

# Review of Head Start, Early Head Start, and Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership (EHS-CCP) Program COVID-19 Guidance



**HEAD START**



## 2021-2022 COVID-19 Program Information Guidance

### Head Start Program

#### Early Education Services

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the City of San Antonio Department of Human Services Head Start Program will follow the recommendations below during the 2021-2022 school year. The program is expected to make every effort to complete requirements within the established timeframes and document all efforts according to the ChildPlus Data Entry Guide.

- **Learning Options** – The City of San Antonio Head Start Program will resume in-person learning for the 2021-2022 school year. Remote learning may be available to a limited number of families. A determination on the best learning option for a family will be made on a case-by-case basis. All children will attend in-person learning by January 2022.

A campus may temporarily provide remote learning for a short period of time during unexpected interruptions that may prevent a child from attending in-person learning, such as inclement weather, health-related reasons, quarantine related to COVID-19, or limited access to utility services, such as electricity or water. Both remote and in-person instruction must align with the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework and the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines. The program will follow guidance provided by the City of San Antonio Metro Health Department (Metro Health), Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Texas Education Agency (TEA), and Edgewood and San Antonio ISD regarding the availability of remote learning.

- **Home Visits** – The City of San Antonio Head Start Program requires teachers to complete two home visits for each child enrolled in the program according to the *City of the San Antonio Benchmark Due Date Guide*. During the 2021-2022 school year, teachers may complete a home visit in person at the family's home or at a neutral location requested by the parent/guardian. It is acceptable to complete the home visit by phone or virtual meeting only if requested by the parent. If a home visit is completed by phone or virtual meeting, the teacher is required to review information on the Home Visit form and include *Completed by Phone/Virtual Meeting* on the document. Teachers should follow the *City of the San Antonio Benchmark Due Date Guide*, *ChildPlus File Scan Order and Process Guide*, and applicable *ChildPlus Data Entry Guide* to document completion or efforts to meet this requirement.
- **Parent/Teacher Conferences** – The City of San Antonio Head Start Program requires teachers to complete two parent/teacher conferences for each child enrolled in the program according to the *City of the San Antonio Benchmark Due Date Guide*. During the 2021-2022 school year, teachers may complete a parent/teacher conference by phone or virtual meeting to accommodate the needs of the parent/guardian. If a parent/teacher conference is completed by phone or virtual meeting, the teacher is required to review information on the Parent/Teacher Conference form and include *Completed by Phone/Virtual Meeting* on the document. Teachers should follow the *City of the San Antonio Benchmark Due Date Guide*, *ChildPlus File Scan Order and Process Guide*, and applicable *ChildPlus Data Entry Guide* to document completion or efforts to meet this requirement.

- **Multi- Disciplinary Staffing (MDS/URS)** – The City of San Antonio Head Start Program requires the Education Service Providers to complete two MDS/URS meetings for each child enrolled in the program according to the *City of the San Antonio Benchmark Due Date Guide*. The MDS/URS meeting may be conducted by phone or virtual meeting. Every effort should be made to include administrative staff, teachers, and the Family Support Worker in the meeting. If the MDS/URS meeting is completed by phone or virtual meeting, a designated staff member must include the names of those in attendance and follow the *City of the San Antonio Benchmark Due Date Guide*, *ChildPlus File Scan Order and Process Guide*, and applicable *ChildPlus Data Entry Guide* to document completion.
- **Behavioral and Developmental Screenings** – The City of San Antonio Head Start Program uses the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3) as the developmental screening and Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social and Emotional, Second Edition (ASQ: SE-2) as the behavioral screening. Teachers should complete the ASQ-3 and ASQ:SE-2 in collaboration with each child’s parent/guardian on or before the 45th calendar day after the child first attends the program or for any child that did not receive a developmental or behavioral screening the previous school year. Teachers should follow the *City of the San Antonio Benchmark Due Date Guide*, *ChildPlus File Scan Order and Process Guide*, and applicable *ChildPlus Data Entry Guide* to document completion or efforts to meet this requirement.
- **Child Assessment** – The CIRCLE Progress Monitoring System has been selected as the formal assessment tool for the 2021-2022 school year. The assessment will be administered three times during the school year, Beginning-of-the-Year (BOY), Middle-of-the-Year (MOY), and End-of-the-Year (EOY) for children participating in remote and in-person instruction. The City of San Antonio Head Start Program will follow guidance from TEA and the Edgewood and San Antonio ISD Testing & Evaluation Department regarding assessment windows and administration. Additionally, the City of San Antonio Head Start Program will analyze and aggregate available assessment data three times during the school year according to the Benchmark Due Date Guide.
- **CLASS** – The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) is a teacher-child observation instrument that assesses the quality of teacher-child interactions in center-based classrooms that support children's learning and development in three domains: Emotional Support; Classroom Organization; and Instructional Support. The City of San Antonio Head Start Program conducts CLASS observations annually during the Spring Semester. CLASS Observations are scheduled to take place in Spring 2022. The City of San Antonio Head Start Program will follow guidance from Metro Health, TEA, and Edgewood and San Antonio ISD regarding campus visitation. The CLASS Observation Team will continue to meet through the school year and should complete the re-certification process to ensure their certification does not expire.
- **Tooth Brushing** – City of San Antonio Head Start Program will follow guidance from the Office of Head Start, Edgewood and San Antonio ISD Health Services Departments and the City of San Antonio Metro Health Department regarding tooth brushing. Education Service Providers may suspend tooth brushing until January 2022. Education Service Providers should continue to discuss and model proper tooth brushing techniques and share resources on tooth brushing and supplies with families. In addition, staff should encourage parents/guardians to assist their child in brushing their teeth and ensuring they use fluoride toothpaste before the start of the school day, whether participating in remote or in-person instruction, and before bedtime.
- **Family Style Meals** – The City of San Antonio Head Start Program will follow guidance provided by Metro Health, Texas Childcare Licensing, and Edgewood and San Antonio ISD regarding meal service. Children and teachers

should eat together and engage in conversation and learning during mealtime. Children may serve themselves during mealtime, as appropriate. Staff and children should wash their hands prior to and immediately after eating.

- **Toileting & Diapering** – A child cannot be denied enrollment, removed from the program, or forced to enroll in the remote learning option based on toileting needs or the use of diapers and/or pull-ups. The Education Service Providers will provide guidance related to toileting and diapering, including assisting a child when toileting needs occur, sanitation and hygiene practices, and provision of extra clothing, diapers, and wipes.
- **Rest Time** – The City of San Antonio Head Start Program will follow guidance from Metro Health, Texas Childcare Licensing, and Edgewood and San Antonio ISD regarding rest time. Children will be given the opportunity to rest or take a nap every day. Cloth face coverings are not recommended for children during rest time. Each child's mat should be spaced out as much as possible, at least 3 feet apart, placing children head to toe in order to further reduce the potential transmission of germs. Each child's bedding should be kept separate from other children's bedding. Bedding that touches a child's skin should be cleaned weekly or before use by another child.
- **Disability Requirement** – The Office of Head Start requires that 10% of enrollment spots are occupied by children with a disability. The City of San Antonio recognizes the many barriers related to enrollment caused by COVID-19. The City of San Antonio Head Start Program will determine the percentage of children with a disability by using the number of children with a current and valid Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and funded enrollment.
- **Classroom Volunteers** – The City of San Antonio Head Start Program will follow guidance from Metro Health, TEA, and Edgewood and San Antonio ISD regarding classroom volunteers. Education Service Providers should offer parents/guardians and community members the opportunity to volunteer while ensuring the health and safety of children, staff, and families.
- **Student Observation & Informal Assessment** – The City of San Antonio Head Start Program requires teachers to implement a system to collect and document ongoing informal assessment to evaluate a child's progress and inform instruction. For children attending remote instruction, teachers should continue, to the best extent possible, to collect information that helps them understand each child's status and progress. Parents/guardians may provide samples or photographs of their child's work and share their observations of what children knowledge, skills, and abilities.
- **Campus and Classroom Closures** – The City of San Antonio Head Start Program will follow guidance from Metro Health, CDC, TEA, and Edgewood and San Antonio ISD regarding campus and classroom closures if a child or staff member tests positive for COVID-19 or is exposed to COVID-19.
- **Exclusion & Readmittance** – The City of San Antonio Head Start Program will follow guidance from Metro Health, TEA, and Edgewood and San Antonio ISD regarding exclusion and readmittance if a child is exposed to COVID-19, exhibit symptoms, or tests positive for COVID-19.
- **Teacher/Student Ratio** – The City of San Antonio Head Start Program will follow guidance from Metro Health, TEA, and Edgewood and San Antonio ISD regarding physical distancing recommendations and class size. Two qualified staff are required in the classroom to ensure high quality and safe learning environments. One teacher or staff member may accompany a small group of children away from the group for a brief period of time, not to exceed a ratio of 1:10, to accommodate for program needs. Education Service Providers should communicate

with the City of San Antonio any concerns related staff shortages that may affect teacher/student ratio.

- **Masks & Face Coverings** – The City of San Antonio Head Start Program will follow guidance from Metro Health, TEA, and Edgewood and San Antonio ISD regarding face coverings for children and adults. Masks, face coverings, and face shields are encouraged.

**Continued Guidance** – All guidance provided in this document is subject to change upon direction from the Office of Head Start (OHS) or recommendations made by the CDC, State of Texas, and/or San Antonio Metro Health. This guidance supersedes current DHS Head Start established Procedures during the COVID-19 pandemic.



## 2021-2022 COVID-19 Program Information Guidance

### Head Start Program

#### Health and Safety Services

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the City of San Antonio Department of Human Services Head Start Program will follow the recommendations below during the 2021-2022 school year. The program is expected to make every effort to complete requirements within the established timeframes and document all efforts according to the ChildPlus Data Entry Guide.

- **90 Day Physical/Well Child and Dental Exam** – Head Start staff must support parents/guardians to ensure their child is up-to-date on preventative annual physical/well-child visits for the 2021-2022 school year. Family Support Workers (FSW) should make every effort to obtain a copy of the child’s most recent physical/well-child exam within 90 calendar days of the child’s enrollment for the 2021-2022 school year. The annual physical/well-child exam should be valid for one day during the 90-day period. If a parent/guardian is not able to make an appointment due to COVID-19, the FSW should document this information in the *Routine Contact* event in the Health Tab in ChildPlus. The FSW should continue to follow up with the parent/guardian monthly. FSWs and the Education Service Providers should follow the *City of the San Antonio Benchmark Due Date Guide*, *ChildPlus File Scan Order and Process Guide*, and applicable *ChildPlus Data Entry Guide* to document completion or efforts to meet this requirement.
- **45 Day Hearing and Vision Screenings** – Completing the hearing and vision screenings is vitally important to ensuring a child’s success in school. The hearing and vision screening may be completed in person on campus or obtained from the child’s most recent well-child/physical exam. Any screenings obtained, must be valid for one day during the 45-day period. The City of San Antonio will follow guidance from the Education Service Providers’ Health Services Department and the Texas Education Agency. Education Service Providers and FSWs should follow the *City of the San Antonio Benchmark Due Date Guide*, *ChildPlus File Scan Order and Process Guide*, and applicable *ChildPlus Data Entry Guide* to document completion or efforts to meet this requirement.
- **30 Day Medical and Dental Home** – The City of San Antonio Head Start Program is required to determine whether a child has ongoing sources of continuous, accessible health care and health insurance coverage within 30 days of the child’s enrollment for the 2021-2022 school year. Family Support Workers should continue to assist families in accessing medical and dental services and health insurance coverage. FSWs should follow the *City of the San Antonio Benchmark Due Date Guide*, *ChildPlus File Scan Order and Process Guide*, and applicable *ChildPlus Data Entry Guide* to document completion or efforts to meet this requirement.
- **Telehealth Services** – The City of San Antonio Head Start Program will accept screenings and annual well-child/physical exam completed by a healthcare provider through telehealth services. During the COVID-19

Pandemic, children should still receive the recommended immunizations and continue to schedule an annual physical/well-child visit with their medical and dental homes.

- **Lead Testing Clinics** – The City of San Antonio Head Start Program will follow guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the City of San Antonio Metro Health Department, the University of the Incarnate Word, and applicable guidance from the Texas Education Agency and school districts regarding on-campus Lead Testing Clinics.
- **Metro Health Dental Clinics** – The City of San Antonio Head Start Program will follow guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the City of San Antonio Metro Health Department, and applicable guidance from the Texas Education Agency and school districts regarding on site Dental Clinics. Education Service Providers should continue to promote effective oral health hygiene in the classroom.
- **Tooth Brushing** – City of San Antonio Head Start Program will follow guidance from the Office of Head Start, Edgewood and San Antonio ISD Health Services Departments and the City of San Antonio Metro Health Department regarding tooth brushing. Education Service Providers may suspend tooth brushing until January 2022. Education Service Providers should continue to discuss and model proper tooth brushing techniques and share resources on tooth brushing and supplies with families. In addition, staff should encourage parents/guardians to assist their child in brushing their teeth and ensuring they use fluoride toothpaste before the start of the school day, whether participating in remote or in-person instruction, and before bedtime.
- **Nutrition Services** – The City of San Antonio Head Start Program will provide meals and snacks to children participating in in-person instruction. Education Service Providers will follow guidance from the Nutrition Services Department and Childcare Licensing regarding meal service. During in-person instruction, children and teachers should continue to eat together and engage in conversation and learning during mealtime. Staff and children should wash their hands prior to and immediately after eating. Children may serve themselves during mealtime, as appropriate. Head Start staff should follow guidance from the Nutrition Services Department regarding requirements for special diets. Staff should follow the *City of the San Antonio Benchmark Due Date Guide, ChildPlus File Scan Order and Process Guide*, and applicable *ChildPlus Data Entry Guide* to document completion or efforts to meet requirements related to nutrition services and special diets.
- **Health Event Follow-up, Tracking, and Data Documentation** – Monthly follow-up is required for any medical, dental, nutrition, or other health related concern or missing ChildPlus event that is identified by the City of San Antonio Head Start Program. Family & Community Services and Wellness Support staff should continue to contact families and provide support regarding health, wellness, dental, and nutrition related services, including health insurance coverage. Staff should encourage families to contact their medical home regarding health concerns and annual well-child/physical exams. The Health Content/T&TA Team will work with the Education Service Provider Health and Nutrition Coordinators and the Family and Community Support Team to identify priorities related to health and nutrition, including physicals/well-child exams, health concerns, special diets, etc.
- **Immunizations** – The City of San Antonio Head Start Program must comply with state immunization requirements, as well as any exemptions from vaccine requirements. Head Start staff will work with parents to help bring their child up to date on immunizations and preventative well-child visits, including the recommended influenza vaccine. Education Service Providers should maintain records of services provided and

those that were suspended or not provided.

- **Wellness Assessment** – Head Start staff will complete the 2021-2022 Wellness Assessment. The Beginning of the Year (BOY) Wellness Assessment will be conducted during the BOY Family Assessment. The End of the Year (EOY) Wellness Assessment will be conducted during the EOY Family Assessment.
- **COVID-19 Health Screening** – The City of San Antonio Head Start Program will follow guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the City of San Antonio Metro Health Department, and applicable guidance from the Texas Education Agency and school district regarding COVID-19 health screenings, including checking an individual’s temperature and sign-in, for staff, children, and visitors to a campus or other buildings and children receiving transportation services.

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## 2021-2022 COVID-19 Program Information Guidance

### Head Start Program

#### Wellness Support Services

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the City of San Antonio Department of Human Services Head Start Program will follow the recommendations below during the 2021-2022 school year. The program is expected to make every effort to complete requirements within the established timeframes and document all efforts according to the ChildPlus Data Entry Guide.

- **Wellness Consultations** – Head Start staff must support parents/guardians and staff to ensure wellness needs are met. When wellness needs are identified, members of the Wellness Team (Family Wellness Specialists and Coordinator of Wellness Services) will provide consultations to address and support needs. During the 2021-2022 school year, consultations will occur by phone or virtual meeting when physical meetings are not feasible. When physical meetings are feasible, staff will follow CDC and COSA COVID-19 guidelines to ensure health and safety. Staff will follow the *City of the San Antonio Benchmark Due Date Guide, ChildPlus File Scan Order and Process Guide*, and applicable *ChildPlus Data Entry Guide* to document efforts related to the provision of consultation services.
- **Permission for Wellness Services** – Obtaining parental/guardian consent for child observations remains necessary to ensure parental involvement in the provision of wellness services. Parents will be given multiple options to complete and return the *Head Start Permission for Wellness Services* form for services including mail in, contact free drop-off, and contact free pick-up. Family Wellness Specialists (FWS) and Family Support Workers (FSW) will provide support to parents in the form of phone, text, emails, virtual meetings and ChildPlus message reminders. Staff will follow the *City of the San Antonio Benchmark Due Date Guide, ChildPlus File Scan Order and Process Guide*, and applicable *ChildPlus Data Entry Guide* to document efforts related to the provision of consultation services.
- **Classroom Observations** – The City of San Antonio Head Start Program is required to provide classroom observations to identify and address wellness concerns. The Wellness Team will follow guidance from Edgewood and San Antonio ISD regarding visitors to campus and/or classroom. In addition, when possible, observations will occur virtually during both remote and in-person instruction and other opportunities to observe children. Staff will follow the *City of the San Antonio Benchmark Due Date Guide, ChildPlus File Scan Order and Process Guide*, and applicable *ChildPlus Data Entry Guide* to document efforts related to the provision of consultation services.

- **Wellness Referrals** – The City of San Antonio Head Start Program is required to ensure that children and families receive information and referrals related to family wellness needs. FWS will continue to provide targeted referrals to parents/guardians, assist parents/guardians to make self-referrals, facilitate referrals for the family at the family’s request. Prior to sharing information with a community provider of services, a signed release form must be completed. The FWS may obtain signatures through mail in, contact free drop-off, and contact free pick-up. Staff will follow the *City of the San Antonio Benchmark Due Date Guide*, *ChildPlus File Scan Order and Process Guide*, and applicable *ChildPlus Data Entry Guide* to document efforts related to the provision of consultation services.
- **Parent Education** – The City of San Antonio Head Start Program is required to provide parents/guardians with opportunities to increase their knowledge of parenting skills and issues related to social and emotional development and functioning. Ready Rosie will remain the foundational parenting education curriculum. Mental Wellness Team members will also implement the Triple P tiered parenting curriculum using virtual platforms, and when feasible, in person, while following CDC and COSA COVID-19 guidelines. Staff will follow the *City of the San Antonio Benchmark Due Date Guide*, *ChildPlus File Scan Order and Process Guide*, and applicable *ChildPlus Data Entry Guide* to document efforts related to the provision of consultation services.

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## 2021-2022 COVID-19 Program Information Guidance

### Head Start Program

#### Family and Community Support Services

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the City of San Antonio Department of Human Services Head Start Program will follow the recommendations below during the 2021-2022 school year. The program is expected to make every effort to complete requirements within the established timeframes and document all efforts according to the ChildPlus Data Entry Guide.

- **Family Engagement Approach** – To minimize the gathering of large groups of people and to stay compliant with recommendations made by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the State of Texas and City of San Antonio Metropolitan Health District, and Edgewood and San Antonio ISD face-to-face engagement opportunities will be limited. The Head Start program continues to recognize parents/guardians as their children’s primary teachers and nurtures and will continue to implement intentional strategies to engage parents/guardians in their children’s learning and development and support parent-child relationships, including specific strategies for father engagement. Family Support Workers (FSWs) will host meetings and engagement opportunities virtually until face-to-face opportunities can be reintroduced safely.
- **Parent Communication** – The Head Start program develops relationships with parents/guardians and structures services to encourage trust and respectful communication. Ongoing two-way communication between staff and parents/guardian is used to create welcoming program environments that incorporate the unique cultural, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds of families in the program and community.

All Head Start staff will ensure continuous communication between families and themselves. Family engagement services will be conducted in the family’s preferred language or through an interpreter, to the extent, possible, to ensure families have the opportunity to share personal information in an environment in which they feel safe.

FSWs will communicate with parents through monthly check-ins regardless if they are receiving in-person learning or remote learning. Check-ins may occur face to face, at the schools during drop off or pick up time, through telephone, text, mail, or email dependent upon the FSWs onsite schedule and the parent’s preferred method of communication. Communication will be documented in ChildPlus.

- **School Communication** – The Head Start program recognizes the importance of ongoing communication between the Grantee and Education Service Provider staff. Ongoing communication between the Grantee and Education Service Provider helps to develop a sense of knowledge, trust and respect that allows all staff to work easily together to ensure that each child and family are receiving the full amount of benefits that Head Start has to offer.
- **Parent Connection Committee Meetings and Parent Engagement Activities** –In order to minimize the gathering of large groups of people and to stay compliant with recommendations made by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the State of Texas and City of San Antonio Metropolitan Health District, face-to-face engagement opportunities will be limited and may be conducted virtually.

Head Start Grantee will work with the Education Services Provider to ensure the establishment of a Parent Connection Committee (PCC) comprised exclusively of parents/guardians of currently enrolled children at each school as early in the program year as possible.

Parent Connection Committee (PCC) Meetings and on-site family activities that will be conducted virtually until face-to-face opportunities can be reintroduced safely.

- **Parent Activities to Promote Child Learning and Development** – The Head Start Grantee and Education Services Provider share responsibility with parents/guardians for their child’s early learning and development. FSWs support families by providing engagement strategies that are designed to foster parental confidence and skills in promoting children’s learning and development.

All families enrolled in the program receive monthly School Readiness Home Learning Activities regardless if they are receiving in-person instruction or virtual learning. Activities provided are taken from Ready Rosie, Creative Curriculum and Conscious Discipline and are intended to support the parent child bond and enhance their learning experiences.

The Head Start Program also offers opportunities for parents/guardians to participate in a research-based parenting curriculum that builds on parent/guardian’s knowledge and offers them the opportunity to practice parenting skills to promote children’s learning and development. The program’s chosen parent curriculum remains Ready Rosie. Parents will continue to receive weekly videos via text message or email. Face to face workshops are suspended until they can be reintroduced safely. Staff will attempt to provide workshops virtually.

- **Family Meeting/Home Visit** – When a child is accepted into the Head Start program, staff meets with the family to complete a Family Meeting/Home Visit. The Family Meeting/Home Visit is an integral part of the enrollment process and allows an opportunity for staff to learn more about the family and the family to learn more about the Head Start Program.

The Head Start Program requires FSWs to complete a Family Meeting/Home Visits for each child enrolled in the program according to the *City of the San Antonio Benchmark Due Date Guide*. During the 2021-2022 school year, FSWs may complete a home visit in person at the family’s home or at a neutral location requested by the parent/guardian. It is acceptable to complete the home visit by

phone or virtual meeting only if requested by the parent. If a signature is not obtained, the FSW will seek further guidance from their supervisor and/or Health Content/T&TA Team. The forms listed below are collected during the Family Meeting/Home Visit and require a signature: re:

- Release of Authorization for Information
- University of the Incarnate Word Lead Consent
- San Antonio Metropolitan Health District Dental Consent
- Permission for Services (if initial application is taken over the phone)
- Statement of Income (if initial application is taken over the phone)

If a home visit is completed by phone or virtual meeting, the FSW is required to review information on the Home Visit form. For all other forms/modules completed during the Family Meeting/Home Visit that do require a parent signature, including the Family Meeting/Home Visit Form, the following statement will be added to the signature block:

“Phone”

FSWs should follow the *City of the San Antonio Benchmark Due Date Guide*, *ChildPlus File Scan Order and Process Guide*, and applicable *ChildPlus Data Entry Guide* to document completion or efforts to meet this requirement. Staff will follow all safety guidelines outlined by the CDC, the State of Texas and City of San Antonio Metropolitan Health District recommendations concerning COVID-19.

- **Family Partnership Services** – The Head Start Program collaborates with families in a family partnership process that identifies needs, interests, strengths, goals, services and resources that support family well-being, including family safety, health, and economic stability. This process must take into consideration each family’s readiness and willingness to participate in the process and must be engaged in jointly with parents.
- **Beginning of Year (BOY) Assessments** – The Head Start Program requires FSW to complete a BOY Assessment for each child enrolled in the program according to the *City of the San Antonio Benchmark Due Date Guide*. During the 2021-2022 school year, FSWs may complete a home visit in person at the family’s home or at a neutral location requested by the parent/guardian. It is acceptable to complete by phone or virtual meeting only if requested by the parent. FSWs should follow the *City of the San Antonio Benchmark Due Date Guide*, *ChildPlus File Scan Order and Process Guide*, and applicable *ChildPlus Data Entry Guide* to document completion or efforts to meet this requirement.
- **End of Year (EOY) Assessments** – The Head Start Program requires FSW to complete a EOY Assessment for each child enrolled in the program according to the *City of the San Antonio Benchmark Due Date Guide*. During the 2021-2022 school year, FSWs may complete a home visit in person at the family’s home or at a neutral location requested by the parent/guardian. It is acceptable to complete by phone or virtual meeting only if requested by the parent.

FSWs should follow the *City of the San Antonio Benchmark Due Date Guide*, *ChildPlus File Scan Order and Process Guide*, and applicable *ChildPlus Data Entry Guide* to document completion or efforts to meet this requirement.

- **Goals** – FSWs will continue to work with each family to offer and develop an individualized goal that includes strategies for success, time frame, and community resources available. FSWs may complete a home visit in person at the family’s home or at a neutral location requested by the parent/guardian. It is acceptable to complete by phone or virtual meeting only if requested by the parent. If the Goal form is to be completed by phone or virtual meeting and the following statement will be added to the signature block:

*“Phone”*

All goals must be completed in accordance with the program’s Data Entry and Benchmark Due Date Guide and scanned, attached and saved into ChildPlus.

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## 2021-2022 COVID-19 Program Information Guidance

### Head Start Program

#### Program Design and Management

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the City of San Antonio Department of Human Services Head Start Program will follow the recommendations below during the 2021-2022 school year. The program is expected to make every effort to complete requirements within the established timeframes and document all efforts according to the ChildPlus Data Entry Guide.

- **Governance** – The City of San Antonio Head Start Program will follow orders from the Governor of Texas and return to pre-pandemic Open Meeting Act rules and regulations. A quorum must be present and in person for Head Start Policy Council meetings. Parent Committee Meetings may be conducted virtually and should follow the guidance from the Edgewood and San Antonio ISD.

The Office of Head Start recognizes digital signatures and electronic records as the official paper files. The City of San Antonio will continue to provide information, reports, and training to the governing bodies, Policy Council and the Community Action Advisory Board. Governing bodies play an important role in our program’s decision-making processes and play an active role informing budgetary and other decisions impacting all aspects of program design and service delivery to best meet the needs of enrolled children and families. The City of San Antonio Head Start Program will continue to update the governing bodies on changes and challenges of the program.

- **Professional Development** – The Office of Head Start requires staff to receive 15 hours of professional development. The City of San Antonio Head Start Program will continue to provide ongoing training and professional development to support staff in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities.
- **Coaching** – The City of San Antonio Head Start Program will implement a research-based coordinated coaching program for staff, including teachers leading remote and in-person instruction. Education Service Providers should develop and implement a plan to continue coaching while limiting exposure of other adults to children and teaching staff. To reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19, remote or virtual coaching for individuals or groups is acceptable
- **Criminal Background Checks** –The safety of children is of the highest priority to the City of San Antonio Head Start Program. Per guidance from the Office of Head Start, the program will comply with current requirements in the Head Start Act, Section 648A(g). This states that grantees must complete a criminal record check prior to hiring of new staff member. Despite the closures of many state and local fingerprinting offices, a name-based check will be completed using an internet-based background check service. The comprehensive background check requirements found in the Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS), which include fingerprinting, are scheduled to go into effect Sept. 30, 2021.

- **COVID-19 Vaccine Requirements** – The City of San Antonio will comply with vaccine requirements from the Office of Head Start and Edgewood and San Antonio ISD. To support the health and safety of American children and families, the federal government announced a COVID-19 vaccine requirement for all Head Start employees. This will help schools and early childhood centers safely remain open and give comfort to the many parents that rely on them every day to keep their children safe. The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) will initiate rulemaking to implement this policy for Head Start and Early Head Start programs. Information and opportunities to obtain the COVID-19 vaccine will be provided to staff.
- **CDA Credential Requirements** – The Office of Head Start requires teaching assistants to have, at a minimum, a Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential within two years of hire. Due to restricted or closed campuses related to COVID-19, staff may be unable to meet the requirements to apply for a CDA Credential. Education Service Providers should maintain a list of staff working towards meeting this requirement.
- **Staff Shortages/Vacancies** – The City of San Antonio recognizes the impact of COVID-19 on staff shortages. Education Service Providers should communicate with the City of San Antonio any concerns related staff shortages that may affect teacher/student ratio or the program design.

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## 2021-2022 COVID-19 Program Information Guidance

### Head Start Program

#### Program Monitoring

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the City of San Antonio Department of Human Services Head Start Program will follow the recommendations below during the 2021-2022 school year. The program is expected to make every effort to complete requirements within the established timeframes and document all efforts according to the ChildPlus Data Entry Guide.

- During the COVID-19 Pandemic, the City of San Antonio Department of Human Services Head Start Program will utilize the 2021-2022 COVID-19 Program Information Guidance documents for each service area as guidance for monitoring projects.
- A Program Monitoring calendar for SY 2021-2022 has been developed to identify each service area monitoring project and timeframe. The Program Monitoring calendar is subject to change due to issues related to COVID-19.
- A Monitoring checklist for each service area will be used in the ChildPlus data system to complete monitoring projects. Monitoring checklists will be updated to align with COVID-19 2021-2022 Program Information Guidance.
- Monitoring projects will consist of child file review and an on-site review when deemed necessary.
- Ongoing Monitoring may consist of service area interviews by phone, virtual meetings, or in-person when deemed necessary.
- When on site, the Monitor will request to review documents in a separate room to promote social distancing and safety, dependent on the COVID-19 climate at the time of monitoring.
- The Education Service Providers are responsible for maintaining child assessment data entry, collecting ASQ's from parents and data entry, and ensuring classroom daily checklist are completed.
- Education Service Providers may be asked to email classroom lesson plans, schedules, classroom checklists, sign-in logs and/or any other additional documentation needed to complete a monitoring review.
- Head Start and Services Area Managers will continue to respond to any noted findings during ongoing monitoring through the ChildPlus Data system.

**Continued Guidance** – All guidance provided in this document is subject to change upon direction from the Office of Head Start (OHS) or recommendations made by the CDC, State of Texas, and/or San Antonio Metro Health. This guidance supersedes current DHS Head Start established Procedures during the COVID-19 pandemic.

# ***EARLY HEAD START***



## 2021-2022 COVID-19 Program Information Guidance

### Head Start Program

#### Program Design and Management

In the event that COVID-19 or any other pandemic, natural disaster or unforeseen events should have an impact on providing in person services the program will make needed adjustment to ensure the health and safety of all children, families and staff. The City of San Antonio Department of Human Services (DHS) Early Head Start (EHS) Program will follow the recommendations below should there be an impact on in person services resulting in virtual services or children being quarantined. The program is expected to make every effort to complete requirements within the established timeframes and document all efforts according to the program's Data Entry and Benchmark Due Date Guide.

- **Governance** – The City of San Antonio Head Start Program will follow orders from the Governor of Texas and return to pre-pandemic Open Meeting Act rules and regulations. A quorum must be present and in person for Head Start Policy Council meetings. Parent Committee Meetings may be conducted virtually and should follow the guidance from the Edgewood and San Antonio ISD.

The Office of Head Start recognizes digital signatures and electronic records as the official paper files. The City of San Antonio will continue to provide information, reports, and training to the governing bodies, Policy Council and the Community Action Advisory Board. Governing bodies play an important role in our program's decision-making processes and play an active role informing budgetary and other decisions impacting all aspects of program design and service delivery to best meet the needs of enrolled children and families. The City of San Antonio Head Start Program will continue to update the governing bodies on changes and challenges of the program.

- **Professional Development** – The Office of Head Start requires staff to receive 15 hours of professional development. The City of San Antonio Head Start Program will continue to provide ongoing training and professional development to support staff in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities.
- **Coaching** – The City of San Antonio Head Start Program will implement a research-based coordinated coaching program for staff, including teachers leading remote and in-person instruction. Early Education Service Providers should develop and implement a plan to continue coaching while limiting exposure of other adults to children and teaching staff. To reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19, remote or virtual coaching for individuals or groups is recommended.

- **Criminal Background Checks** – The safety of children is of the highest priority to the City of San Antonio Head Start Program. Per guidance from the Office of Head Start, the program will comply with current requirements in the Head Start Act, Section 648A(g). This states that grantees must complete a criminal record check prior to hiring of new staff member. Despite the closures of many state and local fingerprinting offices, a name-based check will be completed using an internet-based background check service. The comprehensive background check requirements found in the Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS), which include fingerprinting, are scheduled to go into effect Sept. 30, 2021. Early Education Service Providers continue to work through the established Texas Department of Human Services, Child Care Regulation, Criminal Background Check system for all EHS staff.
- **Vaccine Requirements** – The City of San Antonio will comply with vaccine requirements from the Office of Head Start. To support the health and safety of American children and families, the federal government announced a COVID-19 vaccine requirement for all Head Start employees. This will help schools and early childhood centers safely remain open and give comfort to the many parents that rely on them every day to keep their children safe. The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) will initiate rulemaking to implement this policy for Head Start and Early Head Start programs. Information and opportunities to obtain the COVID-19 vaccine will be provided to staff.
- **CDA Credential Requirements** – The Office of Head Start requires EHS teachers to have at a minimum, a Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential at the point of hire. Due to restricted or closed sites and/or the lack of qualified applicants due to COVID-19 or any other pandemic, natural disaster or unforeseen events, staff may be hired and/or unable to meet the requirements to apply for a CDA Credential. Education Service Providers should follow the DHS EHS hiring procedure and work to enroll any new staff member in a virtual CDA class within three months of hire and maintain a list of staff working towards meeting this requirement.
- **Staff Shortages/Vacancies** – The City of San Antonio recognizes the impact of COVID-19 on staff shortages. Education Service Providers should communicate with the City of San Antonio any concerns related staff shortages that may affect teacher/student ratio or the program design.

**Continued Guidance** – All guidance provided in this document is subject to change upon direction from the Office of Head Start (OHS) or recommendations made by the CDC, State of Texas, and/or San Antonio Metro Health. This guidance supersedes current DHS Head Start established Procedures during the COVID-19 pandemic.



## **2021-2022 COVID-19 Program Information Guidance**

### **Early Head Start Program**

### **Early Education Services**

**During the 2021-2022 program year, what are the Head Start requirements related to education, disabilities and wellness services to ensure the health and safety of children, families, and staff during the COVID-19 Pandemic.**

In the event that COVID-19 or any other pandemic, natural disaster or unforeseen events should have an impact on providing in person services that program will make needed adjustment to ensure the health and safety of all children, families and staff. The City of San Antonio Department of Human Services Early Head Start (EHS) Program will follow the recommendations below should there be an impact on in person services resulting in virtual services or children being quarantined. The program is expected to make every effort to complete requirements within the established timeframes and document all efforts according to the program's Data Entry and Benchmark Due Date Guide.

#### **Learning Options**

The City of San Antonio Early Head Start Program will resume in person learning for the 2021-2022 program year. Remote learning may be available to a limited number of families. A determination on the best learning option for a family will be made on a case-by-case basis. All children will attend in-person learning by January 2022.

#### **Home Visits**

The City of San Antonio Early Head Start Program requires teachers to complete two home visits for each child enrolled in the program according to the Benchmark Due Date Guide.

During the 2021-2022 program year, teachers may complete a home visit in-person at the family's home. If a parent declines an in-person home visit, teachers may complete home visits by phone or virtual meeting, or a neutral location requested by the parent/guardian. If a home visit is completed by phone or virtual meeting, the teacher is required to review information on the Home Visit Form and include Completed by *Phone/Virtual Meeting* on the document.

If the parent requests an in-person home visit, teachers must collaborate with their Center Director/Site Coordinator to ensure all health and safety guidelines are followed including face mask and physical distancing requirements.

All Home Visits must be completed by the established due date on the City of San Antonio Benchmark Due Date Guide and entered in ChildPlus according to the ChildPlus Due Date Data Entry Guide.

#### **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

The City of San Antonio Early Head Start Program requires teachers to complete two parent/teacher conferences for each child enrolled in the program according to the Benchmark Due Date guide. During the 2021-2022 program year, teacher may complete a parent/teacher conference by phone or virtual meeting to accommodate the needs of the parent/guardian. If a Parent/Teacher Conference is completed by phone or virtual meeting, the teacher is required to review information on the Home Visit Form and include Completed by *Phone/Virtual Meeting* on the document.

If the parent requests an in-person parent conference, teachers must collaborate with their Center Director/Site Coordinator to ensure all health and safety guidelines are followed including face mask and physical distancing requirements.

All parent conferences must be completed by the established due date on the City of San Antonio Benchmark Due Date Guide and entered in ChildPlus according to the ChildPlus Due Date Data Entry Guide.

### **Developmental and Behavioral Screenings**

The City of San Antonio Early Head Start Program uses the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3) as the developmental screening and Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social and Emotional, Second Edition (ASQ: SE-2) as the behavioral screening. Teachers should complete the ASQ-3 and ASQ:SE-2 in collaboration with each child's parent/guardian on or before the 45th calendar day after the child first attends the program or for any child that did not receive a developmental or behavioral screening the previous program year.

The ASQ: 3 and the ASQ:SE-2 can be completed by providing the questionnaire to the parent through telephone/virtual interview with the parent.

ASQ-3 and the ASQ: SE-2 questionnaires must be entered in ChildPlus according to the ChildPlus Data Entry Guide. Staff must document completion or efforts to meet this requirement in Child Plus.

Teachers must continue to follow up with parents to provide support, and address any needs or concerns related to development and/or behavior. If the parents express concerns with their child's development and/or behavior, a referral must be offered to the parent.

### **Multi-Disciplinary Staffing (MDS)**

The City of San Antonio Early Head Start Program requires Teacher, Center Directors/Administrators and Family Support Workers to participate in two MDS meetings for each child enrolled in the program.

The Multi-Disciplinary Staffing can be conducted through virtual, phone or in-person meetings for the 2021-2022 program year. If the MDS is completed through in-person meeting, staff must ensure all health and safety guidelines are followed including face mask and physical distancing requirements.

If the MDS is completed through virtual or phone meetings, indicate the event was completed by virtual/phone meeting on the MDS Signature Form and include the names of those in attendance.

All MDS must be completed by the established due date on the City of San Antonio Benchmark Due Date Guide and entered in ChildPlus according to the ChildPlus Due Date Data Entry Guide.

The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) is a teacher-child observation instrument that assesses the quality of teacher-child interactions in center-based classrooms.

The 2022 Spring CLASS Observation Window is projected to take place February 21, 2022, through April 15, 2022. The safety of the children, staff and observers will be considered when finalizing the CLASS Plan and completing observations. The CLASS Observation Team should complete the re-certification process to ensure their certification does not expire.

### **Family Style Meals**

The City of San Antonio Early Head Start Program will follow guidance provided by Metro Health and Childcare Licensing regarding meal service.

Children and teachers should continue to eat together and engage in conversation and learning during mealtime. Children should be served individual trays and should not serve themselves. Children and teachers must ensure that all health and safety guidelines are being followed including physical distancing to the best extent possible.

### **Fidelity Observations**

BOY & EOY Fidelity Observations must be completed for the 2021-2022 program year by the established due date on the City of San Antonio Benchmark Due Date Guide. Peer/Instructional Coaches will review data from fidelity observations and set goals to support teachers in their understanding of Creative Curriculum and implementing curriculum with fidelity.

### **Individual Professional Development Plans (IPDP)**

Individual Professional Development Plans must be completed according to the City of San Antonio Benchmark Due Date Guide. Center Director/Site Coordinator should review the IPDP with each employee to guide professional development.

A copy of the completed IPDP must be provided to the Senior Management Analyst (SMA) for Education Services for all teachers who do not have a current CDA.

### **Child Files**

Teachers must ensure that child files are kept for children who participate in center-based and remote services. The child files must be kept up to date with current information including parent/guardian input, documentation from home visits and parent teacher conferences, developmental and behavioral screeners, formal assessment summary information (BOY, MOY, and EOY), IFSP/IEP (if applicable), transition activities (if applicable), and work samples.

### **Individualization**

Teachers must continue to provide individualized activities to meet each child's unique characteristics, strengths and needs, taking into consideration the cultural and linguistic background, pattern of development and learning for children participate in center-based and remote services.

Individualized caregiving and/or activities should be provided to children using information from IFSP/IEP (if applicable), parent/guardian input, educational assessments, behavioral and developmental screeners, teacher observations and medical/dental evaluations and treatments.

Teachers must document individualized caregiving, and/or activities for all children on the Teaching Strategies Child Planning Form.

### **Educational Assessments**

The Early Head Start Program uses the Early Learning Accomplishment Profile (E-LAP) and the Learning Accomplishment Profile 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition (LAP-3) as the formal educational assessments. E-LAP/LAP-3 will be completed for all children enrolled in the Early Head Start Program. If a child is enrolled in remote services, additional guidance will be provided to ensure E-LAP and LAP-3 are completed with fidelity for all children.

Teachers must review assessment data and follow up with parents to discuss any needs or concerns related to development.

### **Disability Requirement**

The Office of Head Start requires that 10% of enrollment slots are occupied by children with a disability. The City of San Antonio Early Head Start Program will determine the percentage of children with a disability by using the number of children with an up-to-date Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) and funded enrollment.

### **Center/Classroom Closures**

The City of San Antonio Early Head Start Program will follow guidance from Metro Health, CDC and Texas Child Care Regulation regarding center closures if a child or staff member is exposed or test positive for COVID-19.

### **Exclusion & Readmittance**

The City of San Antonio Early Head Start Program will follow guidance from Metro Health and Texas Child Care Regulation regarding exclusion and readmittance if a child is exposed to COVID-19, exhibit symptoms or tests positive for COVID-19.

### **Children who receive Intervention Services**

Currently, some intervention services are being provided through telehealth services. If a parent reports that their child is unable to participate in telehealth services due to not having access to technology, center staff must inform the SMA for Education Services.

The SMA for Education Services and Family Support Worker will collaborate with the parent to assist the family in obtaining access to technology.

**Wellness Observations**

The Early Head Start wellness contractor will complete classroom observations for wellness referrals received for children who participate in center-based services. The wellness contractor will follow all health and safety guidelines while at the childcare centers.

**Continued Guidance**

All guidance offered in this document is subject to change upon direction from Office of Head Start (OHS) or recommendations made by the CDC, State of Texas, and/or San Antonio Metro Health. This guidance supersedes current DHS Head Start Procedures during the COVID-19 pandemic.



## 2021-2022 COVID-19 Program Information Guidance

### Early Head Start Program

#### ERSEA

#### **Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, what are the Head Start requirements related to the Early Head Start (EHS) program services for ERSEA?**

In the event that COVID-19 or any other pandemic, natural disaster or unforeseen events should have an impact on providing in person services, the program will make needed adjustment to ensure the health and safety of all children, families and staff. The City of San Antonio Department of Human Services Early Head Start (EHS) Program will follow the recommendations below should there be an impact on in person services. The program is expected to make every effort to complete requirements within the established timeframes and document all efforts according to the program's Data Entry and Benchmark Due Date Guide.

**Eligibility** – 2021-2022 applications will be completed by phone. In place of parent signatures staff will replace with “PHONE” in ChildPlus on the ERSEA modules to include: Student Residency Questionnaire, Home Language Survey, and Statement of Income (if applicable; parent signature to be collected upon enrollment). Staff will capture their own original signature. Refer to Phone Applications –COVID 19 Procedures.

**Recruitment** – EHS staff will continue to recruit families through promotion with our Service Providers, Community Agencies, social media, and ESD, a third party digital marketing company.

**Selections** – will be conducted virtually to include at a minimum, , EHS ERSEA Coordinator and EHS Disability Coordinator.

**Selection Exception** – EHS program must give first priority to children experiencing homelessness during the selection process. This priority will remain in effect indefinitely.

#### **Enrollment** –

- To ensure the safety of children, families and staff, EHS will prioritize enrollment for returning children. Full enrollment may not be met at centers that are impacted by COVID-19. The EHS program will continue efforts to reach full enrollment and will continue to enroll new children as capacity and safety allows.
- The established selection criteria will be used to enroll and prioritize children on the waitlist. All programs are encouraged to revisit their selection criteria to ensure it is relevant to the current health crisis.
- Classroom sizes will be reduced to the extent possible to ensure physical distancing is a priority and based on local and state guidance in response to the pandemic. Two teachers in a classroom are still required for the reduced classroom size.

- Parents will be provided the options of In Person and Remote Services. Parents may choose to alternate options with advance notice to program staff to ensure adequate staffing and safety is met for in-person services.
- The program continues to prioritize children with disabilities.
- Service Providers may have adjusted operating hours.

**Attendance –**

- EHS will continue to track and analyze attendance for in-person and remote based services.
- EHS staff will work to reengage families with extended absences.
- Children will remain enrolled in the EHS program until the family has notified program staff the child will not return.

**Continued Guidance –** All guidance offered in this document is subject to change upon direction from Office of Head Start (OHS) or recommendations made by the CDC, State of Texas, and/or San Antonio Metro Health. This guidance supersedes current DHS Head Start Procedures during the COVID-19 pandemic.



## 2021-2022 COVID-19 Program Information Guidance

### Early Head Start Program

#### Family and Community Services

#### **Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, what are the Head Start requirements related to the Early Head Start (EHS) program services for Family and Community Support Services?**

In the event that COVID-19 or any other pandemic, natural disaster or unforeseen events should have an impact on providing in person services the program will make needed adjustment to ensure the health and safety of all children, families and staff. The City of San Antonio Department of Human Services Early Head Start (EHS) Program will follow the recommendations below should there be an impact on in person services resulting in virtual services or children being quarantined. The program is expected to make every effort to complete requirements within the established timeframes and document all efforts according to the program's Data Entry and Benchmark Due Date Guide.

#### **FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES:**

**Family Engagement Approach** – To minimize the gathering of large groups of people and to stay compliant with recommendations made by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the State of Texas and San Antonio Metro Health, in person engagement opportunities will be limited. The EHS program continues to recognize parents/guardians as their children's primary teachers/nurturers and will continue to implement intentional strategies to engage parents/guardians in their children's learning and development, support parent-child relationships and work to include specific strategies for father engagement. Family Support Workers (FSWs) will host meetings and engagement opportunities virtually until in person opportunities can be reintroduced safely.

**Parent Communication** –EHS develops relationships with parents/guardians and structures services to encourage trust and respectful communication. Ongoing two-way communication between staff and parents/guardian is used to create welcoming program environments that incorporate the unique cultural, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds of families in the program and community.

All EHS staff will ensure continuous communication between families and themselves. Family engagement services will be conducted in the family's preferred language or through an interpreter, to the extent, possible, to ensure families have the opportunity to share personal information in an environment in which they feel safe.

In the event that FSWs are working remotely they will communicate with parents through weekly check-ins regardless if they are receiving center based or remote services. Check-ins may be, through telephone or email dependent upon the parent's preferred method of communication. Communication will be documented in ChildPlus .

If an FSW is not working remotely and is able to work onsite they will continue to check in through telephone and email with families' whose children are receiving remote services. Check-ins made with remote families will be documented in ChildPlus. Families' whose children are receiving in person services will be greeted on site during drop off and pick up times. Communication limited to drop off and pick up greetings for in person services does not need to be documented.

If a child is under quarantine the FSW will conduct weekly check-ins with the family. During the initial check-in parents/guardians will be provided a resource packet with educational and health related information to assist them.

**EHS Site Communication** –EHS recognizes the importance of ongoing communication between the Grantee and Provider staff. Ongoing communication between the Grantee and Provider helps to develop a sense of knowledge, trust and respect that allows all staff to work easily together to ensure that each child and family are receiving the full amount of benefits that EHS has to offer.

FSWs and Directors/Site Coordinator will meet weekly either in person, while maintaining social distancing guidelines and safety protocols, or virtually to discuss any issues, concerns or simply to provide updated information.

**Parent Connection Committee Meetings and Parent Activities** –In order to minimize the gathering of large groups of people and to stay compliant with recommendations made by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the State of Texas and San Antonio Metro Health, in person engagement opportunities will be limited.

Early Head Start will work with the Service Provider to ensure the establishment of a Parent Connection Committee (PCC) comprised exclusively of parents/guardians of currently enrolled children, who are receiving either center-based or home-based services, as early in the program year as possible.

Parent Connection Committee (PCC) Meetings and on-site family activities will be conducted virtually until in person opportunities can be reintroduced safely.

**Parent Activities to Promote Child Learning and Development** – The EHS Grantee and Service Provider will share responsibility with parents/guardians in promoting their child's early learning and development. FSWs support families by providing engagement strategies that are designed to foster parental confidence and skills in promoting children's learning and development.

All families enrolled in the program receive monthly School Readiness Home Learning Activities regardless if they are receiving center based or virtual services. Activities provided are taken from Ready Rosie, Creative Curriculum and Conscious Discipline and are intended to support the parent child bond and enhance their learning experiences.

EHS also offers opportunities for parents/guardians to participate in a research-based parenting curriculum that builds on parent /guardian's knowledge and offers them the opportunity to practice parenting skills to promote children's learning and development. The program's chosen parent curriculum is Ready Rosie. Parents will continue to receive weekly videos via text message or email. Staff will provide virtual workshops until in person opportunities can be reintroduced safely.

**Family Meetings** – When a child is accepted into the program, the FSW meets with the family to complete a family meeting. The family meeting is an integral part of the enrollment process and allows an opportunity for staff to learn more about the family and the family to learn more about the EHS Program. In person family meetings are suspended at this time until they can be reintroduced safely.

FSWs will contact families and complete the family meeting by phone, or virtually. All forms requiring signatures will be explained during the meeting. Forms needing signatures will be placed in a large envelope and left for the family at the

EHS site or the family's home. All forms must be received back within 10 days of the child's entry date. If signatures are not obtained within 10 days, FSW will seek further guidance from their supervisor and/or Health Management Analyst. Forms requiring signatures include:

- Release of Information
- Permission for Services
- Statement of Income (if applicable)
- University of Incarnate Word Consent (signature may be obtained at a later time)
- San Antonio Metro Health (signature may be obtained at a later time)

For all other forms completed during the family meeting that do not require a parent signature, including the Family Meeting Form, the following statement will be added to the signature block:

“Phone”

If a family has opted to receive remote services and is unable to pick up a packet from the center a home visit may be conducted by following the guidelines written in the Home Visit Procedures During periods of high community spread as indicated by “severe” or “critical” on the San Antonio Metro Health Dashboard a COVID 19 pre screening questionnaire will also be conducted prior to complete an in person home visit. Safety guidelines will follow all CDC, the State of Texas and San Antonio Metro Health recommendations concerning COVID 19. All family meetings must be completed according to the program's Data Entry and Benchmark Due Date Guide.

Please refer to Procedure: Re-Enrollment and New Enrollment Process Change – COVID-19 for further details regarding forms.

**Family Partnership Services**—EHS collaborates with families in a family partnership process that identifies needs, interests, strengths, goals, services and resources that support family well-being, including family safety, health, and economic stability. This process must take into consideration each family's readiness and willingness to participate in the process and must be engaged in jointly with parents.

- **Beginning of Year (BOY) Assessments** – FSWs and Home Visitors will complete the BOY Assessment by phone or virtual meeting. in person meetings are suspended until they can be reintroduced safely. All assessments must be completed according to the program's Data Entry and Benchmark Due Date Guide.
- **End of Year (EOY) Assessments** – FSWs and Home Visitors will complete the EOY Assessment by phone or virtual meeting. in person meetings are suspended until they can be reintroduced safely. All assessments must be completed according to the program's Data Entry and Benchmark Due Date Guide.
- **Goals** – FSWs and Home Visitors will continue to work with each family to offer and develop an individualized goal that includes strategies for success, time frame, and community resources available. The Goal form will be completed by phone or virtual meeting and the following statement will be added to the signature block:

“Phone”

All goals must be completed according to the program's Data Entry and Benchmark Due Date Guide and scanned, attached and saved into ChildPlus.

**Continued Guidance** – All guidance offered in this document is subject to change upon direction from the Office of Head Start (OHS) or recommendations made by the CDC, State of Texas, and/or San Antonio Metro Health. This guidance supersedes current DHS Head Start Procedures during the COVID-19 pandemic.



## 2021-2022 COVID-19 Program Information Guidance

### Early Head Start Program

#### Health, Nutrition and Dental Services

#### **Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, what are the Head Start requirements related to the Early Head Start (EHS) program services for health services?**

In the event that COVID-19 or any other pandemic, natural disaster or unforeseen events should have an impact on providing in person services the program will make needed adjustment to ensure the health and safety of all children, families, and staff. the City of San Antonio Department of Human Services, Early Head Start (EHS) Program will follow the recommendations below should there be an impact on in person services resulting in virtual services or children being quarantined. The program is expected to make every effort to complete requirements within the established timeframes and document all efforts according to the ChildPlus Data Entry Guide.

- **Forms for Applications-** When applications are being completed via phone, in place of parent signature, staff will replace with “Phone” in ChildPlus on the health modules to include Child Health History, Nutrition Assessment, TB Questionnaire, and Health Acknowledgement. (Refer to Phone Applications – COVID-19.)
  - All forms requiring signatures will be explained during the family meeting. Forms needing parents/guardians’ signatures will be placed in a large envelope and left for the family at the EHS site or the family’s home. All forms must be received back within 10 days of the child’s entry date. If signatures are not obtained within 10 days, FSW or Home Visitor will seek further guidance from their supervisor and/or Health Management Analyst (MA). Forms requiring signatures include:
    - Release of Information (ROI)
    - Permission for Services (PFS)
    - University of Incarnate Word Consent (signature may be obtained at a later time)
    - San Antonio Metro Health Consent (signature may be obtained at a later time)
  - If a family has opted to receive remote services and is unable to pick up a packet from the EHS/ EHS-CCP site a home visit may be conducted by following the guidelines written in the Home Visit Procedures. Safety guidelines will follow all Center for Disease Control, the State of Texas and San Antonio Metro Health recommendations concerning COVID 19.
  - Please refer to Procedure: Re-Enrollment and New Enrollment Process Change – COVID-19 for further details regarding forms.
- **30- Day Medical/ Dental Home and Insurance** - EHS is required to determine whether a child has ongoing sources of continuous, accessible health care and health insurance coverage within 30 days of when the child first attends the program or, for home-based program option, receives a home visit. The FSW or Home Visitor will continue

to assist families in accessing medical and dental services and health insurance coverage when needed. FSW or Home Visitor will follow the ChildPlus Data Entry Guide on documenting their efforts to meet this requirement.

- **45-Day Hearing and Vision screenings**– Completing the hearing and vision screenings are vitally important to ensuring a child’s success in school. Completing these screenings could be challenging, particularly if children are receiving remote services. All efforts will be made to complete in-person hearing and vision screenings on site but will depend on the COVID-19 guidance from The City of San Antonio, Metro Health, CDC, and Office of Head Start. If Hearing and vision screenings can be completed on site, protocols will be utilized to increase health and safety standards to minimize the spread of COVID 19.
  - The program will continue to obtain written consent from parents for all health and developmental screenings they administer.
  - In the event that hearing, and vision screenings do not occur the following note will be added to the hearing and vision events in ChildPlus:
    - *Due to COVID-19, the 45-day Federal Head Start requirements for \_\_\_\_\_ has not been met and is postponed until further notice. (in the blank fill in: hearing or vision)*
- **90-Day Well Child Exam**– Within 90 days after the child first attends the program or, for the home-based program option, receives their initial home visit, EHS staff will support parents/guardians to ensure their child is up to date on preventative well-child exams.
  - Family Support Workers (FSW) or Home Visitors with the assistance of the Health MA’s and Service Provider’s will make every effort to obtain a copy of the child’s most recent well child exam within 90 calendar days of the child’s enrollment. Staff should follow the ChildPlus Data Entry Guide on documenting their efforts to meet this requirement.
  - If a child is not up to date, FSW’s or Home Visitors will follow up with the parent and document in ChildPlus, accordingly.
  - In the event that the pandemic or other natural disaster should prevent children from being able to obtain a 90 day well child exam the following note will be added to ChildPlus, if needed:
    - *Due to COVID-19, the 90-day Federal Head Start requirement was not met.*
- **Immunizations** –The program will work with parents to help bring their child up to date on immunizations as quickly as possible. Family Support Workers (FSW) or Home Visitors with the assistance of the Health MA’s and Service Provider’s staff will make every effort to obtain a copy of the child’s most recent immunization records. Staff should follow the ChildPlus Data Entry Guide on documenting their efforts to meet this requirement.
- **A Parent/ Guardian not comfortable with taking their child(ren) to their Health Care Professional** –EHS will take actions that are feasible, reasonable, and safe in terms of continuing to provide services and implementing management and oversight systems. We will communicate with parents to understand the importance of keeping the child up to date on well child exams and immunizations.
- **Telehealth Services** – The City of San Antonio will accept screenings and annual well-child exams completed by a healthcare provider through telehealth services. During the COVID-19 Pandemic, children will need to receive the recommended immunizations and continue to schedule any well-child exams with their medical and dental homes. **Hemoglobin and Lead Testing Clinics** – On site Hemoglobin and Lead Testing Clinics will be scheduled in accordance with guidance by The City of San Antonio, Metro Health, CDC, Child Care Regulations, and Office of Head Start.

- **Metro Health Dental Clinics** – Completing dental screenings are vitally important to ensuring a child’s success in school. Completing these screenings could be challenging during a pandemic, particularly if children are receiving remote services. All efforts will be made to complete in person dental screenings on-site but will depend on the COVID-19 guidance from The City of San Antonio, Metro Health, CDC, Child Care Regulations, and Office of Head Start.
- **Tooth brushing** –EHS will follow guidance from the Office of Head Start and City of San Antonio Metro Health Department regarding tooth brushing. Tooth brushing in the classrooms will be suspended until it can be reintroduced safely. Staff should continue to discuss and model proper tooth-brushing techniques with props such as dental puppets and share resources on tooth brushing and supplies with families. In addition, encourage parents to brush their child’s teeth with fluoride toothpaste before they start the school day, whether in-person or remote instruction, and before bedtime.
- **Family Style Meals** –The City of San Antonio will follow guidance from the Office of Head Start, Metro Health, USDA/CACFP, and Child Care Regulations regarding meal service. Children and teachers should continue to eat together and engage in conversation and learning during mealtime unless it becomes unsafe. Children should have individual trays/plates and should not serve themselves. Staff should ensure children wash hands prior to and immediately after eating.
- **Health Event Follow-up, Tracking, and Data Documentation** – Required 30-day follow-ups for any medical, dental, nutrition, other health related missing event or concern identified by the EHS Program or as indicated on screenings, health assessments, or well child exams remains an important requirement for the program.
  - The FSWs will follow up with the parent and document in ChildPlus every 30 days for a child who enrolled in the EHS site and not up to date.
  - The Home Visitors will follow up during the weekly home visit and document on the home visit form for a child who enrolled in the Home-Based Program and not up to date. FSW’s, Home Based Visitor’s, and EHS site staff should continue to contact families and provide support regarding health, wellness, dental, and nutrition services, including health insurance coverage. Staff should encourage families to contact their medical home regarding health concerns and well child exams.
  - EHS staff, Home Visitor’s and Site staff will work together to identify priorities related to health and nutrition, including well child exams, immunizations, health concerns, special diets, etc.
- **Health Wellness Assessment** – EHS FSW staff will complete the Wellness Assessment.
- **Health Screening** – EHS sites will follow guidance related to COVID screenings, including checking an individual’s temperature, and sign-in, from the CDC, Metro Health, CCL, health screenings for staff, children, and visitors to a site or other buildings and children receiving transportation services.

**Continued Guidance** – All guidance offered in this document is subject to change upon direction from Office of Head Start (OHS) or recommendations made by the CDC, State of Texas, and/or San Antonio Metro Health. This guidance supersedes current DHS Head Start established Procedures during the COVID-19 pandemic.



## 2021-2022 COVID-19 Program Information Guidance

### Early Head Start Program

#### Home-Based Services

Currently, in person home visits are conducted unless a request is made by the parent for an alternate method such as meeting at an alternate location or having a virtual home visit. According to Office of Head Start guidance currently programs must ensure the family is comfortable with a home visitor coming into the home. All virtual home visits must be approved by the City of San Antonio Department of Human Services (DHS) Early Head Start (EHS) Program in advance. Additionally, socializations are conducted in person at the EHS Program located at Stafford Early Childhood Center or other designated locations.

#### **Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, what are the Head Start requirements related to the Early Head Start (EHS) program services for Home-Based Support Services?**

In the event that COVID-19 or any other pandemic, natural disaster or unforeseen events should have an impact on providing in person services the program will make needed adjustments to ensure the health and safety of all children, families and staff. The EHS Program will follow the recommendations below should there be an impact on in person services resulting in virtual services or children being quarantined. The program is expected to make every effort to complete requirements within the established timeframes and document all efforts according to the program's Data Entry and Benchmark Due Date Guide.

#### **HOME-BASED SERVICES:**

**Socializations** – In order to minimize the gathering of large groups of people and to stay compliant with recommendations made by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the State of Texas and San Antonio Metro Health, in person engagement opportunities will be limited. The EHS program continues to recognize parents/guardians as their children's primary teachers/nurturers and will continue to implement intentional strategies to engage parents/guardians in their children's learning and development, support parent-child relationships and work to provide networking opportunities for home based participants.

Twenty-two (22) Socialization opportunities will be conducted virtually until in person opportunities can be reintroduced safely.

**Initial "First" Home Visit** – **Within the Home Based program** the initial home visit is conducted in place of a "Family Meeting" and once completed is used as the enrollment date for the child. The program will make the determination at any given point and time when it is safe enough to conduct in person home visits. The program will utilize information recommended by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the State of Texas and San Antonio Metro Health, when

returning to home visits. Alternative locations such as outdoor areas, parks or other public locations may be considered when completing in person home visits.

When a child is accepted into the program, the Home Visitor meets with the family, virtually, to complete the initial home visit. The initial home visit is an integral part of the enrollment process and allows an opportunity for staff to learn more about the family and the family to learn more about the EHS Program. All efforts to complete home visits will be documented.

If home visits cannot be completed in person the Home Visitors will contact families and complete the initial home visit by phone, or virtually. All forms requiring signatures will be explained during the visit. Forms needing signatures will be placed in a large envelope and left for the family at the EHS site or the family's home. All forms must be received back within 10 days of the child's entry date. If signatures are not obtained within 10 days, the Home Visitor will seek further guidance from their supervisor and/or Health Management Analyst. Forms requiring signatures include:

- Home Based Services Agreement Form
- Release of Information
- Permission for Services
- Statement of Income (if applicable)

University of Incarnate Word Consent (signature may be obtained at a later time)

- San Antonio Metro Health (signature may be obtained at a later time)

For all other forms completed during the family meeting that do not require a parent signature, the following statement will be added to the signature block:

“Phone”

If a family has opted to receive virtual services and is unable to pick up a packet from the center a home visit may be conducted by following the guidelines written in the Home Visit Procedures. Safety guidelines will follow all CDC, the State of Texas and San Antonio Metro Health recommendations. All family meetings must be completed according to the program's Data Entry and Benchmark Due Date Guide.

Please refer to Procedure: Re-Enrollment and New Enrollment Process Change – COVID-19 for further details regarding forms.

**Home Visits** – Home visits are opportunities for the EHS staff and parents to engage in early learning opportunities that fosters the parent's role as the child's first and most important teacher. The program will make the determination at any given point and time when it is safe enough to return to in person home visits. The program will utilize information recommended by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the State of Texas and San Antonio Metro Health, when determining the reinstatement of home visits for the purpose of meeting the required 46 visits per year in the home-based program. In addition, according to Office of Head Start guidance programs must ensure the family is comfortable with a home visitor coming into the home. Alternative locations such as outdoor areas, parks or other public locations may be considered when completing in person home visits.

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If an in person home visit is not feasible the program may conduct a virtual home visit with the same considerations as a in person visit with DHS EHS approval. In addition, Service Providers must be considerate of whether the parent has the time and capacity to participate in this service model. To the best extent possible, virtual home visits must be:

- Planned jointly by the home visitor and parents, and reflect the critical role of parents in the early learning and development of their children, including that the home visitor is able to effectively communicate with the parent, directly or through an interpreter;
- Planned using information from ongoing assessments, if available, that individualize learning experiences;
- Scheduled with sufficient time to serve all enrolled children in the home and conducted with parents and not conducted when only babysitters or other temporary caregivers are present;
- Scheduled with sufficient time and appropriate staff to ensure effective delivery of the full range of program services
- The EHS program will make up planned home visits or scheduled group socialization activities that are canceled by the program, and to the extent possible, attempt to make up planned home visits cancelled by the family.
- Medical or social service appointments may not replace group for either the planned socializations activities or the required number of home visits.

If the family cancels a virtual or in person scheduled home visit for two consecutive visits, the Home Visitor will make every attempt to determine the reasons for the missed home visits by documenting their attempts to contact the family in the Child Plus data system. In addition, the Home Visitor will report this information to their Supervisor. The Supervisor will make every attempt to contact the family either by phone and/or making a home visit to discuss barriers to keeping scheduled appointments. The Supervisor may also discuss with the family if the Home-Based program is the best fit for the family. If parent remains unresponsive , the child's slot may then be considered vacant with the Head Start Administrator's authorization.

**Continued Guidance** – All guidance offered in this document is subject to change upon direction from the Office of Head Start (OHS) or recommendations made by the CDC, State of Texas, and/or San Antonio Metro Health. This guidance supersedes current DHS Head Start Procedures during the COVID-19 pandemic.



## 2021-2022 COVID-19 Program Information Guidance

### Early Head Start Program

#### Program Monitoring

**Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, what are the Head Start requirements related to the Early Head Start (EHS) program** In the event that COVID-19 or any other pandemic, natural disaster or unforeseen events should have an impact on providing in person services the program will make needed adjustment to ensure the health and safety of all children, families and staff. The City of San Antonio Department of Human Services Early Head Start (EHS) Program will follow the recommendations below should there be an impact on in person services resulting in virtual services or children being quarantined. The program is expected to make every effort to complete requirements within the established timeframes and document all efforts according to the program's Data Entry and Benchmark Due Date Guide.

The Program Monitor will be expected to use the Program Information COVID Guidance and the EHS Program Monitoring Polices and Procedures PDM 1, while completing all monitoring projects.

A Program Monitoring calendar for 2021-2022 has been developed to identify each Service Areas monitoring project and timeframe. The Program Monitoring calendar is subject to change applicable to COVID – 19.

Monitoring checklist per Services Areas will be used in the ChildPlus data system to complete monitoring projects. The monitor will document on the checklist if changes are needed to align with the Program Information Guidance.

Monitoring projects will consist of a desk review and on site review when deemed necessary of child files using the ChildPlus data system.

Ongoing Monitoring may consist of Services Area interviews by telephone, WebEx sessions and in person when deemed necessary.

Monitor will ensure hand washing; physical distancing requirements are in place. During the site visits as permitted the monitor will observe facilities, classrooms and playgrounds for the environmental health and safety component of the program.

When on site, the monitor will request to review Curriculum to Fidelity tools, Human Resources files and other documents in a separate room to promote physical distancing and safety, dependent on the COVID climate at the time of monitoring.

Classroom child files, including those files with Special Diets and Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) may be requested and placed in the office area or a separate room for the monitor to review.

EHS Providers will still be responsible for maintaining Curriculum to Fidelity tools; E-Lap data entry, collecting ASQ's from parents and data entry and ensuring classroom daily checklist are completed.

Providers may be asked to email classroom lesson plans to the monitor for review, instead of the monitor visiting the classrooms.

Interviewing Director/Teachers for Education Services may occur by telephone and or WebEx sessions dependent on the COVID-19 climate at the time of monitoring. Monitor will coordinate with the EHS Provider to schedule.

EHS Providers and Services Area Managers will continue to respond to any noted findings during ongoing monitoring through the ChildPlus Data system.

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## **2021-2022 COVID-19 Program Information Guidance**

### **Early Head Start Program**

#### **Safe Environments**

#### **Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, what are the Head Start requirements related to the Early Head Start (EHS) program services for Safe Environment Services?**

In the event that COVID-19 or any other pandemic, natural disaster or unforeseen events should have an impact on providing in person services the program will make needed adjustment to ensure the health and safety of all children, families and staff. The City of San Antonio Department of Human Services Early Head Start (EHS) Program will follow the recommendations below should there be an impact on in person services resulting in virtual services or children being quarantined. The program is expected to make every effort to complete requirements within the established timeframes and document all efforts according to the program's Data Entry and Benchmark Due Date Guide.

#### **Screening**

When applicable, Child Care Providers will follow the Center for Disease Control's (CDC)'s recommended guidance for screening of all visitors and employees. This will include::

- Operations staff;
- Persons with legal authority to enter e.g., law enforcement officers, Head Start staff, and Department of Family and Protective Services staff;
- Professionals providing services to children;
- Children enrolled at the operation; and
- Parents who have children enrolled and present at the operation. Parents should only enter when necessary.

#### **Parent Drop-Off and Pick-Up**

When applicable, unless noted otherwise from Child Care Regulations, San Antonio Metro Health or the CDC, Child Care Centers will adhere to the following:

- The pick-up and drop-off of children should be completed outside of the operation, unless the operation determines that there is a legitimate need for the parent to enter. Should the parent have a legitimate need to enter the operation, the parent must be screened by the operation as outlined in this document.
- Hand hygiene stations should be set up at the entrance of the facility, so that children can clean their hands before they enter. If a sink with soap and water is not available, provide hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol next to parent sign-in sheets. Keep hand sanitizer out of children's reached and supervise use. If possible, place sign-in stations outside, and provide sanitary wipes for cleaning pens between each use.
- Consider staggering arrival and drop off times and plan to limit direct contact with parents as much as possible.
  - Have teachers or classroom staff greets children outside as they arrive.

- Designate a parent to be the drops off/pick up volunteer to walk all children to their classroom, and at the end of the day, walk all children back to their cars.
  - Infants could be transported in their car seats. Store car seat out of children's reach.
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- Ideally, the same parent or designated person should drop off and pick up the child every day. If possible, older family members such as grandparents or those with serious underlying medical conditions should not pick up children, because they are more at risk.
  - Stagger arrival and drop off times.
  - Plan arrival and drop off outside the facility.
  - Provide hand sanitizer for sign-in/out.
  - Limit direct contact with parents/guardians.
  - Designated parent or person should not be a 'vulnerable' person.
  - Refrain from hugging and shaking hands.

### **Screen Children Upon Arrival**

Persons who have a fever of 100.4<sup>o</sup> (38.0<sup>o</sup>C) or above or other signs of illness should not be admitted to the facility. Encourage parents to be on the alert for signs of illness in their children and to keep them home when they are sick. Screen children upon arrival.

There are several methods that facilities can use to protect their workers while conducting temperature screenings. The most protective methods incorporate social distancing (maintaining a distance of 6 feet from others) or physical barriers to eliminate or minimize exposures due to close contact to a child who has symptoms during screening.

### **Staying Home when Appropriate**

- Educate staff and families about when they/their child (ren) should stay home and when they can return to school.
- CDC's criteria can help inform when employees should return to work:

### **Signs and Messages**

- Post signs in highly visible locations (e.g., school entrances, restrooms) that promote everyday protective measures and describe how to stop the spread of germs (such as by properly washing hands and properly wearing a cloth face covering).

### **Maintaining Healthy Environments**

Intensify cleaning and disinfection efforts:

- Facilities should develop a schedule for cleaning and disinfecting surfaces and objects that are frequently touched, especially toys. This may also include cleaning objects/surfaces not ordinarily cleaned daily such as doorknobs, light switches, classroom sink handles, countertops, nap pads, toilet tables, chairs, cubbies, and playground structures. Use all cleaning products according to the directions on the label. For disinfection, most common EPA-registered, fragrance-free household disinfectants should be effective. If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- All cleaning materials should be kept secure and out of reach of children.

- Cleaning products should not be used near children, and staff should ensure that there is adequate ventilation when using these products to prevent children from inhaling toxic fumes.

### **Clean and Sanitize Toys**

- Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized should not be used.
- Toys that children have placed in their mouths or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretions or excretions should be set aside until they are cleaned by hand by a person wearing gloves. Clean with water and detergent, rinse, sanitize with an EPA-registered disinfectant, rinse again, and air-dry. Do not share toys with other groups of infants or toddlers, unless they are washed and sanitized before being moved from one group to the other.
- Set aside toys that need to be cleaned. Place in a dish pan with soapy water or put in a separate container marked for “soiled toys.” Keep dish pan and water out of reach from children to prevent risk of drowning. Washing with soapy water is the ideal method for cleaning. Try to have enough toys so that the toys can be rotated through cleanings.
- Children’s books, like other paper-based materials such as mail or envelopes, are not considered a high risk for transmission and do not need additional cleaning or disinfection procedures.

### **Diapering**

When diapering a child, wash your hands and wash the child’s hands before you begin, and wear gloves. Follow safe diaper changing procedures. Procedures should be posted in all diaper changing areas.

After diapering, wash your hands (even if you were wearing gloves) and disinfect the diapering area with fragrance-free bleach that is EPA-registered as a sanitizing or disinfecting solution. If other products are used for sanitizing or disinfecting, they should also be fragrance-free and EPA-registered. If the surface is dirty, it should be cleaned with detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.

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