



Office of Head Start Monitoring Protocol

Family and Community Engagement and ERSEA Guides

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Interviews

ERSEA Coordinator—Interview

ERSEA Key Indicator #1—Recruitment and Selection

- ▶ Does the program have an effective system for recruitment that includes the following?
 - Defines the recruitment area, establishes recruitment goals, and develops recruitment plans using program data (e.g., Community Assessment, Self-Assessment)
 - Conducts outreach within the community
 - Ensures recruitment efforts and materials include efforts to reach families with children with severe or multiple disabilities
 - Ensures EHS program-recruitment efforts and materials include efforts to reach pregnant women

- ▶ With the ERSEA Coordinator, review the program’s policies and procedures to determine whether the program has selection criteria and practices that ensure the program prioritizes children for enrollment based on:
 - Child age
 - Family income/categorical eligibility
 - Availability of kindergarten or first grade
 - Locally determined priorities

If the ERSEA Coordinator indicates that the program does not have selection criteria, ask the Coordinator to explain how children are selected for enrollment.

- ▶ With the ERSEA Coordinator, review the program’s documentation related to the selection of children for enrollment, including the waiting list, selection criteria, and documentation for currently enrolled children. Ask the ERSEA Coordinator to describe how the program:
 - Develops a waiting list and how it ranks children using the selection criteria
 - Ensures that children who are income and categorically eligible are enrolled prior to children who are above 100 percent of the poverty guidelines
 - Maintains a waiting list throughout the year, including how vacancies are identified and children are selected to fill vacancies within 30 days
 - Conducts ongoing activities and community outreach efforts to identify underserved populations to ensure that eligible children enter the program as vacancies occur

PS 1305.7(b) allows programs to elect not to fill vacancies within 60 calendar days of the end of their program year. If the on-site monitoring review takes place within 60 calendar days of the end of the program year, document the date the program year ends.



- ▶ Ask the ERSEA Coordinator to describe the program's selection process and how it ensures that priority is given to children from families whose pursuit of agricultural work required them to relocate most frequently within the previous 2 years.

***Applies to Migrant programs only*

ERSEA Key Indicator #2—Eligibility

- ▶ Interview the ERSEA Coordinator about the program's enrollment process. Ask him or her to describe the program's enrollment process in detail and provide you with information on how enrollment decisions are made.

Prior to the program enrolling children whose families exceed the low-income guidelines, the AIAN program must ensure that:

- All children from Indian and non-Indian families living on the reservation that meet the low-income guidelines and who wish to be enrolled in Head Start are served.
- All children from income-eligible Indian families native to the reservation but living in non-reservation areas approved as part of the Tribe's service area, who wish to be enrolled in Head Start are served by the program.

***Applies to AIAN only*

ERSEA Key Indicator #3—Enrollment

- ▶ With the ERSEA Coordinator, review the program's enrollment documentation and ERSEA tracking system to determine the percentage of children with disabilities enrolled in the program (actual enrollment).
 - If the on-site monitoring review occurs between October and January of the current program year, ask the ERSEA Coordinator to provide enrollment documentation confirming the actual program enrollment for the previous program year was at least 10 percent children with disabilities.
 - If the on-site monitoring review occurs between February and September of the current program year, ask the ERSEA Coordinator to provide enrollment documentation confirming the actual program enrollment for the current program year is at least 10 percent children with disabilities.
 - If the program is a migrant program, ask the ERSEA Coordinator to provide enrollment documentation confirming the actual program enrollment for the previous program year was at least 10 percent children with disabilities.
- ▶ With the ERSEA Coordinator, review the program's waiting list and selection criteria.

Ask the ERSEA Coordinator to describe how the program:

- Develops a waiting list and how it ranks the children who are listed on the waiting list using the selection criteria



- Maintains a waiting list throughout the year, including how vacancies are identified and children are selected to fill vacancies within 30 days
- Conducts ongoing activities and community outreach efforts to identify underserved populations to ensure that eligible children enter the program as vacancies occur

PS 1305.7(b) allows programs to elect not to fill vacancies within 60 calendar days of the end of their program years. If the on-site monitoring review takes place within 60 calendar days of the end of the program year, document the date the program year ends.

- ▶ With the ERSEA Coordinator, review of the program’s enrollment reports, for the last 12 months of operation to determine whether they:
 - Were submitted to the ACF Regional Office within 14 days following the end of the previous month
 - Accurately match enrollment data maintained by the grantee

Determine whether actual enrollment was less than funded enrollment, how long the shortfall existed, and whether the program submitted the reason for any existing enrollment shortfall in its report to ACF. Document the date the shortfall occurred, the reasons submitted to ACF, and any additional correspondence with ACF.

If there are inaccuracies in reporting, or reasons for underenrollment have not been submitted to ACF, ask the ERSEA Coordinator to explain why.

ERSEA Key Indicator #4—Attendance and Participation

- ▶ With the ERSEA Coordinator, review the program’s daily attendance records to determine whether, for children with four or more consecutive unexcused absences, the program made efforts to initiate appropriate family support.
- ▶ With the ERSEA Coordinator, review the program’s monthly attendance reports for center-based and FCC classrooms to determine whether the program tracks and records instances when attendance falls below 85% and examines patterns of absences, reasons for absences, and the number of absences that occurred on consecutive days.

For instances in which monthly average attendance fell below 85%, ask the ERSEA Coordinator to describe how the program analyzes the patterns and causes of absenteeism and develops plans for addressing attendance issues.

FCE Coordinator/FCE Staff—Interview

Family & Community Engagement Key Indicator #1—Partnerships with Families

- ▶ Ask the FCE Coordinator and staff how they perform each of the following:
 - Demonstrate respect for each family’s cultural, ethnic, and linguistic diversity



- Seek to establish mutual trust with parents
- Help parents identify family goals, strengths, and necessary services and other supports
- Begin the family partnership process as early after enrollment as possible

Document information regarding whether the partnership process takes place throughout the year and how the program tracks/documents staff attempts to engage families and family participation.

- ▶ Ask the FCE Coordinator and staff to describe how the program assists parents—either directly or through referrals—in obtaining resources and services that are responsive to their families’ identified needs, goals, or interests.

Describe how the program determines whether referrals and/or resources met families’ needs and what is done if the referrals and/or resources were ineffective.

- ▶ With the FCE Coordinator, review the documents used to track family services. Determine whether there is evidence of the program:
 - Working collaboratively with parents to identify and continually access services and resources
 - Following up with families to determine whether the kind, quality, and timeliness of services received through referrals met their expectations and circumstances

Family & Community Engagement Key Indicator #2—Parent-Child Relationships

- ▶ Ask the FCE coordinator and staff to describe how they share information and educational resources regarding children’s mental health and wellness and whether they have access to the Mental Health Consultant.

Educational resources on mental health and wellness should be provided to groups and individuals as needed. Focus on the type and quality of services and information provided to individual or groups of parents.

Family & Community Engagement Key Indicator #3—Parents as Their Child’s Educators

- ▶ Ask the FCE Coordinator and staff what opportunities the program has provided—either directly or through referrals—to both children and their families to increase their access to materials, services, and activities essential to supporting literacy development. Listen and probe to determine whether the program used any of the following approaches:
 - Interactive literacy activities for parents and their children
 - Training for parents on how to be their children’s primary teachers
 - Education and resources that lead to economic self-sufficiency and financial literacy



Family & Community Engagement Key Indicator #4—Parents in Transitions

- ▶ Ask FCE Coordinator and staff to answer the following:
 - What procedures are used to support successful transitions? What agreements does the program have with community partners to assist in transitions (the Coordinator, LEAs and individual schools)?
 - What types of education and training are provided to parents to prepare them to exercise their rights and responsibilities concerning the education of their children in the school setting?
 - How are parents assisted in communicating with teachers and other school personnel (or staff in new early care and education programs, such as childcare centers) so the parents can participate in decisions related to their children's education?

- ▶ Ask how the following procedures are taken into account during transition planning for children enrolled in EHS:
 - Begin at least 6 months prior to each child's third birthday
 - Assess each child's health status and developmental level
 - Determine the progress made by the child and family while in EHS
 - Determine the availability of Head Start and other child development or childcare services in the community
 - Provide evidence that the program made a determination as to whether a child should remain in EHS for additional months until he or she can transition into Head Start or another program

Family & Community Engagement Key Indicator #5—Community Partnerships

- ▶ Ask the FCE Coordinator about the community partners he or she works with. Has the program developed partnerships with the following:
 - Health care providers
 - Mental Health providers
 - Nutritional services providers
 - Individuals and agencies that provide services to children with disabilities and their families
 - Family preservation and support services
 - Child Protective Services and any other agency to which abuse must be reported
 - Local elementary schools and other educational/cultural institutions (libraries, museums)
 - Providers of childcare services
 - Other organizations or businesses that may provide support and resources to families



- ▶ Ask the FCE Coordinator to describe each of the following:
 - How these organizations are responsive to community needs
 - How these relationships promote access to services by children and families served by the program
 - What the program does to develop and sustain relationships with organizational partners.

Child Health & Safety Key Indicator #6—Safe Transportation

- ▶ With the Coordinator, review the program’s recruitment materials that describe the types of transportation assistance available to families. If necessary, are these materials translated into the preferred languages of prospective families to enable them to clearly understand the information?

Parent—Interview

Family & Community Engagement Key Indicator #1—Partnerships with Families

- ▶ Ask parents to describe how the program provides them with opportunities to:
 - Share their culture, values, beliefs, and traditions with the program
 - Identify their strengths and needs
 - Create and implement individualized goals for their family
 - Identify services and supports needed to meet their goals

Ask parents how often staff talk with them about strengths, needs, and goals.

Determine whether the program made a one-time effort to help the family set goals or whether the efforts have been ongoing.

- ▶ Ask parents how the program has assisted them—either directly or through referrals—in obtaining resources and services to meet their needs, goals, and interests.
- ▶ Ask parents to consider the services they described above. Ask whether they were satisfied and whether they felt the services met their needs and addressed their goals or interests.

Family & Community Engagement Key Indicator #2—Parent-Child Relationships

- ▶ Ask parents to discuss the following:
 - What types of information have they received about their children's developmental strengths or areas for growth
 - How they partner with staff in developing goals for their children
 - How the program shares information about their children’s progress



- Whether they provided opportunities to share concerns about their children's development
- The information the program shared about how they, as parents, can help promote their children's success as they get ready to enter school

Family & Community Engagement Key Indicator #3—Parents as Their Child's Educators

- ▶ Ask parents about parent-teacher conferences and teacher home visits, focusing on the scheduling of services and the information shared with the families.
- ▶ Ask parents for examples of the different types of family literacy activities that are provided by the program. Ask them how the program helps them access literacy materials, services, and activities that engage the entire family. Listen for examples of the following:
 - Interactive literacy activities for parents and their children
 - Training for parents on how to be their children's primary teachers
 - Education and resources that lead to economic self-sufficiency and financial literacy
- ▶ Ask parents for examples of the types of activities or strategies that the program uses to help support families' financial stability and financial literacy. Ask whether the program provides relevant information and training, including activities that support knowledge about budgeting, financial resources, tax assistance, and access to benefit programs such as:
 - Tax credits, such as the EITC
 - Debt reduction
 - Benefits programs, such as TANF and SSI
 - Financial education classes
 - Individual development accounts (IDAs) supported by local programs that match families' savings
 - Help in setting up bank accounts for themselves and their children
- ▶ Ask parents of children with identified disabilities:
 - Do you understand your rights under IDEA?
 - How confident are you in your ability to identify, access, and advocate for resources for your child?

Family & Community Engagement Key Indicator #4—Parents in Transitions

- ▶ Ask parents:
 - How has the program helped you plan for entering Head Start or Early Head Start or leaving to go to Head Start or another school?



- How did the program encourage you to get involved with your child's education and development?
- How did the program help you coordinate transferring to a new placement?
- Did you have an opportunity to speak with new teachers, principals, or other staff?

ERSEA Key Indicator #4—Attendance and Participation

- ▶ Ask parents to state whether the program charges fees in exchange for enrollment or participation in Head Start. Examples may include paying late fees, registration fees, money for field trips, etc.. If parents are required to pay fees, determine the extent to which this affected their ability to participate in the program.

If parents are required to pay fees, verify with the Fiscal Reviewer that these fees are required. Work with the Fiscal Reviewer to collect documentation of the required payments and include them as part of your evidence.

Child Health & Safety Key Indicator #2—Screening and Referrals

- ▶ Ask parents how the program informs them about:
 - The different types of screenings (should be provided prior to the child receiving the screening)
 - Results of screenings
 - The purpose of further evaluation (should be provided prior to the child receiving the evaluation)
 - Results of the evaluation

If their children were in need of IEPs or IFSPs, ask the parents how the program included them in the process of developing the IEPs or IFSPs.

Child Health & Safety Key Indicator #4—Healthy Practices and Routines

- ▶ Ask parents whether the program has asked them to provide information about their children's health and safety needs. If so, ask them to describe their experience sharing this information with the program. What type of information did they share?

Child Health & Safety Key Indicator #6—Safe Transportation

- ▶ Ask parents if they have trouble getting to the program. If they have had challenges, ask whether and how the program worked with them to overcome any transportation-related challenges to their children's attendance at program activities.



Summary

About the Family and Community Engagement And ERSEA Summary: To complete the summary, reviewers look across the data collected within the Family and Community Engagement and ERSEA content area for evidence of key elements of the systems needed to operate Head Start. For example, for Family and Community Engagement And ERSEA the reviewer will be looking at how the Key Element, Record -Keeping and Reporting, affects FCE and ERSEA in the program. How the program keeps records up to date to meet ERSEA standards would be discussed in this summary. Below are the prompts for each Key Element that reviewers will consider as they summarize the data for this area of the protocol.

Family and Community Engagement And ERSEA Summary

Management Systems Key Indicator #6—Strengths and Summaries

▶ Program Planning-

Key elements of planning include:

- Developing goals, objectives, and plans based on an analysis of program data and the results of the program's Community and Self-Assessments
- Engaging stakeholders (governing bodies, policy groups, parents, and staff) in planning
- Using program data to design and implement changes to improve program services on an ongoing basis

▶ Ongoing Monitoring

Key elements of ongoing monitoring include:

- Use of effective tools and procedures to ensure the program is in compliance and meets its goals and objectives
- Clearly defining staff roles and responsibilities in program oversight
- Conducting frequent, ongoing monitoring activities
- Collecting and using data for planning activities and to ensure future compliance
- Ensuring ongoing monitoring of delegate agencies takes place

▶ Human Resources

Key elements of Human Resources include:

- Maintaining an organizational structure that supports the program's goals and objectives
- Assigning all major program functions and responsibilities to staff



- Supervising and supporting staff

▶ Communication

Key elements of Communication include:

- Sharing accurate and timely information with staff to support outcomes for children and families
- Sharing accurate and timely information with parents, policy groups, and the general community

▶ Record-Keeping and Reporting

Key elements of Record-Keeping include:

- Keeping records up to date
- Consistently collecting and recording data
- Generating reports to inform planning, communication, and ongoing monitoring
- Making information accessible to appropriate parties
- Maintaining confidentiality