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| ACYF Administration on Children, Youth and Families | U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES Administration for Children and Families | |
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| | 4. Key Word: Head Start facilities; Hurricanes Katrina and Rita | |

PROGRAM INSTRUCTION

TO: Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees and Delegate Agencies

SUBJECT: Facilities Damaged in Hurricanes Katrina and Rita

BACKGROUND:

Hurricane Katrina caused damage to more than 200 Head Start facilities. Nearly 100 of these facilities were so significantly damaged that they are still closed and most will require replacement or extensive repair. While no data are yet available, we can only assume that the damage caused by Hurricane Rita will add to this number.

Each Head Start grantee with one or more damaged centers should be working with its Administration for Children and Families (ACF) Regional Office to develop a facility strategy that will, as quickly as possible, allow the grantee to start again serving Head Start children.

In those cases where facilities were leased by the Head Start program, the cost of repairs and who will pay for them need to be part of a discussion between the Head Start grantee, the building owner and the responsible ACF Regional Office. Grantees wishing to stay in centers that can be repaired are expected to work with the property owner and fully explore such issues as FEMA and insurance reimbursement as part of any proposal submitted to their ACF Regional Office for one-time supplemental funding. Regional Offices will consider each supplemental funding request on its own merits, but ACF, in reviewing these requests, will need to fully understand the extent to which resources have been or will be made available to the facility owner to restore the damaged property. In cases where the grantee believes it to be preferable to relocate to a new facility, conversations should be had regularly with your Regional Office so that together you can explore those options which will work best for your program. ACF understands that finding alternate facilities may require one-time funds to, for example, renovate a building to make it suitable for serving Head Start children. All such requests for supplemental funding will need to include a full discussion of what the grantee is proposing and the reason for its request.

In any case in which a severely damaged or destroyed center was grantee owned, the grantee should pursue appropriate options with its insurance company and with FEMA, as well as keeping its Regional Office fully apprised of its situation. ACF will work with each such grantee to explore appropriate options for finding replacement facilities as soon as possible.

Grantees are also expected to work with their Regional Office, as their situations permit, to find temporary ways to provide Head Start services to children and families still in the community. Such approaches as home-based services or family child care may be appropriate options until the grantee is able to address its facility needs.

On a related matter, all Head Start grantees are strongly encouraged to reach out to those families displaced by Hurricane Rita in the same manner so many of you did, and continue to do, in helping those impacted by Hurricane Katrina. We would urge you to provide Head Start services to any eligible families which have temporarily relocated to your community. We will, at a minimum, reimburse you for those costs incurred in the first 30 days of serving these children and families. As with Katrina, we will share additional funding information with you as it becomes available. We will also waive all of those requirements which were waived as part of serving Katrina children and families (Please see Information Memorandum [ACYF-IM-HS-05-04](#)). Please inform your Regional Office on an on-going basis of any children displaced by Hurricane Rita that you are serving in your program.

Thank you again for all each of you is doing to help those impacted by these two natural disasters.

Wade F. Horn, Ph.D.
 Assistant Secretary
 for Children and Families