicle owned, leased, or arranged by the Head Start

Program. For those not fully vaccinated, masks are required when outdoors in a crowded setting or during activities that involve sustained close contact with other people. A crowded setting or close contact is described as a situation where an individual is within six feet of another individual for 15 minutes or more.

Masks are not required when children and adults are eating or drinking, children are napping, and when children and adults are outdoors in a non-crowded setting or engaged in outdoor activities that do not involve sustained close contact with other people. There are additional exceptions for individuals who cannot wear a mask, or cannot safely wear a mask, because of: a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act; individuals with special health care needs. The program should follow the advice of the individual's health care provider regarding the best types of face covering.

Providers will create and implement procedures to ensure that appropriate staff is informed and trained on any accommodations that must be made for children with specific health and safety needs. Information about any child's health or safety needs should be kept confidential.



The Early Head Start Program will follow guidance from the Office of Head Start (OHS) or recommendations made by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Child Care Regulation, the City of San Antonio Metro Health Department, and/or Caring for Our Children National Health and Safety Standards Guidelines for Early Care and Education Programs when establishing procedures related to health and safety practices and the management of illness.

Performance Standard:

1302.47 (b)(7)(iii)

References:

Texas Department of State Health Services Communicable Disease Chart for Schools and Child-Care Centers

	DHS Early Head Start Program Policy		
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY 5			
SUBJECT	Emergency Preparedness / Emergency Procedures		
REFERENCE	Environmental Health and Safety		
EFFECTIVE	8/1/2016		
Policy Council Approval: 7/26/16	Policy Council Revision: 7/28/20	Governing Body Approval: 9/19/16	Governing Body Revision: 8/13/20
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Policy:

The program will develop and implement procedures that address emergencies including, but not limited to health, fire, food allergies, natural disasters, and the control of infectious/contagious diseases. Staff must be trained in emergency preparedness and the Service Provider will maintain documentation of such training.

Locations and telephone numbers and emergency response procedures must be posted in each room used by children, including the main office and central locations, and made available to all staff.

All emergency numbers including police, fire, ambulance, poison control, Child Abuse Hotline, and the Center for Disease Control, must be immediately accessible to staff at all times. Up-to-date family contact information and authorization for emergency care for each child, including emergency transportation authorization must be readily available.

Service Providers must post evacuation routes in each classroom, as well as every room used by children and staff, including the main office and central locations, and made available to all staff

Emergency evacuation routes and other safety procedures for emergencies are practiced regularly, in keeping with Head Start Performance Standards and Texas Health and Human Services Commission Child Care Regulation. Service Providers must retain documentation of these events and activities.

Each classroom must have a first aid kit, available at all times, including outdoor play time. The Early Head Start (EHS) Program will develop and implement procedures related to the location and contents of each first aid kit. Procedures will include Caring for our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards and ensure the following for each first aid kit:

- Kept in clean and sanitary condition
- Easily accessible and available to all employees at all times
- Antiseptics should be in original packaging
- Stored in a designated location known to all employees
- Kept out of reach of children
- Maintained and restocked
- Schedule of ongoing and regular inventory
- Contain no items that are expired



Performance Standard:

1302.47(8)

Additional Guidance:

Caring for our Children Basics 5.6.0.1

Caring for our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards 5.6.0.1

	DHS Early Head Start Program Policy		
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY 6			
SUBJECT	Medication Administration		
REFERENCE	Environmental Health and Safety		
EFFECTIVE	8/1/2016		
Policy Council Approval: 7/26/16	Policy Council Revision: 4/24/18	Governing Body Approval: 9/19/16	Governing Body Revision: 8/17/18
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Policy:

Early Head Start (EHS) Program, Service Providers will establish and maintain written procedures regarding the administration, handling, storage, and appropriate disposal of expired medications, for every child, staff, and volunteer.



A physician's instructions and written parent or guardian authorization is required for all medications administered by staff.

Service Providers will ensure that appropriate staff members can demonstrate proper techniques for administering, handling, and storing medication, including the use of any necessary equipment to administer medication. Service Providers must retain documentation of medication administration training.

All medication must be in the original labeled container, not expired, up-to-date, and stored under lock and key, and refrigerated, if necessary, including those required for staff and volunteers. Rescue medications, including Epi Pens, inhalers, and glucose, do not need to be locked up, however, they must be kept out of the children's reach and accessible to staff at all times. Any staff person administering rescue medications, whether in the classroom, on the playground, or on field trips, must be trained in the administration of such medications.

Performance Standard:

1302.47(7)(iv)

	DHS Early Head Start Program Policy		
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY 7			
SUBJECT	Diapering and Toilet Training		
REFERENCE	Environmental Health and Safety		
EFFECTIVE	8/1/2016		
Policy Council Approval: 7/26/16	Policy Council Revision: 7/28/20	Governing Body Approval: 9/19/16	Governing Body Revision: 8/13/20
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Policy:

A child cannot be denied enrollment or removed from the program based on toileting needs or the use of diapers and/or pull-ups. Early Head Start Program (EHS), Service Providers must develop and implement a procedure to address diapering and toilet training. Procedures must be provided to all EHS staff/volunteers and posted in areas used for diapering and toileting.

At a minimum the system will include the following:

- Process to ensure the respect and dignity for children
- How to assist a child when toileting needs occur
- Provision of diapers and wipes
- Sanitation and hygiene procedures for hand washing, diapering, and toilet training for children and staff
- Cleaning and storage of soiled clothing
- Disposal and removal of soiled diapers
- Cleaning and storage of toilet training assistive equipment
- Posted procedures in areas used for diapering and toileting
- Regular internal monitoring of the system

Staff and families will work together according to developmentally appropriate practices regarding toilet training.

Performance Standard:

1302.42 (e)(i), 1302.47 (b)(1),(6)(i)