



HIDALGO COUNTY HEAD START PROGRAM

DEPARTMENT POLICIES & PROCEDURE MANUAL



**Head Start...where the learning
begins and success follows.**

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Introduction

The [ORGANIZATION] operates its Department Policies and Procedures Manual, as mandated by:

- Head Start Program Performance Standards 45 (CFR) Chapter XIII – Administration for Children and Families
- Head Start Act (As Amended December 12, 2007)

These policies adhere to the general guidelines of the ECLKC Performance Standards and the Texas Health and Human Services Standards.

ECLKC Performance Standards focus on ensuring children's health and well-being in areas like:

- Access to ongoing healthcare (including dental)
- Up-to-date immunizations
- Healthy meals and nutrition
- Mental health and social-emotional development

The Texas Health and Human Services Standards sets guidelines for various programs.

All health information is made confidential in accordance with HIPAA regulations.

Staff can only share information with healthcare professionals and support personnel involved in the child's care with written parental consent.

Acknowledgements:

Department Overview

[XXX]

Staff

[XXX]

Responsibilities

[XXX]

Department Deadlines and Activities

Name of Report or Activity	Staff Responsible	Due Date
Copyright – The Write Direction		

Policies and Procedures

System Service Area:	Advocating for Quality Health Services for Children in Texas
Related Regulations: xx	
Related Forms:	Related Reports:
PC Approval:	PC Revision:
Board Approval:	Board Revision:

Policy: This policy ensures all children enrolled in Texas early childhood programs - including daycare, pre-kindergarten, and Head Start - have access to quality health services that align with the ECLKC Performance Standards and the Texas Health and Human Services Standards.

Time Frame: XX

Person(s) Responsible: XX

Procedure:

Integration and Best Practices

[REDACTED]

Advocacy and Policy Development

[REDACTED]

System Service Area:	Annual training update on reporting suspected abuse and neglect
Related Regulations: xx	
Related Forms:	Related Reports:
PC Approval:	PC Revision:
Board Approval:	Board Revision:

Policy: This policy ensures all staff members in Childcare Programs maintain current knowledge and skills for identifying, reporting, and responding to suspected child abuse and neglect, with the aim of ensuring staff competency in recognizing and responding to suspected abuse or neglect, and promoting consistent application of reporting procedures across the Program.

Time Frame: XX

Person(s) Responsible: XX

Procedure:

All Program staff (teachers, administrators, volunteers, support staff) are required to complete mandatory annual training updates on:

[REDACTED]

Training Format

- Training updates can be delivered through various formats, including in-person workshops, online training modules, and/or interactive webinars.

Regardless of format, the training program should be engaging, informative, and address practical scenarios relevant to Program settings.

System Service Area:	Availability of Health Resources Policy
Related Regulations: xx	
Related Forms:	Related Reports:
PC Approval:	PC Revision:
Board Approval:	Board Revision:

Policy: This policy ensures that the Program maintains readily available health resources to promote children's well-being and address basic health needs. It aligns with the focus on child health and safety. While these documents don't mandate specific resources, this policy promotes preparedness.

Time Frame: XX

Person(s) Responsible: XX

Procedure:

Health Information Resources

- Age-appropriate health information materials are readily accessible to staff in a central location.
- These may include Information on common childhood illnesses and injuries, first-aid procedures, and emergency contact information (poison control center, ambulance)

Community Health Resources

[REDACTED]

Communication and Training

[REDACTED]

IHP Development Process

Individualized Health Plans (continued)

IHP Implementation

[REDACTED]

Program Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

- The IHP policy is reviewed [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

System Service Area:	Health Emergency Bulletin
Related Regulations: xx	
Related Forms:	Related Reports:
PC Approval:	PC Revision:
Board Approval:	Board Revision:

Policy: This policy ensures the safety and well-being of children, staff, and families in Childcare Programs by establishing a clear protocol for monitoring and responding to health emergency bulletins issued by local or state health departments.

The aim is to have timely awareness of potential health threats, allow for proactive response measures, protect children, staff, and families from exposure to infectious diseases, and promote collaboration and communication with health authorities and the community.

Time Frame: XX

Person(s) Responsible: XX

Procedure:

- Program administrators designate a staff member responsible for monitoring health alerts and bulletins from relevant health authorities, such as the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), local public health departments, and official health department email alerts.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Person(s) Responsible: XX

Procedure:

Parents/Guardians are responsible for

- Providing complete and accurate health records upon enrollment.
- Promptly informing the Program of any changes to their child's health information, , including new immunizations received, development of allergies or medical conditions, changes in medications or dosages (with a new physician's order), and updates to emergency contact information.
- Providing necessary documentation to verify updates.

Program Staff are responsible for

[illegible]

System Service Area:	Health Services Staff Collaboration with Health Services Advisory Committee (HSAC) Policy
Related Regulations: xx	
Related Forms:	Related Reports:
PC Approval:	PC Revision:
Board Approval:	Board Revision:

Policy: The Program mandates collaboration between health services staff and HSAC members to enhance health services, access to care, and health awareness for enrolled children.

Time Frame: XX

Person(s) Responsible: XX

Procedure:

The HSAC is comprised of representatives from various backgrounds, including health care professionals (e.g., pediatricians, nurses), mental health professionals, community social service agencies, and program health services staff

Collaboration Activities

[REDACTED]

System Service Area:	Keeping copies of all health records in a safe place for transitional purposes
Related Regulations: xx	
Related Forms:	Related Reports:
PC Approval:	PC Revision:
Board Approval:	Board Revision:

Policy: This policy details securely maintaining copies of children's health records for transitional purposes during enrollment changes in the Childcare Program, with the aim of ensuring continuity of care for children transitioning between the Programs, providing healthcare providers with a complete health history for informed decision-making, and maintaining compliance with relevant standards and regulations.

Time Frame: XX

Person(s) Responsible: XX

Procedure:

- Copies of all health records are maintained [REDACTED]
- Copies of health records must be stored securely [REDACTED]

Transition Process

- Upon a child's exit or transition, the Program: [REDACTED]

Destruction of Records

[REDACTED]

deletion of electronic files.

System Service Area:	Monitoring and Reporting Suspected Abuse and Neglect
Related Regulations: xx	
Related Forms:	Related Reports:
PC Approval:	PC Revision:
Board Approval:	Board Revision:

Policy: This policy ensures the safety and well-being of all children enrolled in the Program, and establishing a comprehensive system for monitoring, reporting, and responding to suspected child abuse and neglect, with the aim of protecting children from harm by ensuring timely reporting of suspected abuse or neglect.

This policy adheres to relevant federal and state laws, including the Texas Family Code and the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA).

Time Frame: XX

Person(s) Responsible: XX

Procedure:

All Program staff, including teachers, administrators, volunteers, and support staff, receive mandatory training on

[REDACTED]

Monitoring and Observation

The staff are vigilant in observing children for signs of abuse or neglect during program activities, including:

[REDACTED]

Monitoring and Reporting Suspected Abuse and Neglect (continued)

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Reporting Procedures

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Confidentiality and Support

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

CONFIDENTIALITY

- All Program staff are mandated reporters and legally obligated to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) Child Abuse Hotline.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

The staff receive training on maintaining confidentiality while fulfilling their mandatory reporting obligations.

System Service Area:	Monitoring Children's Health Records
Related Regulations: xx	
Related Forms:	Related Reports:
PC Approval:	PC Revision:
Board Approval:	Board Revision:

Policy: This policy details the Program's procedures for monitoring children's health records and ensuring compliance with immunization requirements and other health-related regulations.

Time Frame: XX

Person(s) Responsible: XX

Procedure:

Health Record Collection and Review

- Upon enrollment, parents/guardians provide the program with the child's current health records, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Ongoing Monitoring

- Program staff monitor any changes in a child's health status [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Recordkeeping

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

- Any observed or reported health concerns are promptly communicated to the nurse on duty.
- The nurse assesses the situation and determines the necessary course of action.
- Depending on the severity of the concern, the nurse may need to:

System Service Area:	Parent/Guardian Accompaniment During Exams/Tests/Screening Procedures Policy
Related Regulations: xx	
Related Forms:	Related Reports:
PC Approval:	PC Revision:
Board Approval:	Board Revision:

Policy: This policy details the Program's approach to parent/guardian accompaniment during children's exams, tests, and screening procedures, with the goal of balancing the importance of parental involvement with the need to ensure efficient and standardized testing procedures

Time Frame: XX

Person(s) Responsible: XX

Procedure:

[REDACTED]

If parent/guardian accompaniment is permitted:

[REDACTED]

If accompaniment is not permitted:

[REDACTED]

System Service Area:	Physical Examination Policy (Head-to-Toe Assessment)
Related Regulations: xx	
Related Forms:	Related Reports:
PC Approval:	PC Revision:
Board Approval:	Board Revision:

Policy: All children enrolled in the Program will undergo a thorough health assessment upon entering the program to identify any potential health concerns.

Time Frame:

Person(s) Responsible: XX

Procedure:

Initial Health Examination

[REDACTED]

Re-examinations

[REDACTED]

Responsibilities

[REDACTED]

System Service Area:	Promoting Preventive Healthcare via Newsletters and Conferences
Related Regulations: xx	
Related Forms:	Related Reports:
PC Approval:	PC Revision:
Board Approval:	Board Revision:

Policy: This policy increases awareness and knowledge about preventive healthcare practices among parents and caregivers of children enrolled in the Childcare Program, with the aim of improving health outcomes for children through early intervention and prevention of illness and creating stronger partnerships between the Program staff, healthcare providers, and families.

Time Frame: XX

Person(s) Responsible: XX

Procedure:

Newsletters

- Develop engaging and informative newsletters about:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Conferences

[REDACTED]

Offer childcare services during conferences to encourage participation.

System Service Area:	Public Assistance for [ORGANIZATION] Payment Disbursement
Related Regulations: xx	
Related Forms:	Related Reports:
PC Approval:	PC Revision:
Board Approval:	Board Revision:

Policy: This policy ensures transparent and efficient disbursement of public funds allocated to the [ORGANIZATION] program, maximizing their impact on program quality and services for enrolled children.

Time Frame: XX

Person(s) Responsible: XX

Procedure:

Funding Sources

[REDACTED]

Eligibility for Public Assistance

[REDACTED]

Payment Procedures

[REDACTED]

Public Assistance Payment Disbursement (continued)

Financial Reporting

[REDACTED]

Monitoring and Auditing

[REDACTED]

The [ORGANIZATION] also conducts internal audits periodically to identify any areas for improvement in financial management practices.

System Service Area:	Referrals Policy
Related Regulations: 1302.42 (a); §746.609	
Related Forms:	Related Reports:
PC Approval:	PC Revision:
Board Approval:	Board Revision:

Policy: This policy details the procedures for initiating and following up on referrals for children enrolled in the Program who may require additional health services or support.

Time Frame: XX

Person(s) Responsible: XX

Procedure:

Referral Process

[REDACTED]

Communication and Follow-up

Program staff communicate the referral decision [REDACTED]

Referrals Policy (continued)

Following the appointment, program staff:

[REDACTED]

System Service Area:	Referring non-Medicaid parents/guardians to community health resources for assistance
Related Regulations: xx	
Related Forms:	Related Reports:
PC Approval:	PC Revision:
Board Approval:	Board Revision:

Policy: This policy ensures all children enrolled in Childcare Programs in Texas have access to necessary health services, regardless of their family's Medicaid enrollment status, with the goal of improving health outcomes for children through early intervention and preventive care, and enhancing collaboration between programs and community health organizations.

Time Frame: XX

Person(s) Responsible: XX

Procedure:

Identification of Needs

- Program staff are trained to identify potential health concerns in children, including signs and symptoms of illness or developmental delays, and/or indications of unmet health needs (e.g., frequent absences due to illness, changes in behavior)

Referral Process

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

System Service Area:	Regular Health Records Review
Related Regulations: xx	
Related Forms:	Related Reports:
PC Approval:	PC Revision:
Board Approval:	Board Revision:

Policy: This policy ensures the accuracy, completeness, and accessibility of health records for all children enrolled in Childcare Programs to support informed decision-making and continuity of care.

Time Frame: XX

Person(s) Responsible: XX

Procedure:

Regular review of health records demonstrates a commitment to providing quality care for all children enrolled in the Program. Timely identification of potential health concerns for early intervention help improve health outcomes.

- Reviews are conducted by trained Program staff (e.g., nurse, health professional), who are tasked with

[REDACTED]

Record Retention and Accessibility

- The Program has a documented policy for health record retention and accessibility that complies with all applicable laws and regulations (e.g., HIPAA), including:

[REDACTED]

System Service Area:	Securing Information from Primary Healthcare Provider Policy
Related Regulations: xx	
Related Forms:	Related Reports:
PC Approval:	PC Revision:
Board Approval:	Board Revision:

Policy: This policy details the procedures for securely obtaining and maintaining information from a child's primary healthcare provider (PCP) to ensure the child's well-being and program compliance.

Time Frame: XX

Person(s) Responsible: XX

Procedure:

Information Request

[REDACTED]

Information Receipt and Storage

[REDACTED]

Sharing of Information

[REDACTED]

Retention and Disposal of Information

[REDACTED]

System Service Area:	Special Menu Policy - Physician-Ordered Modifications
Related Regulations: xx	
Related Forms:	Related Reports:
PC Approval:	PC Revision:
Board Approval:	Board Revision:

Policy: This policy details the procedures for providing children with special dietary needs in accordance with a physician-ordered modified diet plan.

Time Frame: XX

Person(s) Responsible: XX

Procedure:

Documentation Requirement

[REDACTED]

Communication and Collaboration

[REDACTED]

Accommodation and Modifications

- The staff make reasonable efforts to provide meals and snacks that meet the child's specific dietary needs based on the physician-ordered plan. [REDACTED]

Staff training on Universal Precautions (continued)

Monitoring and Evaluation

[REDACTED]

RESOURCES

- The staff are provided access to readily available resources on UP, including guidelines for proper cleaning and disinfection procedures and information sheets on common childhood illnesses.

System Service Area:	Vitals Monitoring Policy
Related Regulations: xx	
Related Forms:	Related Reports:
PC Approval:	PC Revision:
Board Approval:	Board Revision:

Policy: Program staff are responsible for following established procedures for monitoring the vital signs of children enrolled in the program. This is done to identify potential health concerns and ensure the well-being of all children.

Time Frame: XX

Person(s) Responsible: XX

Procedure:

Monitoring Frequency

[REDACTED]

Monitoring Techniques

[REDACTED]

Documentation and Communication

[REDACTED]