

Subpart C—Head Start Program Options

§ 1306.30 Provisions of comprehensive child development services.

(a) All Head Start grantees must provide comprehensive child development services, as defined in the Head Start Performance Standards.

(b) All Head Start grantees must provide classroom or group socialization activities for the child as well as home visits to the parents. The major purpose of the classroom or socialization activities is to help meet the child's development needs and to foster the child's social competence. The major purpose of the home visits is to enhance the parental role in the growth and development of the child.

(c) The facilities used by Early Head Start and Head Start grantee and delegate agencies for regularly scheduled center-based and combination program option classroom activities or home-based group socialization activities must comply with State and local requirements concerning licensing. In cases where these licensing standards are less comprehensive or less stringent than the Head Start regulations, or where no State or local licensing standards are applicable, grantee and delegate agencies are required to assure that their facilities are in compliance with the Head Start Program Performance Standards related to health and safety as found in 45 CFR 1304.53(a), Physical environment and facilities.

(d) All grantees must identify, secure and use community resources in the provision of services to Head Start children and their families prior to using Head Start funds for these services.

[57 FR 58092, Dec. 8, 1992, as amended at 61 FR 57226, Nov. 5, 1996; 63 FR 2314, Jan. 15, 1998]

§ 1306.31 Choosing a Head Start program option.

(a) Grantees may choose to implement one or more than one of three program options: a center-based option, a home-based program option or a combination program option.

(b) The program option chosen must meet the needs of the children and families as indicated by the community

needs assessment conducted by the grantee.

(c) When assigning children to a particular program option, Head Start grantees that operate more than one program option must consider such factors as the child's age, developmental level, disabilities, health or learning problems, previous preschool experiences and family situation. Grantees must also consider parents' concerns and wishes prior to making final assignments.

§ 1306.32 Center-based program option.

(a) *Class size.* (1) Head Start classes must be staffed by a teacher and an aide or two teachers and, whenever possible, a volunteer.

(2) Grantees must determine their class size based on the predominant age of the children who will participate in the class and whether or not a center-based double session variation is being implemented.

(3) For classes serving predominantly four or five-year-old children, the average class size of that group of classes must be between 17 and 20 children, with no more than 20 children enrolled in any one class.

(4) When double session classes serve predominantly four or five-year-old children, the average class size of that group of classes must be between 15 and 17 children. A double session class for four or five-year old children may have no more than 17 children enrolled. (See paragraph (c) of this section for other requirements regarding the double session variation.)

(5) For classes serving predominantly three-year-old children, the average class size of that group of classes must be between 15 and 17 children, with no more than 17 children enrolled in any one class.

(6) When double session classes serve predominantly three-year-old children, the average class size of that group of classes must be between 13 and 15 children. A double session class for three-year-old children may have no more than 15 children enrolled. (See paragraph (c) of this section for other requirements regarding the double session variation.)

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(7) It is recommended that at least 13 children be enrolled in each center-based option class where feasible.

(8) A class is considered to serve predominantly four- or five-year-old children if more than half of the children in the class will be four or five years old by whatever date is used by the State or local jurisdiction in which the Head Start program is located to determine eligibility for public school.

(9) A class is considered to serve predominantly three-year-old children if more than half of the children in the class will be three years old by whatever date is used by the State or local jurisdiction in which Head Start is located to determine eligibility for public school.

(10) Head Start grantees must determine the predominant age of children in the class at the start of the year. There is no need to change that determination during the year.

(11) In some cases, State or local licensing requirements may be more stringent than these class requirements, preventing the required minimum numbers of children from being enrolled in the facility used by Head Start. Where this is the case, Head Start grantees must try to find alternative facilities that satisfy licensing requirements for the numbers of children cited above. If no alternative facilities are available, the responsible HHS official has the discretion to approve enrollment of fewer children than required above.

(12) The chart below may be used for easy reference:

Predominant age of children in the class	Funded class size [Funded enrollment]
4 and 5 year olds	Program average of 17–20 children enrolled per class in these classes. No more than 20 children enrolled in any class.
4 and 5 year olds in double session classes.	Program average of 15–17 children enrolled per class in these classes. No more than 17 children enrolled in any class.
3 year olds	Program average of 15–17 children enrolled per class in these classes. No more than 17 children enrolled in any class.

Predominant age of children in the class	Funded class size [Funded enrollment]
3 year olds in double session classes.	Program average of 13–15 children enrolled per class in these classes. No more than 15 children enrolled in any class.

(b) *Center-based program option requirements.* (1) Classes must operate for four or five days per week or some combination of four and five days per week.

(2) Classes must operate for a minimum of three and one-half to a maximum of six hours per day with four hours being optimal.

(3) The annual number of required days of planned class operations (days when children are scheduled to attend) is determined by the number of days per week each program operates. Programs that operate for four days per week must provide at least 128 days per year of planned class operations. Programs that operate for five days per week must provide at least 160 days per year of planned class operations. Grantees implementing a combination of four and five days per week must plan to operate between 128 and 160 days per year. The minimum number of planned days of service per year can be determined by computing the relative number of four and five day weeks that the program is in operation. All center-based program options must provide a minimum of 32 weeks of scheduled days of class operations over an eight or nine month period. Every effort should be made to schedule makeup classes using existing resources if planned class days fall below the number required per year.

(4) Programs must make a reasonable estimate of the number of days during a year that classes may be closed due to problems such as inclement weather or illness, based on their experience in previous years. Grantees must make provisions in their budgets and program plans to operate makeup classes and provide these classes, when needed, to prevent the number of days of service available to the children from falling below 128 days per year.

(5) Each individual child is not required to receive the minimum days of service, although this is to be encouraged in accordance with Head Start

policies regarding attendance. The minimum number of days also does not apply to children with disabilities whose individualized education plan may require fewer planned days of service in the Head Start program.

(6) Head Start grantees operating migrant programs are not subject to the requirement for a minimum number of planned days, but must make every effort to provide as many days of service as possible to each migrant child and family.

(7) Staff must be employed for sufficient time to allow them to participate in pre-service training, to plan and set up the program at the start of the year, to close the program at the end of the year, to conduct home visits, to conduct health examinations, screening and immunization activities, to maintain records, and to keep service component plans and activities current and relevant. These activities should take place outside of the time scheduled for classes in center-based programs or home visits in home-based programs.

(8) Head Start grantees must develop and implement a system that actively encourages parents to participate in two home visits annually for each child enrolled in a center-based program option. These visits must be initiated and carried out by the child's teacher. The child may not be dropped from the program if the parents will not participate in the visits.

(9) Head Start grantees operating migrant programs are required to plan for a minimum of two parent-teacher conferences for each child during the time they serve that child. Should time and circumstance allow, migrant programs must make every effort to conduct home visits.

(c) *Double session variation.* (1) A center-based option with a double session variation employs a single teacher to work with one group of children in the morning and a different group of children in the afternoon. Because of the larger number of children and families to whom the teacher must provide services, double session program options must comply with the requirements regarding class size explained in paragraph (a) of this section and with all other center-based requirements in paragraph (b) of this section with the

exceptions and additions noted in paragraphs (c) (2) and (3) of this section.

(2) Each program must operate classes for four days per week.

(3) Each double session classroom staff member must be provided adequate break time during the course of the day. In addition, teachers, aides and volunteers must have appropriate time to prepare for each session together, to set up the classroom environment and to give individual attention to children entering and leaving the center.

(d) *Full day variation.* (1) A Head Start grantee implementing a center-based program option may operate a full day variation and provide more than six hours of class operations per day using Head Start funds. These programs must comply with all the requirements regarding the center-based program option found in paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section with the exception of paragraph (b)(2) regarding the hours of service per day.

(2) Programs are encouraged to meet the needs of Head Start families for full day services by securing funds from other agencies. Before implementing a full day variation of a center-based option, a Head Start grantee should demonstrate that alternative enrollment opportunities or funding from non-Head Start sources are not available for Head Start families needing full-day child care services.

(3) Head Start grantees may provide full day services only to those children and families with special needs that justify full day services or to those children whose parents are employed or in job training with no caregiver present in the home. The records of each child receiving services for more than six hours per day must show how each child meets the criteria stated above.

(e) *Non-Head Start services.* Grantees may charge for services which are provided outside the hours of the Head Start program.

§ 1306.33 Home-based program option.

(a) Grantees implementing a home-based program option must: