

Highland Rim Economic Corporation  
Head Start Policies and Procedures Manual

**Policy ID 20005 (ERSEA) Enrollment of Children**

Related Regulations:	1302.15; Act 645		
Revised by:	Jamie Davenport, Operations Manager	Revision Date:	5/8/2017
Approved by:	Elizabeth McLaughlin, Head Start Director	Approval Date:	9/26/2017
Responsibility:	Family Advocates		
Timeline:	As Vacancies Occur		
Evaluation:			
Forms:			

**Performance Objective:** The program maintains its funded enrollment level and fills any vacancy as soon as possible (within 30 days).

**1.0 Enrollment of Children**

- 1.1 The program makes efforts to maintain enrollment of eligible children for the following year.
- 1.2 Under exceptional circumstances, the program may maintain a child's enrollment in Head Start for a third year, provided that family income is verified again.
- 1.3 When the program serves homeless children or children in foster care, it makes efforts to maintain the child's enrollment regardless of whether the family or child moves to a different service area, or transitions the child to a program in a different service area, as required in §1302.72 a, according to the family's needs.
- 1.4 If the program determines from the community assessment there are families experiencing homelessness in the area, or children in foster care that could benefit from services, the program may reserve one or more enrollment slots for pregnant women and children experiencing homelessness and children in foster care, when a vacancy occurs.
  - a) No more than 3% of the program's funded enrollment slots may be reserved.
  - b) If the reserved enrollment slot is not filled within 30 days, the enrollment slot becomes vacant and then must be filled within 30 days of vacancy (1302.15 a).
- 1.5 Children from diverse economic backgrounds who are funded with other sources, including private pay, are not considered part of the program's eligible funded enrollment.
- 1.6 The program complies with state immunization enrollment and attendance requirements, with the exception of homeless children as described in §1302.16 c 1.
- 1.7 Parent participation in any program activity is voluntary, including consent for data sharing, and is not required as a condition of the child's enrollment.

**2.0 Enrollment Process**

- 2.1 Program ERSEA staff fill out each form completely and accurately and ensure that forms filled out by parents are complete and accurate.
  - a) Family Advocates and parent/guardians sign all necessary forms.
  - b) Family Advocates enter the information from completed registration packet into the electronic record-keeping system.
  - c) Enrollment is C in accordance with Head Start regulations.

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2.2 The program's enrollment procedures take into account:

- a) The number of children with disabilities, including types of disabilities and their severity,
- b) The services and resources provided by other agencies, and
- c) Observation of applicable State laws which require that children entering center-based preschool programs have complete immunizations prior to entering to reduce the spread of communicable disease.

2.3 Family Advocates schedule an application appointment with the parent/s.

- a) The application packet is completed at the appointment.
- b) Family Advocates conduct an in-person interview with each family to the extent possible.
- c) Family Advocates assist each family in completing enrollment packets.
- d) Family Advocates explain each form to parents/guardians and ensure that all items are appropriately completed.

2.4 Family Advocates make determination of acceptance (or Waiting List) within 48 hours of eligibility determination.

2.5 Family Advocates assign accepted children to classrooms/groups as soon as possible.

- a) Family Advocate send acceptance letters to eligible families.

### **3.0 Enrollment Priority**

3.1 Each program uses a uniform priority ranking, assigns points to each child/family, and Family Advocate maintain the Waiting List in the electronic record-keeping system according to these points (see "Selection Criteria for Priority Enrollment" in [Policy ID 20004 \(ERSEA\) Selection of Children](#))

3.2 Priority Order is determined by greatest demonstrated needs.

- a) Greatest needs are determined by the child's priority score on their *Selection Criteria Form*.
- b) The Family Advocate offers the first available slot to the family with greatest need on the Waiting List.
  - i) The family may choose to accept that offered placement or wait for their desired option/slot.
  - ii) Income, age and eligibility must be determined first before placement on the Waiting List.

### **4.0 Enrollment of Over-Income Families**

4.1 The program may enroll over-income families in accordance with the regulations.

4.2 Family Services Manager follow the "Additional Allowances for Programs" section of [Policy ID 20002 \(ERSEA\) Determining, Verifying and Documenting Eligibility](#) to enroll over-income families.

4.3 Once a site has exhausted its Waiting List for income-eligible children and has made every effort to recruit from the community all income-eligible children, it may enroll the over-income children with special needs on the Waiting List according to their ranking.

4.4 Once over-income children with special needs have been enrolled, and the site has not yet reached full enrollment, the program may enroll the other over-income children on the Waiting List according to their ranking.

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- 4.5 When a program has reached 10% over-income it may choose to enroll additional families between 101-130% of poverty as outlined in section 645 of the Improving School Readiness Act of 2007, not to exceed 35% of participants.
- a) Programs choosing to enroll this additional 35% of participants between 101-130% of poverty must submit an annual report detailing the items described in the “Additional Allowances for Programs” section of [Policy ID 20002 \(ERSEA\) Determining, Verifying and Documenting Eligibility](#).
- 4.6 When a family is determined to be over-income, Family Advocates email the Family Services Manager to request placement.
- a) The Family Services Manager reviews program status of over-income families to determine enrollment opportunities.
  - b) The Family Services Manager makes a determination and notifies requesting Family Advocate by email within 24 hours.