



Early Head Start

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Implementation Plan

A. Funding Table

(Dollars in millions)

Program/ Project/Activity	Total Appropriated	FY 2009 Actual Obligations	FY 2010 Estimated Obligations
<i>Grants</i>	982.0	0.0	982.0
<i>Technical Assistance</i>	85.0	0.0	85.0
<i>Monitoring</i>	33.0	8.0	25.0
Total	1,100.0	8.0	1,092.0

B. Objectives and Public Benefits

Under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Recovery Act), \$1.1 billion will be provided to the Office of Head Start to increase the number of children participating in Early Head Start. The objective of the Early Head Start program is to enhance the cognitive, social and emotional development of low-income children, including children on federally-recognized reservations and children of migratory farm workers, through the provision of comprehensive health, educational, nutritional, social and other services and to involve parents in their children's learning and to help parents make progress toward their educational, literacy and employment goals. Head Start also emphasizes the significant involvement of parents in the administration of their local Head Start programs.

C. Activities

The purpose of this funding is to increase the number of children participating in Early Head Start (with up to ten percent of these funds to be used for training and technical assistance and up to three percent for monitoring the operations of these additional programs). Conference report language that accompanied the Recovery Act bill stated: *The conferees expect the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to work with Head Start grantees in order to manage these resources in order to sustain fiscal year 2009 awards through fiscal year 2010.*

D. Characteristics

The Recovery Act appropriates \$1.1 billion to increase the number of Early Head Start (EHS) children.

Purpose	Type of Award	Funding Amount	Recipients
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Purpose	Type of Award	Funding Amount	Recipients
Expand Early Head Start services	Competitive discretionary grants	\$982 million	Community based organizations, local government, higher education institutions, American Indian tribes and migrant and seasonal grantees
Monitoring	Contract	\$33 million	Private Industry
Training and technical assistance (T/TA)	Included in awards to grantees who receive expansion funding, modifications to existing contracts and award of new grants/contracts	\$85 million	Provided to EHS grantees who receive expansion funding, current state-based T/TA system to work with new grantees, new contracts to work on Child Development Associate (CDA) credential and other training issues
TOTAL = \$1.1 billion			

E. Delivery Schedule

- Synopsis of Grant Opportunity published online – completed (April 2, 2009)
- Announcement published in grants.gov – completed (May 8, 2009)
- Applications due – due by July 9, 2009
- Panel the EHS expansion proposals – completed (August 2009)
- Select successful applicants for EHS expansion – completed (September 2009)
- Allocate T/TA funding, including direct awards to grantees, contract modifications to existing recipients, and new contracts to provide T/TA support – ongoing (September 2009 – May 2010)
- Modify contracts to enhance Head Start monitoring activities (completed September 2009 and award new contract (May 2010)
- Award EHS expansion grants – completed (November 2009 - April 2010)
- Award second expansion and T/TA grant – August – September, 2010

F. Environmental Review

The distribution of Early Head Start funds as a result of the Recovery Act is categorically excluded from environmental review based on Category 2 section F - Functional Exclusion: Grants for Social Services under Chapter 30-20-30 of the HHS General Administration Manual. By definition, the use of these funds: (1) mitigates social and environmental impacts; (2) does not include construction or alterations of the human environment; and (3) have no anticipated



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individual or cumulative significant effect on natural or cultural assets. Any funding that includes construction or alterations will not fall under this categorical exclusion and will be subject to an environmental assessment. To date, there have been 561 Environmental Assessments completed for Early Head Start grantees receiving Recovery Act funds. All reviews and documents were completed, and have been finalized and reported under in the Section 1609(c) report form for ACF under the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA).



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G. Measures¹

This funding is expected to provide services to approximately 45,000 more pregnant women, infants, toddlers, and their families. An additional 10,000 Early Head Start (EHS) children will be served through the EHS portion of \$1 billion in Head Start Recovery Act funding, in total nearly doubling the total number of Early Head Start participants.

Targets for the following performance measures have been developed based on historical data, analysis of current trends in Early Head Start programs, and the projected impact of Recovery Act funds. The first three measures will be reported on quarterly, thus quarterly projections are provided for relevant ARRA funding years. The fourth measure is an annual outcome measure, thus only annual targets are provided.

Table 1:

Outcome / Achievement	Units	Type	9/30/ 09	12/31/ 09	3/31/ 10	6/30/ 10	9/30/ 10	12/31/ 10	3/31/ 11	6/30/ 11	9/30/ 11	Program End
Number of additional classrooms used to serve the increased Early Head Start enrollment. <i>(Quarterly Output)</i>	# classrms	TARGET		0	1,350	3,000	4,000	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	
		ACTUAL		439	2,358							
Number of additional Early Head Start children served as a result of Recovery Act funds. <i>(Quarterly Output)</i>	# EHS kids	TARGET		0	11,000	33,000	48,000	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	
		ACTUAL		625	18,467							
Increase the percentage of EHS teachers with AA, BA, Advanced Degree, or degree in a field related to early childhood education. <i>(Annual Outcome)</i>	%	TARGET	57%	n/a	n/a	n/a	60%	n/a	n/a	n/a	60%	57%
		ACTUAL	56%									56%

¹ All EHS expansion grantees will receive two awards – the first to expand and the second to sustain that expansion. Targets will be achieved after the first award and then sustained with the second award made in September 2010.



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Table 2:

Data Source	Data Validation
Program Information Report (PIR)	Data collection for the PIR is automated to improve efficiency in the collection and analysis of data. Head Start achieves a 100 percent response rate annually from 2,600 respondents. The Office of Head Start also engages in significant monitoring of Head Start grantees through monitoring reviews of Head Start and Early Head Start grantees, which examine and track Head Start Program Performance Standards compliance at least every three years for each program. Teams of ACF Regional Office and Central Office staff, along with trained reviewers, conduct more than 500 on-site reviews each year. The automated data system provides trend data so that the team can examine strengths and weaknesses in all programs.

The Office of Head Start (OHS) will track the above output measures in a number of ways. Data on the number of classrooms and enrollment is collected monthly in the Head Start Enterprise System. Grantees report their expenditure data through 1512 reporting on Grants.gov. Risk Management calls, which occur quarterly for all new Early Head Start programs, are used to discuss progress on the grantee's expansion, including enrollment and expenditures. The Office of Head Start works closely with Regional Office staff to review and validate the data.



H. Monitoring/Evaluation

All Recovery Act programs will be assessed for risk to ensure that appropriate internal controls are in place throughout the entire lifecycle of the program. These assessments are conducted by operating components to comply with the statutory requirements of the Federal Manager's Financial Integrity Act and the Improper Payments Information Act, as well as OMB's circular A-123 "Management's Responsibility for Internal Control" (including Appendices A, B, and C).

ACF's risk management process fits within the overall governance structure established at HHS to address Recovery Act program risks. The HHS Risk Management and Financial Oversight Board provides executive leadership and establishes accountability for the risk assessment process related to internal controls over financial reporting, and the HHS Senior Assessment Team ensures that risk assessment objectives are clearly communicated throughout the Department. ACF's Recovery Act Coordination Team carries out comprehensive annual assessments of its Recovery Act program(s) to identify risks and develop strategies to address them, including those associated with selecting recipients, awarding and overseeing funds, and achieving program goals. It meets weekly to monitor and assess the effectiveness of mitigation strategies and identify emerging risks.

In addition, ACF has presented its high level risks to the Recovery Act Implementation Team. Chaired by the Deputy Secretary and comprised of senior policy officials from throughout the Department, the Implementation Team convenes monthly to monitor progress in carrying out Recovery Act program and address the obstacles and risks that could impact on their success.

ACF will follow its existing internal control structure in implementing this Early Head Start expansion. The expenditure of these funds will be carefully monitored by Office of Head Start (OHS) regional staff and by ACF Office of Administration (OA) grants specialists with strong oversight from the national office. On-going Risk Management Meetings conducted with each grantee will focus on the use of these funds and the frequency will be increased to quarterly with all grantees receiving these funds. All Early Head Start programs are subject to regular monitoring visits where their records, including fiscal records will be carefully reviewed to assure an appropriate use of these funds. New Early Head Start programs will be visited after completion of their first year of program operations. The fiscal monitoring tools will be revised to ensure that the use of these funds is thoroughly and separately examined. All new Early Head Start grantees will be monitored at the end of their first year of operation. In addition, all Head Start grantees must submit an annual audit to OHS.

I. Transparency

ACF is open and transparent in all of its grant competitions and regulations depending on what is appropriate for program activities that involve spending of Recovery Act funding consistent with statutory and OMB guidance. ACF ensures that recipient reports required by Section 1512 of the Recovery Act are submitted and reviewed for material omissions and significant errors that would mislead or confuse the public. ACF informs recipients of their reporting obligation through standard terms and conditions, grant announcements, contract solicitations, and other



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program guidance. In addition, ACF provides key award information to recipients and other technical assistance to grantees and contractors and fully utilizes Project Officers to ensure compliance with reporting requirements.

OHS will post on its website (<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ohs/>) quarterly information about the spending of Recovery Act funds, including such information as the number of successful EHS expansion applicants, how many new children are being served, how many new staff have been hired, and how many new EHS centers have been opened (see Table 1 output measures). Annual performance results are available in the annual ACF Budget Justification and Online Performance Appendix (available at: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/olab/budget/index.html>).

J. Accountability

Head Start is legislatively required to perform reviews of each Head Start program every three years and to review all newly funded programs after its first years of operation. Erroneous Payment reviews are conducted to determine whether documentation demonstrated that a Head Start child was income eligible. In the case of errors, Head Start grantees are required to develop corrective action plans. ACF has also issued a memorandum reminding all grantees of documentation requirements, developed a standard signed statement template form, increased oversight of documentation activities being performed by ACF Regional Offices, and increased grantee emphasis for on-going monitoring through training and development of a monitoring protocol to review management systems. Head Start Regional program managers are charged with assuring all programs in their regions are providing appropriate services to enrolled children and families and using their grants funds as required by statute and regulation. Grantees that are not must correct their problems or face de-funding.

To ensure that managers are held to high standards of accountability in achieving program goals under the Recovery Act, ACF has built upon and strengthened existing processes. Senior ACF and Head Start officials will meet regularly with senior Department officials to ensure that projects are meeting their program goals, assessing and mitigating risks, ensuring transparency, and incorporating corrective actions. The personnel performance appraisal system also incorporates Recovery Act program stewardship responsibilities for program and business function managers. Both senior and program managers are held accountable for assuring quality grantee performance through their Performance Management Appraisal Program (PMAP) plans. PMAP plans define clear expectations for managerial performance related to ACF-wide goals, the HHS Strategic Plan, and other key performance measures.

K. Barriers to Effective Implementation

None identified.

L. Federal Infrastructure



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Not applicable.

Summary of Significant Changes:

Provided timely updates regarding funding levels and performance results.