

**SIUC HEAD START  
Operating Policies and Procedures Manual**

<b>Part 1305</b>	
<b>Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance in Head Start</b>	
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<b>Subject:</b> Community Assessment/Community-Wide Strategic Planning	<b>Number:</b> E.05.1
<b>Service Area:</b> ERSEA	<b>Section:</b> Determining Communities Strengths & Needs
<b>Relevant Forms:</b> Located on P:/common drive	<b>Date Effective:</b> Revised 08/2008

**REGULATION REFERENCE:** Performance Standard 1305.3

**POLICY:** The program must complete an assessment of the community strengths, needs and resources and prepare a community assessment report. The assessment must be in accordance with the requirement of 45CFR 1305.3 The Head Start Community Assessment (CA) is conducted to assist in identifying relevant physical, economic, social, and other community resources, as well as problems, as they relate to the design and implementation of the SIUC Head Start Program.

The Community Assessment is a process for collecting data that describes the status of the communities within Jackson and Williamson counties. The findings of the Community Assessment (CA) can be utilized to identify needs of families and children within the service areas, in addition to determining the types of services and program options that would best meet those needs. The CA findings can also assist in identifying where shortages exist in community linkages, suggest possibilities in bridging those gaps, and build upon the current community resources to further enhance the services that are currently being provided.

The community-wide strategic planning process incorporates the findings of the community assessment, program self-assessment with input from community and staff stakeholders into the development the philosophy, long range and short term goals of the program, define current, as well as future service areas, and identify resources that would be able to address identified needs.

**PROCEDURE:** Full Assessment – The full community assessment is to be conducted every three years, which is the year that is the first year of the triennial cycle requiring a full continuation grant application. The following steps outline activities in completing the CA. The required content of the Community Assessment include the following information:

- Demographic make-up of Head Start eligible children and families, which include the number, geographic location, and racial composition;
- Number of children with disabilities, types of disabilities, and relevant services and resources provided by community agencies;
- Data on education, health, nutrition, and social services needs of Head Start eligible children and families;
- The education, health, nutrition, and social service needs of children and their families as defined by families of Head Start eligible children and by institutions in the community serving young children;

- Other child development and publicly funded state and local preschool programs, and the approximate number of Head Start eligible children served by each;
- Resources in the community that could be used to address the needs of Head Start eligible children and their families, including problems with availability and accessibility.
- A summary of the process used to conduct the Community Assessment (CA), which includes the involvement of parents, staff, and other sources of statistical information and data.
  
- The FCPS Coordinator works in coordination with the Program Director to determine areas of focus, timeframes/due dates, participants and assignments.
  - Timeframes for data collection are generally November – January, concluding with a findings meeting for stakeholders and participants held in February and the final report prepared.
  - Participants may include staff at all levels, Policy Council members, University officials and community members and determines the schedule of activities.
- Generally, the FCPS Coordinator is responsible for overseeing data collection, preparing the report and presenting community assessment data at the findings meeting.

Update Year – The Community Assessment update takes place during the two intervening years following a full assessment. The purpose of the update is to review the full Community Assessment to determine if there have been significant changes that need to be reported and impact program design and options.

- The FCPS Coordinator works in coordination with the Program Director to determine areas of focus, timeframes/due dates, participants and assignments.
- Generally, The FCPS Coordinator is responsible for overseeing data collection, preparing the report and presenting community assessment data.

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<b>Subject:</b> Eligibility	<b>Number:</b> E.05.2
<b>Service Area:</b> ERSEA	<b>Section:</b> Age of Children & Family Income Eligibility
<b>Relevant Forms:</b> Located on P:/common drive	<b>Date Effective:</b> Revised 08/2008

**REGULATION REFERENCE:** Performance Standard 1305.4

**POLICY:** SIUC Head Start serves age and income eligible children and their families who reside in Williamson and Jackson counties. Generally, children must be three (3) years of age on or before September 1 and they remain age eligible until they are of kindergarten age. Children with a documented disability, children who have been enrolled in an Early Head Start program, foster children, and homeless children may be served when they turn three (3) years of age during the program year even if they did not turn three (3) on or before September 1. "Income eligible" is defined as

- Families whose total annual income before taxes is equal to or less than the poverty income guidelines as defined by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- Families who are receiving income from public assistance (TANF), SSI, foster care, or are homeless.

If the program has exhausted all income eligible applications, it may serve 35% of children whose families' income falls between 100% and 130% of the poverty income guidelines and an additional 10% of children whose families' income falls above the 130% of the poverty income guidelines. At least 10 percent (10%) of the total enrollment opportunities must be filled with children who have disabilities. Children with disabilities are those who have been identified, evaluated, and meet the eligibility criteria established by P.L. 94-142. No child is denied placement based on a disability or its severity.

**PROCEDURE:** Age and income eligibility are determined when the family completes an application for their child to attend the program.

**Age Verification—**

- Copy of child's birth certificate must be requested and examined
- Families who cannot produce a birth certificate may provide a Medical card or other legal document
- FCS workers are to work diligently with families to acquire the child's birth certificate and incorporate into the Families Partnership Agreement
- Copies of documentation of age will become a part of the child's permanent file.

**Income Verification—**

- Documents provided by the family will be reviewed by staff (generally a family & community service worker or a center director) at the time the application is completed. The staff person who reviews the documents will mark on the

application the type of income documentation provided and sign and date to verify documents were examined.

- Period of time to be considered for eligibility is the twelve (12) months immediately preceding the month in which application or reapplication for enrollment of a child is made, or for the calendar year immediately preceding the calendar year in which the application or reapplication is made, whichever more accurately reflects the family's current needs.
- Families who claim no income during the twelve (12) months must verify this by signing and dating the appropriate line on the application form. Staff should discuss the income status with the family to assess how the family is living and what support services may need to be offered.
- The staff person will total the annual income for the family using the income calculation worksheet.
- Family is determined to be "income eligible" or "over income" based on the federal poverty income guidelines
- Once the determination is made, the appropriate box is marked and then the form is signed and dated.
- Income documents used to verify income include, but are not limited to:
  - Letters – Illinois Department of Public Aid, General Assistance, Veteran's Administration, Social Security, Unemployment Compensation, Universities, Financial Aid, etc
  - Written statement from employers
  - Recent pay stubs; pay envelopes
  - W-2 forms
  - Internal Revenue Tax Form 1040, 1040A, 1099

#### Disability Verification—

- Cases of children with disabilities are to be documented by the referring agency at the time of intake, application, or by an external agency or provider

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<b>Subject:</b> Eligibility - Full Day	<b>Number:</b> E.05.2.1
<b>Service Area:</b> ERSEA—General	<b>Section:</b> Age of Children & Family Income Eligibility
<b>Relevant Forms:</b> Located on P:/common drive	<b>Date Effective:</b> Revised 07/2009

**REGULATION REFERENCE:**

**POLICY:** SIUC Head Start provides the opportunity for families to receive full day school year Head Start services by operating three full day classrooms in collaboration with the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS)/Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP). Families must meet the guidelines set forth by the Child Care Assistance Program in order to qualify for full day services. In addition, slots in these full day classrooms are made available for foster children needing full day care as determined by the Illinois Department of Children & Family Services (IDHS). These classrooms are located in the Marion (1) and Carbondale (2) Head Start Centers. In addition, the program offers full day/full year Head Start services in collaboration with childcare providers including Malone’s Early Learning Center and John A. Logan Preschool.

**PROCEDURE:** Families interested in full day Head Start services must meet the eligibility requirements of the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS)/Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) and agree to make a co-payment determined by the CCAP. The SIUC Head Start program works with the family and the local Childcare Resource and Referral agency (CCR&R) in completing required paperwork and determining eligibility. Families must:

- Complete an SIUC Head Start full day application which indicates school and/or work schedule
- Complete and submit the appropriate CCAP paperwork
  - Families without a current CCAP case complete an application and submit along with pay stubs, work and/or school schedule to CCR&R
  - Families with a current CCAP case complete a provider change form to CCR&R indicating the child will be attending an SIUC Head Start center or child care collaboration site
- Submit re-determination paperwork/information when requested by the CCAP
- Make a monthly co-payment to SIUC Head Start or the collaboration site as determined by the CCAP

Families who apply for full day services but do not qualify for the CCAP or families who no longer qualify after going through the re-determination process, are offered a transfer to a half day slot when one becomes available.

Foster families must meet the guidelines of the IDCFS to qualify for full day services for foster children. Foster families do not make a co-payment as IDCFS covers the cost of providing full day care.

A full day selection criteria form is completed by the center director for all families interested in full day school year Head Start services in order to prioritize selection for the available slots.

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<b>Subject:</b> Recruitment	<b>Number:</b> E.05.3
<b>Service Area:</b> ERSEA	<b>Section:</b> Recruitment of Children
<b>Relevant Forms:</b> Located on P:/common drive	<b>Date Effective:</b> Revised 07/2009

**REGULATION REFERENCE:** Performance Standard 1305.5

**POLICY:** Recruitment is a systematic process which utilizes the results of the community assessment to assure enrollment of eligible children from the most disadvantaged homes. Also, recruitment must result in the enrollment of eligible children with disabilities (10 percent of available enrollment opportunities). Recruitment is ongoing throughout the school year although mass recruitment is conducted in March and April of each program year for start up in August. All staff have a role in the recruitment process.

**PROCEDURE:** Family/Community Partnership Coordinator has the responsibility for development, implementation and monitoring of the program's recruitment plan. Recruitment materials must be developed, partnerships and alliances must be maintained, markets must be defined and effective strategies developed and implemented to reach these markets.

Recruitment materials may include but are not limited the following:

- Flyers
- Posters
- Brochures
- Press Releases
- Letters/mailings
- Banners hung in strategic locations
- Door hangers utilized during door-to-door recruiting
- Ink pens or other imprinted items

In addition to a description of the program, printed recruitment materials should include the following information:

- A statement describing the type of transportation services offered
- A statement indicating a child cannot be denied placement based on disability status only

Markets include:

- Current parents who have children age eligible to return
- Current parents who will have age eligible children by or on Sept. 1
- Current parents who refer friends/contacts who have/will have age eligible children
- Families who are assisted by IDHS who have not been enrolled

- Families living in homeless or women's shelters
- Families on the waiting list who still have age eligible children
- Families who applied in the past (or expressed an interest), but did not complete verification who still have age eligible children
- Families who visit/frequent area community/public service agencies/organizations serving low-income families
- Businesses serving low income families
- Families with children with disabilities
- Special Education Cooperatives
- Early Head Start referrals
- DCFS referrals
- Targeted low income geographic areas
- Low income families receiving child care subsidies

Strategies to reach the specific markets are as follows:

- Family Community Partnership Coordinator (FCPC) is responsible to utilize currently enrolled parents in the recruitment process. Positive feedback received from parents about Head Start experiences should be documented by staff. FCPC is responsible to include this information in brochures, newsletters and other recruitment information.
- A re-enrollment form is sent to all current parents asking them to indicate plans for next year's enrollment. The form is sent to parents in April and asks for preferences for session/full day and other comments. Family/community service workers track the receipt of the completed forms for the Program Systems Operations Manager.
- Family/community service workers will prepare a list of and directly contact families who have younger siblings who should be age eligible by September 1 in April. The April agency newsletter will inform parents that applications for the upcoming program year are being accepted.
- Parents will be encouraged at the March and April parent meetings to make referrals. Parents will be provided with recruitment flyers and brochures for distribution as follows:
  - At the April parent meetings
  - Via all staff (teachers, center directors, specialists, coordinators) that will offer parents, when they are in contact with current parents, recruitment materials to pass along, post at work, take to church, etc.
- In early April, the PSOC prepares a letter which is mailed by the FCSWs to families whose names appear on the IDHS lists received from Jackson & Williamson counties, if the children who will be age eligible are not currently receiving Head Start services. An updated list is received in July and another mailing occurs by August.
- FCSWS provide flyers and brochures to IDHS offices for distribution and posting.
- FCSWS contact families who were placed on the waiting list are encouraged to reapply or complete the unfinished application on file.
- FCPC develops a list using the Community Resource Guide and Interagency Partnerships and prepares a packet of materials for agencies/organizations, which frequently serve low-income families. The packet will contain information that agencies can use in their newsletters/materials that are distributed to families, flyers

for posting, flyers and brochures for distributing. FCSWS deliver packets to the agencies.

- FCPC develops a list of local churches and ensures they receive information to use in church bulletins and announcements and are provided flyers for posting and/or distribution.
- FCPC develops flyers for distribution to families with children currently attending the primary grades at public schools. ECDC contacts schools for permission to deliver the fliers to schools/ programs along with the number of fliers needed.
- Staff participation in community activities (multicultural fairs, family expos, child finds, etc) in both counties occurs as opportunities are available.
- Family/community service workers are provided with flyers to post at business; permission to post flyers must be received. Businesses may include:
  - Thrift/resale stores
  - Laundromats
  - Gas stations/convenience stores
  - Fast food locations
  - Housing/rentals/apartment/mobile home park offices
  - Hair salons/barbers
  - Grocery and retail stores
  - Physician and dental offices accepting medical card
  - Employers (frequent employers of current families)
  - Homeless shelters
  - Women's shelters

#### Children with disabilities:

- Program staff participates with area Child Find events held in March, April, and August. ECDC develops a schedule of participation by staff including FCSWs, Specialist and Coordinators. Names of families are contacted.
- Materials are distributed to early intervention providers and special education school districts.
- Referrals from EI/Special Ed agencies are handled with priority year-round.
- Interagency agreement is established and implemented with staff from The H Group Early Head Start regarding families enrolled in EHS who will be age eligible to transition into Head Start. *See Community Partnerships Referrals - Early Head Start for procedures for handling referrals from Early Head Start.*

#### Door to door canvassing:

- Targeting & canvassing door-to-door low-income geographic areas are determined by center directors/collaboration specialist; appropriate tracking of canvassing activities is completed and submitted to the FCPC. Canvassing procedures are as follows
  - Identify yourself as Head Start staff
  - State you are seeking eligible children for Head Start
  - Briefly tell about the program and give the parent a brochure
  - If invited into the home, take an enrollment application
  - If the parent does not invite you into the home, ask if you may call later to arrange an appointment to complete an application.

- Explain the information that the parent will need to have available at the time of application (age and income verification).
- Do not pursue persons who do not indicate an interest in the program
- While conducting door-to-door canvassing, staff should seek out locations to distribute/post flyers. **Flyers are not to be placed in mailboxes.**

Additional recruitment methods/information:

- Enrollment banners are hung in Carbondale during the spring recruitment period and on an as-needed basis. Recruitment banners will be displayed at other sites as needed and space is available.
- Press releases and public service announcements are written by FCPC, submitted to the program director who forwards to the University's Media department. This usually occurs during the spring and summer and on an as-needed basis, throughout the school year.
- The number of recruitment contacts are reported monthly to the FCPC and the PSOC.

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<b>Subject:</b> Selection	<b>Number:</b> E.05.4
<b>Service Area:</b> ERSEA	<b>Section:</b> Selection Process
<b>Relevant Forms:</b> Located on P:/common drive	<b>Date Effective:</b> Revised 08/2008

**REGULATION REFERENCE:** Performance Standard 1305.6

**POLICY:** The program must establish selection criteria points annually with input and approval of the policy council and advisory board. Information from the communitywide strategic planning process/community assessment is utilized in the development of the selection criteria. The selection criteria points are used to prioritize the enrollment of children and families into the program. If the program has exhausted all income eligible applications, it may serve 35% of children whose families' income falls between 100% and 130% of the poverty income guidelines and an additional 10% of children whose families' income falls above the 130% of the poverty income guidelines.

**PROCEDURE:**

Selection Criteria

- The program director presents the selection criteria form, which may have been modified based on the data from the community wide strategic planning process, to the policy council and advisory board each spring for review and approval
- Staff, generally center directors or FCSW's, are to complete the approved selection criteria form after completing an application with the family.
- Center directors and the program systems operations coordinator review the form to verify points.
- Full day selection criteria forms are completed on families requesting full day services.
- Data from the application is entered into the database by the family & community service worker.
- Once applications are entered into the database, the names of the children will appear on the eligibility waiting list ranked in order of highest to lowest points. The eligibility waiting list also indicates the age of the child and the percent at which the child is either under or over income.
- This waiting list is to be used when selecting children to enroll.

Selection

- The program's enrollment period takes place in March, April and May for the next program year.
- Enrollment evenings are held at each center generally in early April and enrollment appointments are scheduled with families throughout March, April, and May.
- Using the eligibility waiting list developed from the selection criteria, the following time frames are used to accept children from this pool of enrollment applications:

### May and June

- Children who are determined income eligible (IE) and are four years of age on or before September 1 can be accepted regardless of selection criteria points due to the need for school readiness.
- Children who are determined income eligible (IE) and are three years of age on or before September 1 and selection criteria points total 100 or more points can be accepted.
- Children who are determined income eligible (IE) and age eligible, regardless of the family's total selection criteria points, can be accepted if the child/family:
  - Has an IEP or IFSP on file **or**
  - Is referred by or receiving DCFS services, is homeless **or**
  - Is referred by or receiving Early Head Start/Head Start Services

### July and August

- Children who are determined income eligible (IE) and age eligible regardless of selection criteria points can be accepted.
- Typically, acceptances are prioritized as follows:
  - Income eligible 4 year olds
  - Income eligible families are accepted based on point rankings (higher points taken first)

### Remainder of Program Year and Full Year Services

- The procedures outlined in the above section (July and August) are followed throughout the program year

### Exceptions

- Children who were not three years of age on or before September 1, but turn three during the school year, may be accepted into the program in the following cases:
  - have a documented disability (IEP)
  - are transitioning from Early Head Start
  - homeless (as defined in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act )
  - foster children
  - referred by or receiving services from Early Head Start or other Head Start program
  - can be served in a developmentally appropriate way (i.e. screening, assessment, curriculum) when all older children have been considered first.
  - generally, the enrollment of these children should occur later in the school year as a vacancy occurs and there is not an older child on the waiting list to occupy the slot.
- If the program has exhausted all income eligible applications, it may serve 35% of children whose families' income falls between 100% and 130% of the poverty income guidelines and an additional 10% of children whose families' income falls above the 130% of the poverty income guidelines.
- Efforts to distribute over-income families per the allowable percentage of the funded enrollment slots by sites will be made.
  - The goal of maintaining full enrollment, however, will impact the distribution of OI slots. Given that in general, priority is given to IE applications, some sites

may not have vacancies for OI applications. Therefore, some sites may have less than the allowable percentage of OI slots filled and other sites may have more than the allowable percentage of OI slots filled.

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<b>Subject:</b> Enrollment and Re-enrollment - Years Eligible	<b>Number:</b> E.05.5
<b>Service Area:</b> ERSEA	<b>Section:</b> Enrollment and Re-enrollment
<b>Relevant Forms:</b> Located on P:/common drive	<b>Date Effective:</b> 08/2003

**REGULATION REFERENCE:** Performance Standard 1305.7(a)

**POLICY:** Children enrolled in SIUC Head Start will be allowed to remain in the program until kindergarten is available for the child.

**PROCEDURE:** N/A

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<b>Subject:</b> Enrollment and Re-enrollment - Vacancies	<b>Number:</b> E.05.5.1
<b>Service Area:</b> ERSEA	<b>Section:</b> Enrollment and Re-enrollment
<b>Relevant Forms:</b> Located on P:/common drive	<b>Date Effective:</b> Revised 08/2008

**REGULATION REFERENCE:** Performance Standard 1305.7(b)

**POLICY:** SIUC Head Start is required to maintain a funded enrollment of 433 children. Once a vacancy is determined, that vacancy will be filled within 30 days. In accordance with Head Start Performance Standards, a vacancy that occurs with 60 calendar days or less remaining in the enrollment year does not have to be filled.

**PROCEDURE:**

Enrollment of Children

- A family applies to SIUC Head Start by meeting with a family and community service worker or center director to complete an enrollment application.
- The staff member completing the application will determine if the child is eligible based on age and income verification and assign selection criteria points.
- Child and family data is then entered into the data base and the child's name appears on the eligibility waiting list along with number of selection criteria points. At this time, the child may still have outstanding DCFS health requirements.
- Children remain on the eligibility waiting list until there is an opening in the program option that meets the family needs or until a family notifies us they no longer want to be considered for enrollment.
- The process listed under selection procedures is followed to enroll children.

Dropping Children

- Drops are defined as children who have been accepted, enrolled and attended at least one day of class, and who leave the program.
- Once follow-up has occurred with families and it is determined that the child will not continue in the program, the program systems operations coordinator and the center director will confer to determine the official drop date.
- The program system operations coordinator will drop the child in the data base system.
- The center director and the program systems operations coordinator will review the eligibility waiting list to determine which child should fill the vacancy, based on the selection criteria process.
- The center director or program systems operations coordinator will move the selected child's name from the eligibility waiting list in the database to the assigned classroom section.
- The center director returns the child's file to central office
- The program systems operations coordinator will ensure the child's file is reviewed by health and disabilities staff and that file is sent to the appropriate center.

- The program systems operations coordinator will notify the family in writing of the opening, any outstanding health requirements, and a start date will be set for the new child

#### Re-Enrollment of Children

- Staff will notify the program systems operations coordinator of the child that will be returning.
- Programs systems operations coordinator will pull the child's original file and determine, based on when child was previously enrolled, what information needs to be updated
- Program systems operations coordinator will forward file to health staff for review
- Program systems operations coordinator will move child's name from Ineligible/Terminated list in the database to the Eligibility Waiting List.
- Child can now be considered for enrollment under the procedures listed in the selection process

#### Transferring Children

- Children wishing to transfer from center to center will take precedence over children who are on the eligibility waiting list for a particular center. The program systems operations coordinator will transfer the child in the database system and ensure the file is transferred to the new center.

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<b>Subject:</b> Enrollment and Re-enrollment - Income	<b>Number:</b> E.05.5.2
<b>Service Area:</b> ERSEA	<b>Section:</b> Enrollment and Re-enrollment
<b>Relevant Forms:</b> Located on P:/common drive	<b>Date Effective:</b> 08/2008

**REGULATION REFERENCE:** Performance Standard 1305.7(c)

**POLICY:** Children found income eligible and who are participating in the SIUC Head Start program will remain income eligible through the current program year and the immediately succeeding program year.

**PROCEDURE:**

- Re-enrollment forms are sent home each spring to all families of enrolled children who are eligible to return for the next program year to determine if families plan for their child to return.
- Re-enrollment forms are collected by the center directors and submitted to the program systems operations coordinator.
- Information gathered from the re-enrollment form is used to determine the number of slots to be filled for the next program year,

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<b>Subject:</b> Attendance	<b>Number:</b> E.05.6
<b>Service Area:</b> ERSEA	<b>Section:</b> Attendance
<b>Relevant Forms:</b> Located on P:/common drive	<b>Date Effective:</b> Revised 07/2009

**REGULATION REFERENCE:** Performance Standard 1305.8

**POLICY:** The program must ensure that daily attendance for each child is recorded and follow-up is conducted for chronic and consecutive absenteeism.

**PROCEDURE:**

- Center directors print weekly attendance forms every Monday morning and distribute to classroom teachers.
- Teachers complete attendance daily by placing attendance codes in appropriate box. Codes are as follows:

Absentee Reason	Attendance Sheet Code	Definitions
Doctor/Dental Appointment	D	If child is attending a doctor or dental appointment
Excused	E	Utilize only if child is pending health approval or if not scheduled to attend
Moved	M	Utilize only if the child has moved
Sick	S	Utilize only if the child is sick
Subsidy	SB	Utilize only if the child is not attending due to a change in subsidy. For example, pending re-de, parent owes money
Transportation Problem	T	Utilize if the SIUC Head Start buses are not running  <b>OR</b> If the child does not receive transportation by Head Start and parents unable to transport
Inclement Weather	W	Utilize if parent determines it is unsafe to transport child  <b>OR</b> If Head Start is open but buses only running where possible
Public School Closing	PS	Utilize only if public schools are closed
SIU/JALC Break, Vacation	BR	Utilize only if family is gone due to SIU or Logan being closed for break
Visitation	V	Use when child visiting non-custodial parent/other family members

- Family/Community Service Workers enter attendance into the database daily. If absent or not scheduled for a center on a particular day, the FCSW is to enter attendance the next day at that location. FCSWs at co-locations with limited computer access should check attendance daily and initiate follow-up as outlined below. Attendance should be entered into database at least weekly for co-locations.
- In cases where the reason for the child's absence is known, FCSWs should select the appropriate option from the Absentee Reason list in the database.
- The FCSW should indicate on the comments section how the reason for absence is known (i.e. parent called, note sent, parent informed bus driver, etc.)
- If the child's reason for absence is unknown, the FCSW should initiate follow-up with the family immediately.
  - Follow-up may include a phone call, home visit and/or through written communication.
  - If absences result from factors which appropriate family support from SIUC Head Start could alleviate, then such support must be initiated.
- Documentation of results of follow-up with families and explanations of absenteeism should be made in the database using the Follow-up and Comments sections of the Absentee List. Follow-up should be completed (contact made with parent and/or letter sent) and entered into database within ten days of the first date of the child's absence.
- In addition, documentation of support to families should be made in the Family Case Notes and procedures related to follow-up should be followed. When the child's attendance has not improved and there is documentation of support provided to the family, the child may have to be placed back onto the waiting list.
- Absenteeism and follow-up will be monitored at the administrative office by the Family/Community Partnerships Coordinator (FCPC) and Program Systems Operations Coordinator (PSOC). When the monthly daily attendance rate falls below 85%, the cause of absenteeism is analyzed. The analysis includes a study of the pattern of absenteeism for each child as well as the number of absences that occur on consecutive days. In circumstances where chronic absenteeism persists and it does not seem feasible to include the child in either the same or different program option, the child's slot will be considered an enrollment vacancy.
- The Child Absentee & Follow-Up Report (236) in the database will be reviewed by the FCPC at least once per month.
- Written communication from the FCSW and/or Center Director should be sent to those families who do not respond to other efforts of follow-up or as determined by the Center Director and FCSW.
- At the request of a Center Directors, the FCPC will initiate written contact with families who do not respond to efforts (both verbal and written) made by FCSWs and Center Directors and/or when attendance does not improve. Letters sent to families that include a deadline for termination will be determined on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the Center Director and PSOC.
- FCSW/Teacher Consultations should include a plan for improving attendance for children who attend less than 50% for a given month. The child's percentage of attendance for the month is available at the class level in the Monthly Attendance Report (201) in the database.

**SIUC HEAD START  
Operating Policies and Procedures Manual**

<b>Subject:</b> Fees	<b>Number:</b> E.05.7
<b>Service Area:</b> ERSEA	<b>Section:</b> Policy on Fees
<b>Relevant Forms:</b> Located on P:/common drive	<b>Date Effective:</b> 08/2008

**REGULATION REFERENCE:** Performance Standard 1305.9

**POLICY:** SIUC Head Start does not prescribe a fee schedule or charge fees for participation in the program portion providing Head Start services. The program does not solicit or encourage the voluntary payment of fees as a condition of a child's enrollment.

For Head Start programming offered for full day services in collaboration with Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) and childcare partnerships, fees are determined by the state of Illinois CCAP guidelines.

**PROCEDURE:** See childcare subsidies/family co-payment procedures.

**SIUC Head Start  
Operating Policies and Procedures Manual**

<b>Subject:</b> Childcare Subsidies/Family Co-Payment	<b>Number:</b> E.05.8
<b>Service Area:</b> ERSEA	<b>Section:</b> ERSEA
<b>Relevant Forms:</b> Located on P:/common drive	<b>Date Effective:</b> 08/2008

**REGULATION REFERENCE:**

**POLICY:** SIUC Head Start operates three full day classrooms in collaboration with Illinois Department of Human Services(IDHS). and Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R). These classrooms are located in the Marion (1) and Carbondale (2) Head Start Centers.

The collection of family co-payments is to be implemented at these respective centers. The Head Start co-payment/income guideline is the existing IDHS co-payment/income guideline sheet. SIUC Head Start will charge the same co-payment recommended by IDHS. Family co-payments amounts are governed by the State and may increase at the State's discretion. SIUC Head Start reserves the right to change the SIUC Head Start co-payment amounts which are never to exceed IDHS recommended co-payment amounts. All staff must honor all policies and procedures developed regarding the collection of family co-payments and the maintenance of the cash drawer at all times

**PROCEDURE:**

Estimating Family Co-Pay

- Family co-payment amounts will be estimated based on IDHS Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) as needed by the Center Director who is responsible for the collection of co-payments.
- Estimated co-pay amounts will be based on income information, family size and the number of children in the Head Start extended care reported on the childcare subsidy application.
- The approximate family co-payment amount will be calculated using the Parent Fee Calculation Form.

Family Co-payment Schedule

- At the beginning of the school year as new children enter the centers and apply for childcare subsidy, the estimated co-payment will be collected prior to the child attending.
- Once CCR&R approves childcare subsidy applications, official payments will be collected regularly on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month for both centers. Payments are due by the first of the month but no later than the 15<sup>th</sup> of every month.
- Families who are accepted for full day classrooms at different times throughout the year will be asked to provide the estimated co-payment portion up front; once CCAP approval is received, the regularly scheduled payment plan pattern of the payment due by the first but no later than the 15<sup>th</sup> of every month will be followed. If a parent

chooses to pay in installments, installment can be made on the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 15<sup>th</sup> of every month.

#### Parent Responsibility Agreement (PRA)

- Once CCR&R has officially approved a family's childcare subsidy application, the family will sign a Child Care Subsidy Parent Responsibility Agreement (PRA). The PRA form is in triplicate so the parent, the center and the central office will all have a copy. The PRA outlines the policies and procedures the family must adhere to regarding eligibility for the extended child care program as well as important co-payment procedures that must be followed.

#### Accepting Co-Payments from Families- Center Director Responsibility

- Family co-payments will only be accepted by the Center Directors at the Marion/ Carbondale Centers. Families must make their co-payments in person to the Center Directors. No other staff at the Head Start locations will be authorized to accept a family co-payment. At co-locations, families will make co-payments according to the co-location procedures.
- As families make a co-payment at the Marion & Carbondale locations, a receipt will be given to them, from the receipt book kept by the Center Director.
- The receipt will list the amount of co-payment, payment method, name of parent, name of child, month payment is intended for and date of payment. T
- Center Director will maintain a cash drawer for the acceptance of family co-payments. The cash drawer must remain locked, at all times other than to deposit an accepted payment. The Center Director is the only staff who may access the cash drawer at their particular center.
- Center Director may accept co-payments at any time during the month, however parents are encouraged to make co-payments by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.

#### Co-payment Collection at Centers- Program Systems Operations Coordinator Responsibilities

- During the last week of each month, the Program Systems Operation Coordinator (PSOC) collects the monies from all of the co-payments made by families, from the Center Directors at the Marion and Carbondale locations.
- On the day of co-payment collection from the Center Directors, the Center Director provides the Program Systems Operation Coordinator a receipt for each individual family co-payments that were collected and the equivalent dollars received from each family.
- Program Systems Operation Coordinator calculates the total amount of monies collected and provides the Center Director with one receipt for the full amount of co-payments collected. The Program Systems Operation Coordinator maintains a copy of the receipt, in the receipt book.
- The Program Systems Operation Coordinator returns to central office to complete the Deposit Collection Report form. The Program Systems Operation Coordinator will track the co-payments using the SIUC Head Start Co-payment tracking form for billing purposes.

### Deposit of Co-Payment Procedures- Program Systems Operation Coordinator and Business Manager Responsibilities

- To prepare a deposit, a SIUC Head Start Deposit Collection Report is to be filled out by the Program Systems Operation Coordinator responsible for collecting parent co-payments.
- The Program Systems Operation Coordinator reconciles parent co-payments and notifies the Business Manager that the deposit is ready.
- The deposit collection report and monies are kept in a locked location. The keys to the file cabinet are held by assigned staff per the Director.
- The Business Manager verifies parent co-payments and verifies state reimbursement. The Business Manager will then complete a University approved deposit report for, deposit at the Bursar's office once a month as state reimbursement checks are received.
- SIUC Head Start is responsible for collecting co-payments. The state takes no recourse against families who do not make their family co-payments. The Program Systems Operation Coordinator responsible for co-payment collection is also responsible for tracking co-payments and notifying families if they have not made their co-payments.

### Family Co-Payment Exemptions and Grace Periods

Families may be eligible for a grace period prior to cancellation in the following instances:

- If a parent loses employment, a notice of cancellation will be mailed, however the family will have 30 days covered child care subsidy to allow for time to find a job and re-submit the needed documentation to CCR&R. The parent must request this special grace period by speaking directly with CCR&R; SIUC may not request a grace period on behalf of the family. In a two parent household, the other parent must remain working or provide a letter from a doctor on letterhead to CCR&R stating the parent is unable to work or care for children. SIUC Head Start will waive the family co-payment for the 30 day grace period CCR&R allows plus any additional time SIUC Head Start deems necessary based on individual situations.
- If a parent claims maternity leave, a letter to CCR&R on letterhead from a doctor confirming the pregnancy will be required. The family is then eligible for up to 6 (six) weeks (but at least 30 days) of childcare subsidy during maternity leave. The family may receive an additional 6 weeks when a properly documented medical reason exists that prevents work and care of children. The documentation required for the additional time is a letter from the doctor to CCR&R on letterhead stationary stating the client is unable to work and is unable to care for children. In a two parent household, the other parent must remain working or provide a letter from a doctor on letterhead to CCR&R stating the parent is unable to work or care for children. SIUC Head Start will waive the family co-payment for the same period that CCR&R does.
- To receive child care subsidy during a medical leave, a parent must submit a letter from a doctor stating the client is unable to work and unable to care for children in addition to a letter from the parent's employer stating a job will be available to return to at the end of the medical leave. In a two parent household, the other parent must remain working or provide a letter from a doctor on letterhead to CCR&R stating the

parent is unable to work or care for children. SIUC Head Start will waive the family co-payment for the same period of time CCR&R allows.

- SIUC Head Start will waive the parent co-payment for self –employed individuals that shows their business is exhibiting low activity and is not currently supporting the family. The family must still qualify for childcare subsidy so that SIUC Head Start can still bill the state for reimbursement monies.

#### Parent Provider Changes/ Parent Acknowledgement Form

- If an applicant is changing providers to attend SIUC Head Start, the former provider must be notified at least 10 business days in advance. SIUC Head Start may keep an enrollment vacancy to see that the child's acceptance date allows time for this change.
- If an applicant is leaving SIUC Head Start to go to another provider, SIUC Head Start must be given 10 business days notice and prorate parent co-pays. SIUC Head Start reserves the right to waive the 10 business day notice due to special circumstances. "Special Circumstances" will be determined in a case by case manner.
- Families must complete a Request for a Child Provider Change form to provide notice of a change in or the addition of a provider

#### The State Reimbursement

The program receives a billing statement(child care certificate) monthly. The monthly attendance report on COPA is utilized in completing the child care certificate. Steps in completing the certificate are as follows:

- Indicate on the form the number of days the center was open during the month
- Indicate on the form the number of days each child was eligible during the month
- Indicate on the form the number of attendance days for each child
- Total all the eligible days
- Total all the attended days
- Divide eligible days into attended days to determine the ADA

Certificate is to be mailed to Child Care Resource and Referral (700 College Road, Carterville, Illinois 62918) by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the following month. A copy of the certificate is submitted to the Business Manager II and a copy is made for the file

#### Head Start Policy On Failure To Make Co-payments

- Notification to the family regarding failure to make co-payment is receipt of a past due letter. The PSOC will send a letter when a payment is not received by one week past the due date. This applies to unpaid amounts that are due that exceed \$25.00.
- If a family continues to ignore notices for payment, without contacting the Program Systems Operation Coordinator or the Center Director the following will take place
  - A letter will follow the past due notice stating that the amount of money owed must be paid by a specific date or the child will be moved to a half day spot, should one be available.

### Family Co-Payment Amount Changes

- A family's co-payment amount may change due to a re-determination of child care subsidy approval initiated by CCR&R, SIUC Head Start, or a the family. Typical reasons for change in the amount of family co-payment include a change in family size or income.
- Family co-payment amounts are governed by the State and may increase at the State's discretion. SIUC Head Start complies with Illinois Department of Human Service (IDHS) Child Care Subsidy Schedule.