



## Student Attendance Policy and Procedures

### Performance Standard

#### § 1302.16 Attendance.

- (a) Promoting regular attendance. A program must track attendance for each child.
- (1) A program must implement a process to ensure children are safe when they do not arrive at school. If a child is unexpectedly absent and a parent has not contacted the program within one hour of program start time, the program must attempt to contact the parent to ensure the child's well-being.
  - (2) A program must implement strategies to promote attendance. At a minimum, a program must:
    - (i) Provide information about the benefits of regular attendance;
    - (ii) Support families to promote the child's regular attendance;
    - (iii) Conduct a home visit or make other direct contact with a child's parents if a child has multiple unexplained absences (such as two consecutive unexplained absences); and,
    - (iv) Within the first 60 days of program operation, and on an ongoing basis thereafter, use individual child attendance data to identify children with patterns of absence that put them at risk of missing ten percent of program days per year and develop appropriate strategies to improve individual attendance among identified children, such as direct contact with parents or intensive case management, as necessary.
  - (3) If a child ceases to attend, the program must make appropriate efforts to re-engage the family to resume attendance, including as described in paragraph (a)(2) of this section. If the child's attendance does not resume, then the program must consider that slot vacant. This action is not considered expulsion as described in §1302.17.
- (b) Managing systematic program attendance issues. If a program's monthly average daily attendance rate falls below 85 percent, the program must analyze the causes of absenteeism to identify any systematic issues that contribute to the program's absentee rate. The program must use this data to make necessary changes in a timely manner as part of ongoing oversight and correction as described in §1302.102(b) and inform its continuous improvement efforts as described in §1302.102(c).
- (c) Supporting attendance of homeless children.
- (1) If a program determines a child is eligible under §1302.12(c)(1)(iii), it must allow the child to attend for up to 90 days or as long as allowed under state licensing requirements, without immunization and other records, to give the family reasonable time to present these documents. A program must work with families to get children immunized as soon as possible in order to comply with state licensing requirements.
  - (2) If a child experiencing homelessness is unable to attend classes regularly because the family does not have transportation to and from the program facility, the program must utilize community resources, where possible, to provide transportation for the child.

### Policy

All families are encouraged to maintain consistent attendance in the Head Start program. Consistent attendance is defined as present or participating for at least 85% of scheduled classroom days. Head Start staff help families in identifying barriers to consistent attendance. Staff initiate support as appropriate. If participation or attendance ceases, staff make efforts to re-engage families to resume attendance. A slot is vacant when attendance does not resume, and may be considered an enrollment opportunity.

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## Procedure

1. Parents/caregivers will be provided information about the benefits of regular attendance at the Family Services home visits and given specific child attendance at Education visits/ILP conferences using ChildPlus report 2131 (web-based version of CP).
2. Daily, the teacher, or EA will complete classroom attendance in ChildPlus. Attendance will be completed by 9:30 am. Children who are marked with “**Unexpected Absence**” in ChildPlus will result in a phone call to the child’s listed primary phone number by the auto-dialer system.
  - o The normal classroom operation times are automatically populated in ChildPlus. If a child comes to school late, or leaves early, the teacher or EA must adjust attendance in CP accordingly. See [Mealtime Policy](#)
3. FSW will monitor attendance daily using ChildPlus attendance data. If a child is absent for three (3) consecutive days, *and* there has been no contact from the family (Unexpected Absence), Family Service staff will call the parents/caregivers to determine the reason for absences and provide support as needed. When FSW determines the reason for absence they will update ChildPlus and make notes as attendance follow up, as appropriate.
4. The FSW will pull CP report 2305, at least monthly, to determine when the average daily attendance rate for an individual child falls below 85% and work with the family to develop an [Attendance Success Plan](#). (See Attendance Concerns/Follow up section for details.)
5. Program attendance clerk will review attendance records daily utilizing CP report 2303 to monitor completion. Teaching staff not completing attendance will be notified via email.
  - o If a teacher fails to complete attendance for two (2) consecutive days, the attendance clerk will notify the appropriate Education Supervisor.
  - o Education Supervisors will follow-up with teachers to ensure compliance with attendance procedures.
  - o If any classroom has three (3) or more students out due to illness (“SCK”), email should be sent to the Building Administrator/Education Supervisor for follow up. The Education Supervisor will follow the [Communicable Disease procedure](#) to determine next steps.
6. The attendance clerk will prepare a monthly report (CP 2335, Performance Panel-Absence reasons) for all classrooms on the 2nd working day of the month. This report will be shared monthly with Education Supervisors, Program Nurse, Family Service Manager, FSW, and teachers to support monitoring of trends. Content Area managers will discuss trends during the Content Area monthly meeting and communicate back to staff through the Bulletin (teachers and FSW) to address concerns, share information, and solicit suggestions. If needed, managers will communicate directly with site teams for specific situations or trends to discuss support to improve attendance. Some strategies that the program may implement include:
  - o Multiple education opportunities for parents/caregivers related to importance of attendance
  - o Attendance incentives for specific situations
  - o Using visuals (family-friendly reports, Attendance Tree, etc.) to share child-specific attendance information
7. Monthly attendance data will be presented to the Parent Policy Council to gather input and ideas to support families.
8. In the event of a communicable disease, the program will coordinate with the Multnomah Education Service District and follow any needed procedures.

### **Attendance Concerns/Follow-up**

We recognize that there will be instances where families are houseless, or are experiencing unavoidable situations and special arrangements will be made whenever possible. The attendance patterns of children with less than 85% attendance will be analyzed to determine the best possible

solution. Once a child falls below 85% attendance support will be documented in the Attendance Support Plan tab *at least* monthly by FSW.

1. Within 60 days of the program start date and every month thereafter, CP report 2336 will be used to identify children with patterns of absence that place them at risk of missing 15% or more of program days. FSM will pull this report and review it with FSW staff individually.
2. Appropriate strategies will be used to improve attendance among identified children (direct contact, intensive case management). FSW will submit Internal Program Referral to FSM, Program Nurse, Program Dietitian, Mental Health Manager and/or Inclusion Manager (as needed) to begin creating a plan. Monthly documentation will be entered for all follow up in the Family Services-Attendance Support Plan tab in ChildPlus. As a part of this process, FSW staff will develop a [Family Attendance Success Plan](#), to be revisited until attendance improves, and uploaded into ChildPlus.
  - a. If a student is absent **related to illness** more than 50% over the course of a month, an IPR should be submitted to the Head Start Program Nurse. Additionally, if there are any medical related barriers to attending school, an IPR to Program Nurse should be submitted.
  - b. If a student is absent **related to nutrition**, an IPR should be submitted to the Head Start Program Dietitian. Program Dietitian will consult with Program Nurse on any illness-related IPRs that have significant nutrition implications.
  - c. If a student is absent due to **complex family dynamics or concerns**, an IPR should be submitted to the Mental Health Manager to discuss strategies.
  - d. If FSW or teachers notice a **trend related to attendance other than those listed above**, an IPR should be submitted to the Family Service Manager to determine next steps.
3. If **contact cannot be made** with the family after three (3) days, FSW will complete an Internal Program Referral to the FSM. FSM will communicate with FSW and teacher to develop next steps (ie. Attendance Support Plan, home wellness visit, Attendance Letter sent, bus tickets, etc). If contact is made, FSW may consult with FSM to discuss benefits of sending an Attendance Letter to reinforce communication.
4. If attendance problems persist or no response is received from the family after five (5) additional days, [Attendance Letter 2](#) may be sent informing parent/caregiver of the possible drop date. If no response is received and attendance problems persist, the FSW should submit an IPR to FSM to determine next steps with the Education Supervisor and teacher.
5. A [Termination Letter](#) dropping the child from the program may be sent when all interventions have failed and attendance remains a chronic problem with FSM and Education Supervisor approval.

### **Extended Absence**

1. Children may not miss more than eight (8) consecutive scheduled school days due to family vacations or family emergencies—such as a death in the family—that causes the family to leave town. Special circumstances requiring absences longer than eight days will be reviewed by the FSM and Education Supervisor. *(In an effort to support home culture, consistency of services, and family needs, families who must travel on an extended basis may remain enrolled in the program and attendance will be marked as “Not Scheduled” during their absence. Absences that exceed eight school days require a communication plan with the family during their absence, and approval by the FSM and Education Supervisor.)*
2. Parents/caregivers must be immediately informed of this policy by either the child’s teacher or FSW when the family’s plans are known. Teachers and FSWs will inform one another and will document the conversation held with the parents/caregivers in the ChildPlus attendance module.

3. If the child does not return to school on the expected day, the FSW will attempt to contact the family that day. Teacher will be informed, and a Termination Letter will be sent, if the child does not attend the following day.
4. Parents/caregivers will need to apply for re-enrollment and wait for the next classroom opening. The child will return to the same teacher whenever possible.

### **Special Situations**

When problems arise that do not fit within the above procedures, the teacher or FSW should contact the Family Service Manager for assistance.

### **Attendance Reports**

- CP Report 2131–Participant Summary  
Used to share information with parents/caregivers about the child’s attendance, health requirements, education and family service home visits, etc.
- CP Report 2330–Consecutive Absences  
Used to compile a list of children in each classroom who has had three (3) consecutive absences. FSW can use the report to determine who needs a phone call home.
- CP Report 2335–Attendance Works Chronic Absence Charts  
Used to show attendance demographics, percentages and/or by count.
- CP Report 2336–Attendance Works Chronic Absence Report  
Used to pull a list of children who fall into the three attendance categories—can show demographic information as well—shown as a grid.
- CP Report 2305–Monthly Attendance  
Used to show detailed average daily attendance by classroom, can see child’s attendance percentages individually.