

	DHS Early Head Start Program Policy		
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY <u>82</u>			
SUBJECT	Staffing <u>and Supervision</u> and Class Size Requirements		
REFERENCE	Environmental Health and Safety		
EFFECTIVE	8/1/2016		
Policy Council Approval: 7/26/16	Policy Council Revision: 5/23/23	Governing Body Approval: 9/19/16	Governing Body Revision: 6/15/23
PAGE: 1 of 2			

Policy:

Early Head Start (EHS) Program, Service Providers will ensure that EHS classes are designed with no more than eight children and staffed by two paid teachers. It is recommended, whenever possible, that a third person be in the classroom, such as a volunteer.

Classroom Design

Ages	Classroom Design
6 Wks -36 Months	All EHS classrooms, by design, will have no more than eight children enrolled per class. The integration of EHS enrolled children and non EHS children per classroom is encouraged.

Group Size

Ages	Group Size
6 Wks -36 Months	Maximum of eight children enrolled per class. Two teachers with no more than eight children. Two teachers must be in the classroom at all times.

Ratios

Ages	Ratios
6 Wks -36 Months	One teacher to four children with two teachers in the classroom at all times.

~~Class sizes are determined based on square footage, with a minimum of 35 square feet/child. Service Providers must seek prior approval before any change to a classroom age group designation. As children age throughout the program, they may remain in their current classrooms until room becomes available in the next age appropriate classroom.~~

Classroom management entails both teachers meeting the needs of all children. However, Service Providers must ensure that each teacher working exclusively with infants and toddlers has the responsibility for no more than four infants and toddlers when meeting home visits, parent/teacher conference expectations and developmental needs of the children. All EHS sites must comply with the above stated staffing, group and class size requirements.

Ratios must be maintained during EHS hours. Program hours vary by site and are set and approved at the beginning of the program year as part of the EHS Program Design.

In extreme emergencies, should a center become short staffed and unable to meet the EHS ratios and group size, they must follow the Texas Child Care Regulation Minimum Standards and seek approval from DHS EHS Senior Management. This practice is the exception and not the norm. Centers must report when being understaffed.

~~Ratios must be maintained during EHS hours. Program hours vary by site and are set and approved at the beginning of the program year as part of the EHS Program Design.~~

Service Providers will develop and implement active supervision procedures. No child will be left alone or unsupervised for any period of time.

Volunteers being counted in classroom ratios

A volunteer may be used to supplement the required adult/child ratio only for short periods of time, 10-15 minutes to accommodate for unscheduled interruptions/emergencies. Volunteers may be used to supplement for restroom breaks, children's needs, and to cover lunch hours as long as a qualified EHS teacher is in the classroom. **A volunteer must never be left alone with a child or group of children and must always remain with a qualified EHS teacher.** All volunteers must sign the Head Start Standards of Conduct, pass a background check, and receive volunteer training. Providers must keep documentation of volunteer training and comply with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission Child-Care Regulations.

Performance Standard(s):

1302.21(b)(1)(2); 1302.94(a)(b); 1302.47 (b){2}{iii}; 1302.47(b){S}{i}; 1302.47(b) (S){iii}; 1302.94(b)