

Mississippi County, Arkansas Economic Opportunity Commission, Inc.
Early Childhood Education Program



7

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

PROMOTING CULTURE, DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION IN THE CLASSROOM

Mississippi County, Arkansas EOC Head Start is deeply rooted in the mission of ensuring a welcoming and inclusive environment for all student, employees, and clients.

Head Start has always embraced the **ethnic, cultural, and linguistic diversity** of its enrollment and the communities in which it operates. Head Start programs have responded to diversity as an opportunity for children and families to learn about different cultures and customs.

Mississippi County, Arkansas EOC Head Start does not tolerate acts of discrimination, harassment, profiling or other conduct causing harm to individuals on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, gender, age, disability, religious beliefs, political preference, sexual orientation, gender identity, citizenship, national origin or other personal characteristics. Such conduct violates our standards and may result in imposition of sanctions according to agency policies governing conduct and local, state, and national laws.

MCAEOC understands the importance of insuring diversity, equity, and inclusion while fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment of belonging for all members of student body, employee body, and community.

At MCAEOC, we promote awareness and understanding through research, education, and training; furthermore,

- we believe that diversity is critical to maintaining excellence in all of our endeavors.
- we seek to foster open-mindedness, understanding, compassion and inclusiveness among individuals and groups.
- we value differences as well as commonalities and promote respect in personal interactions.
- we understand our responsibility for creating and fostering a respectful, cooperative, and equitable environment for our children, employees, and communities.
- we strive to build a community of learning and fairness marked by mutual respect.
- we believe in promoting an ethic of respect

Engagements with diversity fosters students' cognitive and personal growth including their cultural knowledge and understanding. Whereas, a lack of diversity can lead to unconscious biases in children and adults.

Diversity can provide a rich social environment that can promote a students' learning and development. How teaching staff engage with diversity in the classroom can play a critical role in student experiences, satisfaction, and learning outcomes. Our educators make the curriculum more inclusive by including different racial and ethnic art and play toys and creates a more welcoming environment, creating an inclusive learning environment that promote positive learning outcomes for all students.

Mississippi County, Arkansas, Economic Opportunity Commission, Inc. has always believed in promoting an atmosphere of open communication and cooperation among all personnel. This Employee Handbook reflects that thinking. It **supersedes** in all respects any prior staff handbooks. This handbook does not constitute a guarantee that your employment will continue for any specified period or end only under certain conditions. NOTHING IN THE HANDBOOK CONSTITUTES AN EXPRESS OR IMPLIED CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT, WARRANTY, OR ANY BENEFITS. Employment at MCAEOC is an employment-at-will relationship for no definite period. While we hope to have a long and mutually beneficial working relationship together, regardless of anything that may appear in this handbook, you have the right to terminate your employment.

**MISSISSIPPI COUNTY ARKANSAS, E.O.C.
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION DEPARTMENT**

**Head Start • Early Head Start • Arkansas Better Chance • Arkansas Better Chance for School Success • Operation Parenting Edge
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Priscilla Johnson
Executive Director

Shirley Pulliam
Program Director

Dear Staff,

On behalf of MCAEOC, I would like to welcome you to our agency and wish you every possible success.

MCAEOC considers employees one of the most valuable resources and feels each employee contributes directly to its growth and success. We desire that you take pride in being a member of this team. We are confident that you will find our company a dynamic and rewarding place in which to work. We look forward to a productive and successful association.

This handbook, along with MCAEOC Personnel Policies, was developed to describe some of our expectations and outline the policies, programs, and benefits available to eligible employees. Employees should familiarize themselves with the contents as soon as possible, for it will answer many questions about employment with MCAEOC. After reading this handbook, please contact your supervisor, any management member, or myself if you have any questions.

We hope that your experiences here will be challenging, enjoyable, and rewarding. Again, welcome.

Sincerely,

Shirley Pulliam

Shirley Pulliam
Program Director

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VISION STATEMENT

All children have the right to be healthy and live in a safe and nurturing environment. Recognizing diversity and that a child's family is his/her primary teacher, the collaborative group of agencies and programs serving children pledges to communicate and partner at both community and state levels to enhance and ensure the provision of quality outcome-oriented services.

MISSION STATEMENT

Mississippi County Arkansas Economic Opportunity Commission is dedicated to providing quality comprehensive services in a caring environment that meets the needs of children, staff, families, and community.

HEAD START SERVICES

Head Start programs promote the school readiness of infants, toddlers, and preschool-aged children from low-income families. Services are provided in a variety of settings, including centers, family childcare, and children's own home. Head Start programs also engage parents or other key family members in positive relationships, with a focus on family wellbeing. Parents participate in leadership roles, including having a say in program operations.

Head Start programs are available at no cost to children ages birth to 5 from low-income families. Programs may provide transportation to the centers so enrolled children can participate regularly. Families and children experiencing homelessness and children in the foster care system are also eligible. Additionally, Head Start services are available to children with disabilities and other special needs.

Head Start programs deliver services through 1,600 agencies in local communities. Most Head Start programs are run by non-profit organizations, schools, and community action agencies. They provide services to more than a million children every year, in every U.S. state and territory.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

All employees, consultants, contractors, and volunteers must abide by the program's standards of conduct in order to ensure positive strategies to support children's well-being and prevent and address challenging behavior. Employees, consultants, contractors, and volunteers will not maltreat or endanger the health or safety of children, including, at a minimum, will not:

- A. Use corporal punishment;
- B. Use isolation to discipline a child;
- C. Bind or tie a child to restrict movement or tape a child's mouth;
- D. Use or withhold food as a punishment or reward;
- E. Use toilet learning/training methods that punish, demean, or humiliate a child;
- F. Use any form of emotional abuse, including public or private humiliation, rejecting, terrorizing, extended ignoring, or corrupting a child;
- G. Physically abuse a child;
- H. Use any form of verbal abuse, including profane, sarcastic language, threats, or derogatory remarks about the child or child's family; or,
- I. Use physical activity or outdoor time as a punishment or reward;

GOALS

- I. MCAEOC Head Start Program will strive for excellence by providing comprehensive, high-quality child development services that will promote the social, emotional, and physical development of Head Start eligible infant, toddler, and preschool children.
- II. MCAEOC Head Start will engage in collaborative partnerships with parents, early childhood agencies, and other human services agencies and resources to ensure a comprehensive, integrated array of services and support to families in fostering their child's development, meeting personal goals, and achieving self-sufficiency.
- III. MCAEOC Head Start will administer and operate in accordance with guidelines described in Program Design and Management regulation to specifically respond flexibly to the needs of children and families in a changing society by using a well-qualified staff that is adequately compensated.

Objectives: Performance Measures

- I. A. Enhance Children's Growth and Development
 - a. children demonstrate improved emergent literacy, numeracy, and language skills.
 - b. children demonstrate improved general cognitive skills
 - c. children demonstrate improved gross and fine motor skills
 - d. children demonstrate improved positive attitudes toward learning
 - e. children demonstrate improved social behavior and emotional health
 - f. children demonstrate improved physical health
- II. Provide Children with Educational, Health, and Nutritional Services
 - a. programs provide developmentally appropriate educational environments
 - b. staff interact with children in a skilled and sensitive manner
 - c. programs support and respect children's cultures
 - d. assures children receive needed medical, dental, and mental health services
 - e. children receive meals and snacks that meet their daily nutritional needs
 - f. programs provide individualized services for children
 - g. program demonstrates sanitation and health practices
- III. Link Children and Families to Needed Community Services
 - a. parents link with social service agencies to obtain needed services
 - b. parents link with educational agencies to obtain needed services
 - c. parents link with health care services to obtain needed care
 - d. parents secure childcare to work, go to school, or gain employment training
- IV. Strengthen Families as the Primary Nurturers of Their Children
 - a. parents demonstrate improved parenting skills
 - b. parents improve their self-concept and emotional well-being
 - c. parents make progress toward their educational, literacy, and employment goals
 - d. Strengthen parents' awareness of child-outcome data based on their child's data compared to their classroom, center site, and agency
- V. ***Ensure Well-Managed Programs that Involve Parents in Decision-Making***
 - a. programs are well-managed

- b. parents are involved actively in decisions about program operations
- c. programs employ qualified staff
- d. programs support staff development and training
- e. programs comply with MCAEOC Head Start regulations
- f. inform parents of the importance of school attendance in closing the achievement gap
- g. staff's attendance is important to continuity and attaining goals of school readiness
- h. continue to train staff that lack the fundamentals of computer competencies

WE VALUE

Striving for Excellence

Mississippi County, Arkansas E.O.C. & Child Development is dedicated to providing and promoting high-quality, developmentally appropriate child development programs for children and their families. We believe learning begins before birth. The child, family, and community benefit from the operation of an Early Childhood Program.

Responds Flexibly to the Needs of Today's Children and Families

The comprehensive approach to serving families and the community addresses childcare, family literacy, alcoholism, substance abuse, violence, adolescence, and the multi-faceted needs of families in a changing society. The parent is the prime educator as the program focuses on each issue.

Linkages and Community Partnerships

MCAEOC Head Start and Child Development Programs adopt an approach to program development by emphasizing the utilization of broad-based linkages and community partnerships. These partnerships involve the public, private, and corporate sectors.

The overall goal of MCAEOC is to bring about a greater degree of social competence and school readiness for all children. Achievement of this goal will enable the child to deal effectively with both the present environment and later responsibilities.

In accordance with the National Head Start Association, MCAEOC is working toward the following goals and objectives:

A. Striving for Excellence

1. Focus on staffing and career development

- a. Follow national guidelines; ensuring requirements are met in every Head Start Program
- b. Develop a new initiative to encourage "qualified mentor teachers" to support classroom staff; reinforcing research showing one-on-one training is most effective
- c. Establish competency-based training as well as academic training for staff that work at both the local and central office levels
- d. Review current educational system to determine if the program is reflective of current information and best practices

- e. Continue to increase, when able, the compensation of Head Start staff.
- f. Strengthen the availability of training and career development opportunities at the local level; also provide training and technical assistance
- g. Establish systems to evaluate progress in the areas of anti-bias curriculum and multi-cultural needs
- h. Review program to assess the collaborative efforts between library systems, museums, and fine arts within local programs and statewide efforts
- i. Work to provide the best possible health services to young children and their families

2. Improve the management of local programs

- a. Attend management training developed by national and regional offices to emphasize and improve the quality of Head Start management
- b. Strengthen financial management policies and practices.
- c. Support strategic planning at the local level, thus providing program direction for a given period (i.e., 5 to 10 years with definite yearly goals).
- d. Contribute to the updating of the Head Start Performance Standards.
- e. Ensure implementation of performance measures to support strong outcome-oriented results.
- f. Strive to have program staff at center and central office level computer literate (i.e., use of technology). Utilize this system and information to improve management of program.

3. Re-engineer federal and local oversight to provide for greater accountability

- a. Provide guidance to the regional and national level to reassess and design the Head Start training and technical assistance system to support program quality and expansion.
- b. Provide suggestions to the regional and national staff as they review and strengthen Head Start monitoring.
- c. Ensure prompt action to correct any identified problems in performance areas. Request technical assistance from training institutions and other Head Start grantees and assist in necessary improvements.
- d. Review agency administrative structure and staffing levels to ensure quality.

- e. Participate in professional development and training initiatives as launched by the federal government.

4. Provide better facilities

- a. Use new national regulations on facilities to improve the quality of facilities.
- b. Assess the condition of agency Head Start facilities.
- c. Secure technical assistance for facilities if needed.
- d. Explore creative ways to leverage other funds to secure quality facilities.

5. Strengthen the role of research

- a. When applicable, participate in building a strong and enduring infrastructure for Head Start research, ensuring that Head Start is able to carry out its leadership role on an ongoing basis.
- b. When applicable, participate in new Head Start research focusing on quality and other policy issues.
- c. Start programs as national office guides such issues. Support longitudinal research on children and families served in Head Start.
- d. Expand the partnership between research and practitioners by encouraging better communication and better utilization of data.
- e. Maintain awareness of the development of a long-term research plan for Head Start, which places Head Start in the broader context of research on young children, families, and communities; ensure a commitment to ongoing themes, and yet have the flexibility to respond to new and emerging issues.

B. Expanding to Better Meet the Needs of Children and Families

1. Enhance family services and increase parent involvement. Review and expand current resources used for family services, parent education, and family support.

- a. Increase efforts to involve parents in all aspects of the Head Start program.
- b. Assess program linkages with local family literacy resources and the availability of those resources to Head Start.
- c. Develop and maintain adequate case management systems for meeting family needs.

2. Assess needs and plan strategically

- a. Encourage programs to reassess their total program following expansion.

- b. Strengthen the tools and capacities for conducting community needs assessment and for assessing family resources and needs.
- c. Encourage the involvement of other early childhood and family support providers in the community assessment process.

3. Expand to reach children and families who are currently underserved

- a. Continue to expand the number of children served using an entrepreneurial approach (not always expecting Head Start to provide all resources).
- b. Set priorities to target expansion through strategic and long-range planning to areas of high concentrations of poverty and areas of scarce resources.
- c. Provide additional support to address the special needs of children who are new to Arkansas and address their diverse cultural needs.

4. Promote full-day and full-year services

- a. Head Start programs may use Head Start funds to provide full-year and full day services if the need is established and funding is available.
- b. Grantees may choose to provide services during the summer as appropriate to respond to the needs of children and families, if funding is available.
- c. Continue efforts to maximize other resources to meet the full day needs of Head Start eligible children.
- d. Head Start programs should work more closely with the broader childcare community.
- e. Improve the maximum federal childcare policies serving low-income children.
- f. Serve families with young children.

5. Work to develop a new initiative for expanded Head Start support to families with children under age three.

- a. Ensure that the services Head Start provides to infants, toddlers and their families are of the highest quality.

C. Forging New Partnerships

1. Provide continuity and coordination with schools

- a. Continue the Head Start Transition Project with agencies providing a transition program of their own.

- b. Promote high standards, responsive assessment, professional development, effective parent involvement, and supportive services, thus providing an opportunity for all children to achieve their potential in our nation's schools as an integral part of the planned transition program.
- c. Secure training and technical assistance for directors, staff, public school administrators, and staff on transition, jointly wherever possible.
- d. Ensure that Head Start parents receive training on working with the public schools to support their child's education.
- e. Encourage written linkages between Head Start, Even Start, Family Literacy Initiatives, and Part H for services to children 0-3 with disabilities, and the Educational Cooperatives to provide local services for children 3-5 with disabilities.
- f. Continue and expand linkages between Head Start and federal, state, and local programs that meet the needs of children with disabilities.
- g. Give suggestions for revising Head Start Performance Standards and/or guidance to address stronger transition efforts for children and their parents.
- h. Participate in developing ongoing structure and capacity for federal Inter-Agency coordination between Head Start, Department of Education, Department of Health, and Department of Human Services.
- i. Forge improved linkages at the local level with health services, public and private providers to ensure that the child and family health needs are met promptly.

2. Facilitate state and local collaboration.

- a. Develop a long-range strategic plan to better link Head Start with other federal, state, and local resources.
- b. Explore the use of incentive grants to facilitate the planning and implementation of comprehensive systems of services for young children.
- c. Expand the state collaboration grants or explore and develop other mechanisms for promoting better Head Start linkages at the state level.
- d. Promote better linkages at the local level through the community needs assessment process and training and technical assistance.
- e. Develop a clearinghouse on best practices in early childhood and innovative approaches to deliver services to low-income families.

3. Encourage partnerships with the private sector.

- a. Convene key local members of national organizations representing the foundation and business community to stimulate new linkages and support for Head Start.
- b. Document and disseminate promising initiatives with the private sector.

4. Link Head Start with other national initiatives.

- a. Provide full-day services for children of parents in training or working.
- b. Improve the quality of the developmental childcare of participating families.
- c. Provide case management and referral services.
- d. Coordinate training for participating families using all available systems such as satellites for training within communities.
- e. Serve as a site for parenting education, improving literacy skills, and job training, particularly for teen parents and families with very young children.
- f. Provide job placements for entry-level positions, resources, and support for career advancement.
- g. Assess local and state involvement with services in which National Head Start has agreements.
- h. These goals and objectives meet the national initiatives as identified in the Creating a 21st Century Head Start, Final Report of the Advisory Committee on Head Start Quality and Expansion, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

MULTIPLE FUNDING

The Mississippi County Head Start Program operates several programs to support the community which it serves. Funding sources include Head Start, Early Head Start, Arkansas Better Chance, HIPPY MICHV, and HIPPY. These programs offer quality childcare and individualized educational programs to children ages 0-5 with before and aftercare available at some centers. Alternative funds from other resources are available for eligible children whose parents work or attend school during the summer months.

HEAD START CENTERS

As reflected from the community needs assessment, the standard program model for center base will meet the needs of the community. This has been approved by the Governing Board, Policy Council, parents, and staff, with the option to involve before and aftercare programs in needed areas. The service areas include Jonesboro, Blytheville, Keiser, Osceola, Leachville, Manila, Joiner, Gosnell, and Luxora. The recruitment area shall include the entire Mississippi County and a portion of Craighead County.

PROGRAM OPERATION

Assignments of Staff

All employee positions are approved by the Program Director and/or Human Resource Department and are subject to reassignment. Reassignment may be necessary to achieve equitable distribution of work, provide adequate care for children, and operate a quality program. Staff must be able to arrange their transportation to and from work, be on time for their scheduled work hours, and cooperate with co-workers, parents, and volunteers. Employees who substitute for other programs when they are laid off from their regular position are paid as substitutes, not their regular salary.

Bulletin Boards/Message Center for Staff

Each site will have a bulletin board for the use of the staff. Notices and general information for and from the staff should be placed there. In addition, individual program boxes are used in the Central Office and at the Parent Center. Site Supervisors are expected to check their boxes on a weekly basis at the Central Office and the Parent Center, if appropriate. Site Supervisors should make every effort to coordinate this effort in order to run a smooth program and maintain the flow of information.

Cell Phones

Cell phone use, talking, or texting should not be used for personal reasons during working hours. Cell phones should be used for emergency and authorized business reasons only during working hours.

Driver's License

Staff who are required by their job description or are required to operate an agency vehicle must have a valid driver's license. A copy of the license must be in the operator's personnel file. Operators must carry the required license while operating any agency vehicle. Driving record checks will be completed on current and prospective transportation employees through the National Driving Register Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration.

Confidentiality

It is very important that all information concerning parents and children remain confidential and is discussed only with authorized staff.

Routine information is kept on each child in a file at each program site. This information is available to consulting or treating medical professionals. Records are not accessible to unauthorized persons. Because of the confidential information in the children's folders, they must remain out of sight and in a locked file cabinet unless staff is working on them.

The information must not be released to insurance companies or other inquiring agencies without the written consent of the child's parents or guardian. This must be coordinated through the Central Office. Informal conversations, talking in front of staff with differing degrees of responsibility, or talking in the presence of outsiders (visitors), is a violation of the confidentiality and privacy of the family.

CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT PROCEDURES

Law of the State of Arkansas Child Abuse Reporting

Reports of Suspected Abuse or Neglect

- A. When any physician, surgeon, coroner, dentist, osteopath, resident intern, registered nurse, hospital personnel who may be engaged in the admission, examination, care, or treatment of persons, teacher, school official, social service worker, daycare center worker or any other child or foster care worker, mental health professional, peace officer, or law enforcement official has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been subjected to conditions or circumstances which would reasonably result in abuse, he shall immediately report or cause a report to be made to the Arkansas Department of Human Services.
- B. Whenever that person is required to report under this subchapter in his capacity as a member of the staff of a medical or public or private institution, school, facility, or other agency, he shall immediately notify the person in charge of the institution, school, facility, or other agency or his

designated agent, who shall then become responsible for making a report or cause a report to be made.

- C. In addition to those persons and officials required to report suspected child abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect, any other person may make a report if such persons have reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been abused or neglect.

OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

According to Arkansas Law, child abuse is described as acts or omissions by a caretaker to a child including:

- Extreme and repeated cruelty
- Physical, psychological, or sexual abuse
- Any conduct creating substantial possibility of death, permanent or temporary disfigurement, illness, impairment of bodily organs or impairment of intellectual or psychological capacity.
- Any non-accidental physical or mental injury
- Any injury at variance with history given

As a caregiver of children, you are mandated by the law to report any suspected child abuse or neglect. The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, states that any person participating in good faith in making a report has immunity to civil or criminal liability that otherwise might result from such actions. Failure to report subjects the person to civil liabilities and criminal penalties. Neglect is described as acts or omission by a caretaker that results in:

- A failure or refusal to prevent child maltreatment,
- Failure to take action to protect a child from maltreatment, and
- Failure, refusal, or irremediable inability to provide for the essential and necessary physical (food, clothing, shelter, medical) mental, emotional, or educational needs of the child.

All prospective employees must sign a statement of declaration that they have not been arrested, charged, or convicted of a felony/crime against children. Reference checks will be conducted to include the past six years of applicant's employment and three personal references. Criminal checks shall be obtained from the Central Registry. Criminal Record Checks and Arkansas Maltreatment Central Registry Checks shall be conducted in accordance with Minimum Licensing Requirements for Child Care Centers and Head Start Performance Standards.

All prospective volunteers will complete an application and must sign a statement concerning crimes against children. Reference checks will be conducted to include volunteer's previous six years of employment and three personal references. Criminal Record Checks and Arkansas Maltreatment Central Registry Checks shall be conducted in accordance with Minimum Licensing Requirements for Child Care Centers and Head Start Performance Standards.

A copy of Arkansas Act 1208 of 1991, formerly known as Arkansas Code annotated 12-12-50-516 (1987), is maintained at the Head Start Central Office. The Parent Family and Community Engagement Manager assumes the overall responsibility for the Child Abuse and Neglect Component.

All Head Start employees have a responsibility to identify suspected child abuse or neglect. Calls made to report suspected child abuse and neglect may be done anonymously.

Each employee will sign a statement that they have read and understand the Minimum Licensing Requirements for Child Care Centers and the reporting procedures of suspected child abuse and neglect.

During enrollment, parents will receive MCAEOC Head Start Notification of Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect. Additional opportunities regarding prevention, identification, and reporting procedures of suspected child abuse and neglect is offered at the parent meetings and/or during training.

The Parent Family and Community Engagement Manager or designated staff will attend workshops dealing with child abuse and neglect and will share the training with other staff.

The Statewide Child Abuse Hotline number (1-800-482-5964) is posted in all centers. The number is available 24 hours a day.

IMMUNITY

Any mandated reporter shall be immune to suit and liability, both civil and criminal when acting in good faith.

PENALTIES

Any mandated reporter willfully making false notification or who willfully fails to make notification shall be guilty of a Class C misdemeanor and shall be civilly liable for damages.

Any person who willfully permits or encourages the release of data contained in the Central Registry to whom disclosure is not permitted shall be guilty of a Class A misdemeanor.

You cannot be arrested for making a good faith report or need "proof" for making a report. The law does not take into consideration any reason for not reporting. The State's first priority is to protect the child. Until the report is made, the child cannot be protected. Waiting for "proof" could result in serious injury or death to the child. Besides giving protection to the child, there is another reason for reporting, and that is self-protection. As daily caregivers, you are open to accusations of abuse that may have been committed elsewhere. Performing daily health checks in the presence of the parent and learning to recognize the signs of abuse are important facts of all childcare personnel. Knowing early warning signals may help prevent further harm to the child, as well as reducing the chance that charges may be brought against you.

The following procedure must be followed whenever you suspect a case of child abuse or neglect: In deciding what to report, the key criterion is seeing, hearing, or in any other way, discovering reasonable cause to suspect a child has been subjected to abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect. The law specifies that reports should be made immediately by telephone. Anytime you suspect a child has been abused or neglected, you must first report it to your Site Supervisor. Then, after contact with the Site Supervisor, the following procedures apply:

1. The person witnessing the suspected abuse will make an oral report by calling the Child Abuse Hot Line at 1-800-482-5964. The oral report consists of the following:
 - a. The identity and address of the child and his/her parents or guardians, and any caretakers.
 - b. The physical and behavior indicators.

- c. Status of other children in the home.
 - d. Any information related to the cause of the injury or the person responsible, if known.
 - e. Any call made to report suspected child abuse or neglect may be done anonymously.
2. The employee/individual witnessing the suspected child abuse will contact the Child Abuse Hotline. The employee making the report will immediately notify the Parent Family and Community Engagement Manager and the Program Director of the suspected abuse or neglect report.
 3. The staff making the report is responsible for following the oral report on the Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect Reporting Form. This statement must be forwarded to the Parent Family and Community Engagement Manager , in a sealed envelope marked confidential on the day the report is made.

Employees involved directly or indirectly with a case of suspected child abuse or neglect will cooperate fully and maintain confidentiality of all information related to the case.

Staff Placed Under Restricted Supervision

Minimum Licensing Requirements

If a complaint of child maltreatment is filed against any owner/operator, employee or other person in a child care center, the Child Care Licensing Specialist shall evaluate the risk to children and determine the suitability of the person(s) to supervise, be left alone with children, have disciplinary control over children or remain in the center during hours of care until the allegations have been determined true or unsubstantiated. (Pending the evaluation of risk to children by the Child Care Licensing Unit, the person(s) alleged shall not be left alone with children.)

If corrective action is appropriate, the facility shall require all employees who have had a founded report of child maltreatment to follow the corrective action plan specified by the Child Care Licensing Unit. Corrective action measures may vary from relevant training to reassignment or termination. Failure to comply with corrective action plans may constitute grounds for adverse action against the license. MCAEOC will work closely with the Arkansas Department of Health & Human Services Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education Child Care Licensing Unit in implementing the best care within all centers.

The responsibilities and duties of persons who are under these restrictions will include but are not limited to:

Staff will not/are not allowed to:

1. Be alone with a child or children for any reason.
2. Hug or touch the child.
3. Guide or lead children by using their hands.
4. Take a child to the restroom, nurse, or any other place alone.

Staff will:

1. Be a part of the teacher-child ratio.
2. Assist the supervising teachers in preparing classroom for the day.
3. Assist with meals, laundry, instructional time, outside play, etc.

CLASSROOM POLICIES

Written Communication to Parents or Guardians

Site Supervisors must approve all written communication to parents or guardians before being sent home.

When sending home cards, gifts, etc., from the children, please check to find out the family structure. Many children are from single-parent families, and it may not be appropriate for them to bring home things addressed to "Mom and Dad." Some alternate salutations to use from the children are "To My Special Friend" or "To My Favorite Friend."

Classroom Environment

Employees are responsible for keeping a neat and clean environment. Children's work must be displayed as a regular part of the curriculum. There should be other bulletin boards, displays, materials, etc., that reflect themes and other activities that involve the children and make the room an inviting place.

Classroom Supervision

Children must be supervised at all times. In a classroom setting, it is the responsibility of the teacher and teacher assistant to make sure the classroom and children activities are in compliance with all health, safety, state, and local laws and regulations. Employees must be aware that classroom employees have been found liable for negligence due to improper supervision in the classroom; policy breaches will result in disciplinary measures.

Playground

Outside play is required by the Child Care Licensing Division (see Licensing Manual for specific information). It is a part of the classroom staff's daily routine. Outside play should be met with the same enthusiasm and diligence as any other area of the center's curriculum. Lesson plans should be followed and changed as the children develop.

Playground Rules

Prior to going onto the playground, children need to understand what is expected of them. Adequate discussion with the children is essential. Different rules will apply to different age levels. Staff are expected to use common sense in determining the rules. If there is a question regarding the playground rules, check with the Site Supervisor.

Safety

Every effort must be made to prevent accidents to children or staff. It is the responsibility of all staff to correct unsafe or messy conditions such as liquids, food, paper, clothing, or toys on the floor. Staff are to report any unsafe conditions or fire hazards to the Site Supervisor immediately if they are unable to correct them.

Staffing

Staffing Head Start is directly related to the number of children enrolled. If the enrollment decreases, it is possible that the number of hours worked by staff or the number of staff needed may be adjusted.

All staff must be willing to accept and expect variations in their schedules as required by the needs of the children and the program. The administrative staff will make every effort to ensure that the variations in schedules are fair and equitable.

Supervision of Children

All employees have the responsibility of supervising children when needed. They are not only responsible for children in their classroom, but wherever the children may be on center grounds. Such responsibility is not limited to time or areas of specific duty assignments. Under no circumstances are children left alone in a Head Start facility or activity for any reason, at any time. This standard of performance is the result of the cooperation of all staff in sharing the responsibility of child supervision.

Sending Children Home

At times, it is necessary to send a child home because of illness or to prevent harm to others. If a child has a contagious disease or a fever, the parent must be notified and the child sent home. In the event there is a serious behavioral problem that disrupts the center activities, and behavioral modification does not prove effective, the Site Supervisor will contact the appropriate central office staff member prior to sending the child home.

Program Attendance

MCAEOC Head Start strives to operate a learning program where all children have the best opportunity to learn. The program encourages parents to have their children at school in a timely manner. This ensures the children of receiving the maximum benefit of learning. However, no child will be sent home for being late, regardless of the arrival time at school. Any child coming late after breakfast is served will be offered a snack. Snacks should include milk, juice and cereal, as required by the Performance Standards. These items should be kept on hand at each center in the event that a child is late. If the time is after 9:00 a.m., it will **not** be counted on the USDA roster for reimbursement.

Leaving Children Unattended

Children should never be left alone. If an emergency arises which causes you to leave your room or group, another staff member or supervisor must be notified so that someone will take your place.

Eating Practices

Eating and drinking, except as part of a regular meal or snack activity, is not permitted in the children's presence and will be limited to scheduled break periods and confined to the designated area. Reasonable accommodation will be made for employees with special dietary needs whenever possible. Classroom staff will be expected to eat lunch with the children. Mealtimes are teaching time, too. Children and staff are to serve lunch "Family Style," with everyone (this includes staff) seated at the tables, having every item placed on their plate, whether eaten or not.

Working with Children

Interaction with children is important. During indoor and outdoor activity time, you are required to involve yourself in the children's activities. Standing or sitting to one side is an unacceptable method of supervision. Inside and outside activities are important parts of a child's day and just as much of a teaching vehicle as structured classroom activity. Move about and encourage the children to be involved with one another. While outside, all children must be carefully supervised. Therefore, each Teacher and Teacher Assistant should be in a location where she/he can safely supervise the children. Social visiting between staff is inappropriate during outdoor training time.

Rest Time

All children at the center will be provided with the opportunity to rest after lunch. A freshly sanitized cover for both the cot and child will be used during rest. Although children will not be forced to go to sleep during this period, they will be required to rest quietly. A one-hour rest period is sufficient for

preschool children and infant/toddlers rest on demand. All preschool children must be assigned to a cot with an identification number. These identification numbers will be charted in order to label and individualize each assigned cot.

Rest Time for Supervision

Rest time for children is considered work time for staff. During this time, staff are to be reading stories, patting backs, working on lesson plans or other required documentation. This is not a time for staff to attend to personal business.

Field Trips

All classrooms are expected to regularly participate in field trips. Field trips must be documented on the Lesson Plan sheets. Teachers are responsible for having signed permission slips for field trips. Children must be prepared for field trips and field trips must reflect the Unit of Study. All field trips that require "out of area" travel must be a parent-planned activity and staff will accompany parents. Permission slips will be signed at least three days in advance. The Food Service Manager must be notified seven working days prior to scheduled field trips to allow adequate time to make the necessary arrangements.

Request for all field trips will be made to the Site Supervisor and Transportation/Facilities Coordinator at least 15 workdays before it can be scheduled.

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT & HEALTH SERVICES

Home Visits

Each teacher will make at least two (2) Educational visits to the home of each child per year. The first visit should be made within nine weeks of the child's enrollment and the second visit should be made in February. Completed Home Visit Records must be kept in each child's folder. For safety purposes, the teacher and teacher assistants are expected to travel together on home visits.

Parent Newsletter

Mississippi County E.O.C. publishes a monthly Newsletter available for all staff and parents. Each center may submit information for the Newsletter at the end of each month with a monthly report. Site Supervisors are responsible for submitting center information for the Newsletter from each classroom in his/her center.

Lesson Plans

All teachers should have lesson plans prepared two weeks in advance and these should be available for inspection by the Site Supervisor. Current Lesson Plans should be posted at all times.

A Child Assessment must be completed within four (4) weeks of the enrollment of each child. The assessment should be used as a guide for preparing the Weekly Individualized Class Plans. Evidence that this plan is being followed will be documented on the Lesson Plan. Child assessments will be on going and should be reviewed with new observations noted at least once per month.

Daily schedules are posted and followed. Children should not be just sitting for periods longer than five minutes.

Accidents

All employees are responsible for filling out an Accident Report when an injury occurs, whether visible or not. Copies of the Accident Report go to the parent, Site Supervisor, and to the Health Service Manager,

while one copy remains in the child's file. All staff need to be familiar with the location of the children's emergency telephone numbers. Each Teacher and Teacher Assistant is responsible for updating emergency records upon notification. All staff should be aware of First Aid and care should be taken in a decision to move an injured child. Accidents that require any first aid should be reported to the Site Supervisor. If an accident occurs at school and requires doctor's attention, then it is reported to the Health Service Manager or RN immediately. A staff member will transport the child to the doctor immediately following the accident. A staff member will notify the parent or guardian at the time of the emergency or as soon as possible. A staff member will return to the classroom and remain with the other children. The volunteer is to remain with the children at all times. If there is no volunteer, a staff member will be present in the classroom.

A staff member shall be responsible for taking the child to the appropriate medical facility. The Central Office must be notified of all accidents. An accident report shall be filed the day the accident occurs.

MCAEOC stresses safety in the workplace. It is the responsibility of each employee that all tasks be conducted in a safe and efficient manner complying with all local, state, and federal safety and health regulations, programmatic standards, and with any special safety concerns.

If the accident involves an employee, a Workmen's Compensation form must be completed and returned to the Central Office. In addition, when applicable, the accident report must be submitted to the Site Supervisor who in return will forward it to the Health Service Manager. Failure to comply with the proper safety conduct or policies places everyone at risk and can lead to employee disciplinary action and/or termination. First aid and emergency procedures shall be posted in each classroom.

Cleanliness and Safety at the Center

All staff members are responsible for making certain the area they are responsible for is clean and neat. It is the employee's responsibility to keep tabletops, chairs, and play areas clean. Floors will be mopped and swept. Bathrooms shall be cleaned at least once per day. Staff will also see that all supplies are returned to their proper place.

Health Checks

Health checks will be made by the teacher or teacher assistant each morning in the presence of the parent or adult as they sign in their child. If a child has a contagious or infectious disease, he/she cannot be admitted. Parents shall be notified immediately if a child is unable to participate due to illness or fever. The child shall remain as isolated as possible while remaining under supervision until the parent arrives. All medicines are to be kept out of reach of children, including when dispensing and shall be stored in a locked area at all times. Medication shall be given to children only with signed parental permission that includes date, type, drug name, time and dosage. It shall be in the original container, not have an expired date, and be labeled with the child's name. Staff shall not dispense medications in dosages that exceed the recommendations stated on the medication bottle.

Cleaning of Children's Cots

All cots should be cleaned and sanitized on a daily basis with the provided cleaning solution. Cots should not have children's names on them just an assigned number. Names and numbers should be recorded on the Classroom Cot Roster form.

Health Screenings

All staff and regular volunteers are required to have tuberculosis screening according to state and local laws and regulations as determined by the Health Advisory Committee to help employees and children

remain free from communicable diseases. Failure to provide and maintain a current health screening could result in suspension without pay until a current document is provided.

Safety

Regular fire, tornado, flood, earthquake, and emergency drills will be held and each employee is responsible for knowing his/her role in case of an emergency. A fire evacuation plan will be posted in each classroom. Employees should report any unsafe conditions or equipment immediately to the Site Supervisor.

Discipline of Children

The use of discipline should not be humiliating, frightening, or physically harmful to children. Discipline is not, for any reason, to be associated with food, rest, toilet training, or unsupervised isolation. Labeling a child as "bad" or "naughty," etc., will be avoided. Inappropriate punishment, unnecessary restraint, scolding, shouting, harsh treatment, isolation without supervision, verbal abuse, sarcasm, threats, or derogatory remarks about the child or his/her family or any type of physical punishment will not be tolerated. Any of the above actions will be grounds for immediate dismissal.

Safety Policy & Injury Prevention

It is the policy of Head Start to provide safe working conditions for all staff and to promote continuing, vital SAFETY AWARENESS at all levels. Safety awareness is the basis on which safety must be founded. Without proper practices, safety is seriously compromised. In the event of a national disaster, policies and procedures will be modified to reflect local, state, and national mandates. MCAEOC Head Start Program:

1. Recognizes its responsibility to furnish a place of employment that is safe for staff, visitors, volunteers, and children.
2. Will provide safety devices and mechanical safeguards, as necessary.
3. Will use methods and processes to protect the life health, safety, and welfare of staff, visitors, volunteers, and children.
4. Will maintain and enforce a program to fulfill all of the agency's responsibilities.
5. Will provide staff with information regarding Blood Borne Pathogens and precautions to avoid exposure. Disciplinary action leading up to and including termination, may be taken against staff for failure to use safety precautions.

Therefore, it is each person's responsibility to assure their safety and develop a concern for all who work with them. While on Head Start property, employees will conduct themselves professionally and perform work in a safe manner consistent with existing safety rules. Employees, who take safety seriously by reporting potential danger, requesting reviews of conditions, etc., are held in the highest regard. Under no circumstances will staff be reprimanded, demoted, fired, or discriminated against for reporting safety issues.

Immunizations

Children who are not current or up-to-date on their immunizations may not enter the program until they become current or up-to-date or can provide a physician's statement regarding this. Every effort will be made by staff to provide needed assistance to parents regarding their children's immunization

status. Throughout the child's enrollment in Head Start, his/her immunizations must be kept current. The child's parent or guardian must be present when immunizations are given during an appointment with a health care provider. Children who are not current or up-to-date on their immunizations and where a physician's statement cannot be secured may be dropped from the program after contacts are made with the parents regarding their children's immunization status.

New Enrollees

Employees should make every effort to extend special greetings to children and to acquaint themselves with every child. Children are to be reassured that the center is a friendly place and made to feel welcome.

PROGRAM DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT

Program Assessment

An ongoing Program Assessment is necessary if we are to comply with Performance Standards and improve the program. We must comply with Performance Standards to receive Head Start Funds. MCAEOC uses several methods for Program Assessment such as Periodic Staff Evaluations, Annual Self-Assessment, Federal Review Instrument, Observation Checklists, On-Site Evaluations, and informal assessments of various committees. Program Content Area and Site Supervisors will conduct scheduled and unscheduled on-site visits.

The required annual self-assessment is an integral part of each program's management system. The self-assessment is a process for examining how well the program has maintained compliance with the Performance Standards. MCAEOC will utilize the federal review instrument. This instrument is the validating tool used in the self-assessment. The federal review instrument will show weaknesses and strengths of the program and an improvement plan will be developed from this instrument. Information provided by the self-assessment is used to bring the program into compliance, to plan improvement, and to update the plan.

Volunteers are organized into teams to examine the plans and operations of each program area. Program staff or consultants provide training regarding the content of the Performance Standards and the process used to conduct the self-assessment. Confidentiality will be strictly enforced during the review. Activities, facilities, or plans that are out of compliance or in need of improvement are addressed in a self-assessment report.

Teams consisting of staff, parent, and community representatives who participate in a review of the program areas will be trained to use three assessment techniques: observation, interviews, and review of written records and documentation. Specific assessment responsibilities are assigned to team members so that the work can be completed within the established time. Self-assessment team members also need to coordinate the findings with teams examining related program areas.

The Official Recorder's main purpose is to take the official minutes and maintain accurate account. The Team Leader's main objective is to keep focus and maintain a clear understanding of the regulations and give or delegate the oral report to the entire Self-Assessment Team.

Policy Council

The Policy Council assists the Governing Board and Program Director in the planning and evaluation of the program. A Policy Council member cannot have an immediate relative working for MCAEOC. A member of the MCAEOC Governing Board may serve as a liaison between the MCAEOC Early Childhood Program and the Governing Board.

A list of Policy Council members, along with their addresses, telephone numbers, year they are elected or appointed, and centers they represent is maintained in the Central Office. MCAEOC Early Childhood Program employees (or members of their families) are not eligible to serve on the Policy Council/Committee in a voting capacity. They may attend in a non-voting capacity, at the council's request.

The Policy Council serves as a link between public and private agencies, and between MCAEOC and the community it serves. It makes program suggestions, receives reports on action taken, plans, coordinates, and organizes agency-wide parent activities (with staff assistance), recruits volunteers, and mobilizes community resources. These suggestions are forwarded to the Governing Board.

Members are entitled to reimbursement for reasonable expenses in fulfilling their group responsibilities. Funds are provided through MCAEOC Head Start Program grant funds.

The following activities are allowable: Travel, lodging, and per diem expenses associated with program training, conference, and workshops and in accordance with agency policies for staff travel. Required travel forms must be completed by the member and prior approval granted by the Executive Director and Program Director.

Teaching Certificates

Employees who hold a valid State Teaching Certificate (degree in Early Childhood Education) are responsible for renewing the certificate prior to expiration. The Teaching Certificate should be valid for the state of Arkansas.

In-Service Training and Career Development

MCAEOC Head Start provides employees with in-service training designed to improve and enhance their skills and competencies and to further the career growth of individuals during employment. Training activities are centered on enhancing the achievement of Head Start's mission, goals and objectives, providing individual employees with increased levels of knowledge and experiences, leading to new or different employment opportunities that provide greater opportunities for increased earnings and self-actualization.

We encourage your success at MCAEOC Head Start and want to assist you in reaching your career goals. If you are considering another position at MCAEOC, you may need to update our current information on your education and experience by writing a letter and submitting it to the Office of Human Resources. The letter may be used to apply for a position. The letter will remain active for 90 days after which time you will need to submit another letter. A letter should be submitted only if there is a vacancy in a position and it has been announced by the Human Resource Department.

A promotion plan is utilized when applicable. The plan is to award promotions to employees based on responsibility and assignment or award employees based on additional responsibilities. Requests will be given consideration based upon agency needs, funding, and job performance.

Orientation

Every employee is required to attend an employee orientation session. Orientation is designed to train new staff on policies and procedures, benefit plans, MCAEOC history and programs, and other required information.

Absence from the Job

If you are ill, have an accident, or are otherwise unable to report for work at the designated time, you are expected to immediately notify your supervisor in accordance with personnel policies. This procedure is necessary so that arrangements can be made to provide sufficient coverage in every Head Start Center or Central Office. If a Head Start staff member is absent from work due to illness for more than three consecutive days, a doctor's statement must be brought to the Central Office prior to returning to work (See Personnel Policies).

Inclement Weather Policy

MCAEOC recognizes that there will be occasions of inclement weather. When poor weather conditions dictate, the normal work schedule may be revised. Decisions will be made for each incident of bad weather or hazardous road conditions. In severe weather conditions or hazardous road conditions:

- The Executive Director will decide if the normal work schedule will be altered, permitting late arrivals or early departures for the staff. The Program Director will determine if employees are on remote work status.
- The closing of the Head Start Centers will generally reflect the decision of the public school in each district where the center is located. The Director may, at her discretion, close all centers if there are other problems to be considered.
- Site Supervisors are responsible for building maintenance during inclement weather. The Facilities Coordinator and maintenance team will assist upon request.

Change of Personal Information

You should report any changes in your personal information to the Human Resource Department and/or Finance Office. Items such as name, address, telephone number, dependents, education, work location, and telephone extension are important to our ability to provide service and periodic information to you.

Staff Meetings

Staff meetings are one of the best avenues for the exchange of ideas and the sharing of information. It is important that all staff members attend. Suggestions for change, improvements, etc., are always welcomed and interpreted as positive input.

The management team will meet on a regular basis. This may include Family Service, Coordinators, Managers, Central Office Staff and others from health, mental health, and nutrition content areas. If the Site Supervisor is absent, every effort should be made to arrange for alternate to attend the staff meeting to ensure information is shared at the Head Start Center. Once the information has been shared and distributed, it is the responsibility of each person attending the meeting to share the information in a staff meeting with their peers. Center Staff meetings should be on a weekly basis in order to share information and plan the various activities of the center.

Training and Technical Assistance

It shall be the policy of MCAEOC to obtain maximum utilization of all staff. In an effort to effectively and efficiently accomplish assigned tasks, a staff development program will be provided to enhance this goal. Components of the staff development program will include providing an orientation and pre-service training program, providing daily on-going supervision to ensure maximum performance, and providing in-service training programs designed to improve and enhance employee skills, competencies, and career development.

It is mandatory for all staff to participate in training. It is also required that each employee is knowledgeable of program area plans, minimum licensing requirements, personnel policies, performance standards, this publication, and other information relating to MCAEOC.

Mississippi County E.O.C. Training/Technical Assistance (T/TA) and Child Development Associate (CDA) programs' basic purpose is to increase knowledge and awareness among decision makers, teachers, parents, and partners in our Head Start service system. Proper training and experience play a vital role at MCAEOC. Staff will earn a twenty-five-dollar monthly increase upon completion of CDA. Each employee shall be responsible for maintaining a current CDA (which includes paying CDA fees and being assessed by the Program Operations Education Manager or designated person.). Staff should begin the renewal process six (6) months prior to the current CDA's expiration date. If an employee fails to renew the CDA, the employee puts his/her job in jeopardy.

Employee College Tuition Assistance

When funding is available, Early Childhood employees pursuing a college degree may apply for college tuition assistance in a job-related field. Opportunities are available for staff members who are interested in pursuing an undergraduate degree in Early Childhood Education, Child Development, or a related field in accordance with current Head Start guidelines. Guidelines are established to ensure funding is used to best meet the needs of the program. Full tuition will be paid to the college or university. The program is based on the availability of funds and operates on a first come, first served basis. Currently, there is no penalization for dropped or failed classes. However, each staff person that receives college assistance funds from the agency will sign a contract to maintain employment with MCAEOC or within the county for at least three years after receiving the funds. Salary increases are given for certification and degrees based on the availability of funds. The agency will provide tuition assistance after Pell Grant and other scholarship awards are deducted, excluding student loans. A major must be declared that is job related. We are encouraging Family Service Workers to work toward a BS degree in social work. Employees interested in college tuition assistance should talk with their supervisor and the Human Resources staff to determine availability and eligibility. Assistance for other degree plans are available based on funding.

Emergency Preparedness Plan

An Emergency Preparedness Plan is implemented to provide guidance when staff encounter potential or actual workplace violence. It is the responsibility of all staff to immediately report threats, acts of violence occurring on MCAEOC Head Start premises or while conducting Head Start business (i.e., field trips or home visits) to their supervisor.

Procedures:

When encountering a threatening incident, person, animal, etc., the following procedures must be implemented:

Staff in centers and offices will use a code or phrase to convey to co-workers the need to call 911. If you are not familiar with the code word/phrase, please see your Site Supervisor.

Ask uninvolved parties to leave the area if this can be done safely. If possible, use the prearranged code word/phrase to alert your supervisor or co-workers to call 911.

MCAEOC Head Start offices, centers and home-based facilities must have a designated safe signal.

The staff person most accessible to the phone should call 911.

If possible, close all doors to classrooms/offices and close blinds, if applicable, to minimize accessibility to other areas.

In an open classroom/office situation, try to keep the threatening incident as close to the nearest outside door as possible.

If the threatening incident is outside, go quickly into the building, lock the doors, close the blinds, if applicable, and take a head count.

Guidance:

Try to stay calm. Raising your voice may increase the anxiety of the potentially violent person.

Speak slowly, softly, and clearly to reduce the momentum of the incident.

Avoid challenging body language such as placing hands on hips, moving toward the person, or staring directly at them. Do not turn your back on the individual.

Listen empathetically by really paying attention to what the person is saying. Let the person know that you will help them within your ability to send for additional help.

Neither agree with distorted statements or attempt to argue-REMAIN CALM.

Ask the person to leave and come back at a time when a meeting can be arranged with your supervisor.

Never challenge, try to bargain, or make promises that you cannot keep.

Closure:

After the incident has been resolved, a meeting will be initiated to discuss the incident with staff, parents, or children, if applicable. This debriefing should be done as soon as possible, depending on the incident, with the spokesperson being someone who was not directly involved in the incident. The Head Start Program or their designee will name the spokesperson. Staff are not to discuss the incident with the media.

Mental Health staff may assist in evaluating the incident and provide support to staff, parents, and children, if indicated.

Remember: This is a basic plan. Various incidents will call for the staff involved to make the best decision based on survival instincts. KEEP CALM AND THINK!

Licensing Compliance Record Procedure

When a Child Care Licensing Specialist comes to monitor the Head Start Center, she/he completes the following sections of the Licensing Compliance Record form: the standard review, discussion/observation, and compliance data. After the specialist completes this form and gives it to the Site Supervisor, the following steps need to be taken:

- 1) Site Supervisors will coordinate with the Facilities Coordinator on corrections to be made (if any).
- 2) Site Supervisors should then enter the date that the corrections were made on the licensing compliance form.
- 3) The form should then be forwarded to the Program Operations Education Manager. He/she will contact the Licensing Department and report the date and the corrections that were made.

In the event there is a need to report a potential licensing violation, please contact the Site Supervisor first. If the Site Supervisor is unavailable, staff should report in writing to the Education Manager and/or Transportation/Facilities Coordinator. As a last resort contact Program Director verbally or in writing through the Head Start secretaries.

Health Procedures for Early Childhood Education Employees

1. In compliance with the Head Start Performance Standard Health Procedures for Head Start staff the following practices have been established.

MCAEOC's utmost goal is to meet the federal regulations of initial health examination for staff and volunteers in order to avoid communicable disease that pose a significant risk to the health or safety of others in the Early Head Start and Head Start Programs that cannot be eliminated or reduced by reasonable accommodation.

- a. All candidates for employment must have an initial health examination and TB screening prior to hiring. The agency will be responsible for the expense of the initial TB screening of all new employees given by the agency's physician. The initial Health Examination will be performed by the agency's nurse, the employee's preferred physician, or the agency's physician (i.e. Department of Transportation physical).
- b. In light of the Arkansas Department of Health's decision to discontinue TB skin test requirements, staff will complete a Tuberculosis (TB) Risk Assessment Form. Staff with TB referrals must obtain a TB skin test card, at their own expense, as instructed on questionnaire.
- c. The periodic health re-examination shall be every two years or as recommended by the employee's health care provider. Physicals will be completed by the agency nurse, contracted nurse, or the employee's personal physician.
- d. TB screening questionnaires will be completed every two years by the Human Resources Department.
- e. DOT initial health examinations can be used as the initial health examination as required by the Head Start Performance Standards.
- f. Employee health data is entered in the database weekly and forwarded to

supervisory/management staff monthly for distribution and as a means to inform employees of expiration dates. Entries include TB and health examination expiration dates.

- g. Employees are responsible for maintaining required health and educational credentials (physicals, health screenings, etc.). Failure to comply will result in disciplinary actions.
- h. Health data is filed separately from other employee personnel files in the central office.
- i. The Human Resource Department will monitor employee health requirements.
- j. The current health policy (see personnel policies) supersedes any previous policies.

The following health information is maintained in PROMIS as a means of tracking employee requirements:

- A. Date of hire
- B. Initial TB and physical (when applicable)
- C. Expiration dates for health screening
- D. TB Expiration Date
- E. Physical Expiration Date

Reports are generated monthly and forwarded to Supervisory/Management Staff for distribution, review, and as a means to inform employees of needed documents.

Intentional Violation of Program Eligibility Requirements

MCAEOC follows all local, state, and federal guidelines in accordance with 45CFR Part 1305 to ensure that the neediest children and families benefit from Head Start services. Employees who intentionally violate any local, state, or federal policy regarding program eligibility and intentionally enroll ineligible pregnant women and/or children will be subject to disciplinary action, including termination.

Teacher Qualifications

Center-based teachers must have at least an associate's or bachelor's degree in child development, child development, equivalent coursework or otherwise meet the requirements of section 648A (a)(3)(B) of the Act. Equivalent coursework is a Child Development Accreditation (CDA) in the appropriate setting (infant/toddler or preschool) or at least 15 college hours in early childhood education.

