

 <b>Policy #: ERSEA-4</b>	<b>Page #: 1 of 3</b>
<b>Ref #: 1302.14</b>	<b>Policy Council Approval Date:</b> 07/25/2023

**COMPONENT: ERSEA**

**SUBJECT: SELECTION PROCESS**

**PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE:** The program establishes selection criteria annually for the prioritization of selection of participants.

**POLICY AND PROCEDURE:**

The program annually establishes selection criteria that weigh the prioritization of selection of participants, based on community needs identified in the community needs assessment and including family income, whether the child is homeless, whether the child is in foster care, the child’s age, whether the child is eligible for special education and related services, or early intervention services, as appropriate, and other relevant family or child risk factors.

When the program operates in a service area where Head Start eligible children can enroll in high-quality publicly funded pre-kindergarten for a full school day, the program prioritizes younger children as part of the selection criteria (unless this priority would disrupt partnerships with local education agencies, in which it is not required).

The program does not deny enrollment based on a disability or chronic health condition or its severity.

**Children Eligible for Services under IDEA**

The program ensures at least 10% of total funded enrollment is filled by children eligible for services under IDEA, unless the responsible HHS official grants a waiver.

- Then children eligible for services under IDEA are prioritized for the available slots in accordance with the program’s selection criteria described below.

**Waiting List**

The program develops at the beginning of each enrollment year and maintains during the year a waiting list that ranks children according to the program’s selection criteria.

The Waiting List is an ongoing part of the intake and record-keeping system to ensure vacancies are filled by the child with greatest demonstrated need in a timely manner.

It is the responsibility of the Head Start Director to identify a single point of contact to be responsible for administering the program's Waiting List.

- The Family Services Manager maintains the Waiting List in the electronic record-keeping system.

When a parent expresses an interest in enrolling their child, and there are no available enrollment opportunities, that child will be put on the Waiting List.

When an enrollment opportunity becomes available, the program offers it as quickly as possible to the child with the greatest need.

- Families have the right to accept or decline the enrollment opportunity.
- Family Advocates centrally process and maintain records of *Head Start Application and Eligibility Verification Forms*.

The Waiting List is maintained for the current program year for which the application is received and is purged at the end of each program year. Those still eligible for the following year will be asked to re-submit updated application documents to remain on the waitlist for the upcoming program year.

The Family Services Manager monitors and provides assistance in the administration of the Waiting List.

### **Selection Criteria for Priority Enrollment**

The Grantee provides the base priority scores categories and criteria as approved by Policy Council and the Board of Directors.

Priority score criteria are derived from the results of the Community Assessment and its annual updates.

Changes to the priority score are submitted to the Policy Council and Board of Directors for approval.

Once changes are approved, corresponding documents are updated:

- *Selection Criteria Form*
- Selection Criteria for Priority Enrollment procedure (this policy); and
- Priority scores are updated in the electronic tracking system.