

 Policy #: ERSEA-6	Effective Date: 9/28/10	Page #: 1 of 2
Ref #: 1305.8(a)(b)(c)	Policy Council Approval Date: 09/28/10	

COMPONENT: ELIGIBILITY, RECRUITMENT, SELECTION AND ENROLLMENT

SUBJECT: ATTENDANCE

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE: To ensure Highland Rim Head Start routinely monitors and analyzes the causes of absenteeism when the average daily attendance falls below eighty-five percent (85%).

POLICY AND PROCEDURE:

Daily attendance for each child is recorded and follow-up conducted for chronic and consecutive absenteeism.

If the monthly average daily attendance rate in the Head Start Program falls below eighty-five percent (85%), it must be analyzed and a correction plan implemented (see *Attendance Analysis Form*). The Head Start Program staff will work with families on problems of irregular attendance. All contacts with the child’s family as well as special family support service activities provided by Head Start Program staff must be documented and entered into ChildPlus.

- The analysis must include a study of the patterns of absences for each child, including the reasons for absences as well as the number of absences that occur on consecutive days. Excused absences include, but not limited to:
 - Head lice
 - Hospitalization
 - Incapacitated due to serious illness/injury
 - Death in the family
 - Receiving medical treatment or therapy at a time when class is in session
 - Temporary family situations (Ex: parent/guardian illness, temporary relocation, and inclement weather.
 - Court-ordered visitations and arrangements between custodial and noncustodial parent/guardian
 - Transportation

When absences occur, the teacher must make contact with the parent/guardian to discuss the reason for the absence. Contact should be made on the first day of absence. Teachers must document on the attendance sheet each time a parent/guardian is contacted concerning attendance. If more information other than reasons for absence is discussed, such information must be documented via email to the Family Advocate and Family Service Manager according to SOP “Building Relationship with Parents and Writing

Case Notes”. The Family Advocate (FA) must be contacted on the first day of an absence if the reason for the absence is: unexcused, temporary family situation, emergency, crisis, communicable disease, or hospitalization of child.

- The teacher will notify the FA responsible for their classroom immediately. The FA will make a phone call to the parent/guardian to see if we can assist them in any way. If the absence is unexcused, they will remind the parent/guardian of our attendance policy.
- On the third day of an unexcused absence, the FA along with another staff person will attempt to make a home visit and offer assistance to help parents/guardians establish regular attendance. Parent/Guardian will be notified that the child must return to school and maintain regular attendance or be in jeopardy of being terminated from the program for chronic absenteeism.
- Home Visits will also be made, as necessary, to offer assistance due to emergency, crisis, and temporary family situation.

When a child has been enrolled for a center but has never attended by the 4th day after the first scheduled day of attendance and no contact is made with the family, that slot will be considered vacant.

Circumstances where chronic absenteeism persists and it does not seem feasible to include the child in either the same or a different program option, the child’s slot must be considered an enrollment vacancy. Chronic Absenteeism is defined as a child whose attendance record shows they are consistently maintaining an individual attendance rate of 75% or less for at least two months without being a result of illness or well documented absences for other reasons. (1305.8 OHS-PC-1-018).