

ACF Administration for Children and Families	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES	
	1. Log No. ACF-PI-HS-18-01	2. Issuance Date: 1/19/2018
	3. Originating Office: Office of Head Start	
	4. Key Words: Fifty Percent; Duration Requirements	

PROGRAM INSTRUCTION

TO: All Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees, including Delegate Agencies

SUBJECT: Fifty Percent Program Duration Requirement

INSTRUCTION: 45 CFR § 1302.21(c)(2)(iii) of the Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS) final rule states that programs must provide 1,020 annual hours of planned class operations over at least eight months per year for at least 50 percent of its center-based funded enrollment by August 1, 2019.

However, this Program Instruction (PI) notifies programs the Secretary has exercised his authority under 45 CFR § 1302.21(c)(3)(i) of the HSPPS final rule to waive the August 1, 2019 Head Start center-based service duration requirements, effectively lowering this requirement from 50 percent to zero percent. The Secretary has determined the mandate was not coupled with sufficient funding to mitigate a substantial reduction in funded enrollment. Therefore, to avoid serving fewer children and families, this requirement will not go into effect.

Programs are still free to choose to increase the duration of services, but the Secretary’s determination waives the mandate that all programs do so for at least 50 percent of its funded enrollment. Given the funding constraints, we believe programs will have more flexibility to most effectively meet the needs of their communities.

The Department is also considering whether to remove the requirement that programs provide 1,020 annual hours of planned class operations for 100 percent of its funded enrollment by August 1, 2021. We expect to release a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking later this year. In addition, 45 CFR § 1302.21(c)(3)(ii) of the HSPPS final rule authorizes the Secretary to lower this 100 percent requirement on or before February 1, 2020. If this requirement is still in effect and Congress does not appropriate significant funds, the Secretary would likely make a similar determination.

The [Federal Register notice](#) announcing this determination with additional details is available for review. If you have questions regarding this PI, please contact your Regional Office.

Thank you for the work you do on behalf of children and families.

/ Ann Linehan /

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