0-5 Attendance

POLICY/APPROACH:

Children who attend daily and on time experience better outcomes than those who do not. We encourage families to arrive on time each morning so that children may be included in the daily transition process and other morning routines, which prepare the child for that day’s educational experience.

We support each pregnant woman and child’s successful, regular attendance in the Head Start and Early Head Start programs, and provide individualized comprehensive service plans when special circumstances occur that interfere with regular attendance.

Attendance will be carefully monitored to ensure vacancies are identified and filled promptly within 30 days.

When attendance falls below 85%, an analysis of the reasons for absence will identify the possible causes, and plans will be made to increase attendance to 85% or above.

Policy Council Approval 8/19/2014
Board Approval 8/21/2014

HEADED PROGRAM PERFORMANCE STANDARDS:

1302.16(a)-(c)—Attendance

PROCEDURES:

Attendance

1. Recording Attendance
   • The Area Assistant (AA) will print the most current attendance sheet each Friday for use the following week.
   • Each day of service a member of the teaching staff will document attendance on the attendance sheet.
   • Attendance is to be recorded as children arrive, prior to the first meal of the day.
     o If parent has made contact that their child will be absent, write the reason for a child’s absence in the “notes” area of the attendance sheet.
       ▪ If the absence is due to child illness, document the symptoms (cough, runny nose, rash, fever, etc.) or diagnosis.
   • When a child arrives late, or leaves early, document the time in the notes on the attendance sheet.
   • EHS: Parents attending the home-based option will also sign in.
   • Data entry
     o Attendance will be entered into data management system by the Area Assistant (AA) as soon as possible, but no later than the end of the week.
     o Child will be marked Present (P), Absent (A), or Late (L).
     o A child attending class for any length of time is counted as present (P).
Record absence reasons in ‘Reasons’ field.

- When staff is made aware of reasons for absence after attendance has been recorded in the system, AA will update the absence reason in attendance. This step is critical in ensuring that we are able to conduct an effective analysis of the class’ absence reasons.
  
  *Please be aware that entering a note will create an attendance case note in the family tab.*

2. **Meal Counts**

   - Once the daily attendance is complete, the attendance sheet and center sign in sheet must be placed on a clipboard in a place accessible to the cooks/cook assistants.
   - The meal count must be done by a different person than the one who took attendance.
   - The cook or cook assistant must count each child at the time the meal is being served (point of service).
   - If the child is not at the table, do not count that child; if a child comes to the table after the meal count is complete the teacher will add a +1 to the count.
   - Count each adult and child over the age of 12, and place the total on the top line below the day (Adult Meal Count).

**Child Absences and follow up:**

1. **First Call: (within the first hour of class time)**

   - After the meal count is complete, and **within the first hour of class time**, the Family Advocate/EHS Specialist or other assigned staff will review the attendance sheet and add any new information obtained from the center phone log.
     
     - If the parent has made no contact (“no call/no show”) regarding the child’s absence that day, write the child’s name on the attendance follow up sheet.
     
     - Within the first hour of class, advocate/specialist or other assigned staff **must** call all “no call” families to establish the reasons for absence, offer support, explain the benefits of regular preschool attendance, and problem-solve any attendance barriers. Note the results of the call on the attendance follow up sheet.
     
     - If the parent is not reached, initial that a call was made / message was left.

2. **After Class:**

   - HS teacher/EHS Specialist will call all families that were not reached by “First Call”.
     
     - The educator will establish the reason for the absence, offer support, explain the benefits of regular preschool attendance, and problem-solve any attendance barriers. Note the results of the call on the attendance follow up sheet.
     
     - The follow up sheet is forwarded to the Area Assistant along with the daily attendance for data entry.

3. **Two consecutive days of NO CALL/NO SHOW**

   - **Home visit:**
     
     - If a child has been absent for two consecutive days with No call/No show Advocates/ Specialists **MUST** conduct a home visit no later than the morning of the **third** day.
     
     - If a family cannot be reached at the home, fill out and leave a Home Visit Post Card at the residence.
     
     - Document the outcome of the home visit in an attendance follow up case note.
Attendance Letter #1:
If there has been no contact from parent by the END of the 3rd day of No call/No show absences contact PFCE Department and inform the Area Manager/Center Manager of the situation.
- (HS) PFCE/ (EHS) ED/PFCE Supervisor will mail the 1st attendance letter that will include a return call/contact date (3 business days) and will send a copy to the center to be placed in the child file.
- Document as an Attendance Follow up case note.

Attendance Letter #2 (Dropping a child):
If the parent does not make contact by the deadline on Attendance letter #1, Family Advocate/EHS Specialist will:
- Call the Enrollment SAA.
  ○ Enrollment SAA will send a drop letter to the family and assign a new family to the center.
- Complete all sections of the Child Change Sheet, attach to paper file contents. Send the complete Child and Family folder, to the Enrollment Supervisor.
- Ensure the child’s Teacher and Area/Center Manager and (HS) PFCE Supervisor/ (EHS) ED/PFCE Supervisor are aware the drop is finalized.
- Document all steps as a follow up note to original case note.

Chronic Poor Attendance:
If a child is at risk of missing ten percent of program days per year appropriate strategies to improve attendance such as contact with parents or intensive case management is necessary.
- One month: If a child falls below 90% attendance (missing 2 or more days) enter an attendance follow up case note with summary of reasons and supports offered.
- Two consecutive months: If attendance is below 90% (missing 2 or more days), ongoing support is needed to engage the parent in consistent attendance. Therefore a plan must be established with the parent and documented under goals section in SHINE.
  - The Family Advocate/EHS Specialist will discuss the plan with the family in order to develop the steps. Family and staff will sign the plan.
  - AA will upload a copy into the goal section in SHINE and a copy will be given to the family.
  - Monthly goal follow up will be the only needed documentation for attendance. If absence reasons are due to a family need (example: lacking transportation), then a need identified case note may also be established in addition to ongoing support and follow up.

*If chronic absence for two consecutive months is the result of illness, consult Health Services staff.
*If the child is on an IFSP, notify both the Case Manager and the Disabilities Supervisor, and consult with them while addressing chronic poor attendance.
Attendance Goal/Plan follow up and monitoring:
Express immediate encouragement and recognition anytime attendance improves.
- 30 day follow up: Review goal steps and if they are not successful, work with families to modify these steps.
- After 60 days of the goal being created:
  o If the total of unexcused absences make up more than 10% (2 missed days) of attendance concerns, the Family Advocate/EHS Specialist will consult with (HS) PFCE Supervisor/(EHS) Education/PFCE Manager to develop an attendance letter and plan that will be discussed with the family.
  o Attendance goals can be completed and closed when attendance has improved to 90% or higher.

Attendance Plans/Consults and Attendance Letters for chronic poor attendance:

Attendance Letter 1: (This may only be sent AFTER consult with HS PFCE Sup/ EHS Education/PFCE Sup)
- HS PFCE Sup/ EHS Education/PFCE Sup will send letter ONLY AFTER CONSULT
- A copy of the letter must be placed in the child's file. Document in the data system as a follow up note to the active Attendance goal.

Extended Absences and Special Service Plans

Extended Absence – for up to 8 school days.
If a parent wants a child to miss up to 8 days there must be prior approval of center team.
(HS: AM, Ed Sup, HT or T, and FA. EHS: EHS Specialist, ED/PFCE Sup and CM). If the team approves the absence then a plan will be created and must include:
- the reason for absence
- the agreed upon date of child’s return to class
- services/support offered.
- Area Assistant will notify ERSEA Director to ensure accurate attendance recording

Special Service Plan – for more than 8 school days.
The Special Service Plan provides short-term, individualized services from two weeks, up to two months, to enrolled families in Head Start and Early Head Start when special circumstances, (such as special medical condition of child, hospitalization, custody changes, homelessness, travel to visit relatives in Mexico, etc.), prevent the child from attending the services of the program they are enrolled in.

Prior approval must be obtained or the child will be dropped from the program.
- A Special Service Plan must be created with input from: Head Start: AM, Ed Sup, HT/T, PFCE Sup, and FA. Early Head Start: EHS Specialist, ED/PFCE Sup and CM
- The plan must include:
  1. the reasons for absence
     If medical concerns are causing the absence, consult the Health Services Director.
     If the child is on an IFSP, consult the Dis/MH Supervisor.
  2. the agreed upon date of child’s return to class,
  3. services and support offered. (Examples: class materials, parent and child activities, books, weekly check-ins via phone or home visits, etc.)
• The plan must then be submitted to the following people for review: (HS) PFCE Director and HS Director. (EHS) EHS Education/PFCE Manager and EHS Director.
• Outcome of the review will be communicated to center staff.
• Special Service Plans are monitored monthly by the Area/Center Manager
• The Area Assistant must be notified immediately upon approval of the Special Service Plan OR Extended Absence Plan to ensure proper attendance recording.
• The Area Assistant will upload a copy of the completed Special Service Plan as an attachment to the goal tab in the database (SHINE).

If a child is experiencing homelessness and is unable to attend classes regularly because the family does not have transportation to and from the program facility, the program must utilize community resources, where possible, to provide transportation for the child (1302.16(c)(2)).

*Special service plans are not used for chronic attendance issues.

ATTENDANCE MONITORING:
When the center based program attendance falls below 85%, an analysis by PFCE department of the reasons for absence will identify the possible causes, and plans will be made to increase attendance to 90% or above.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Family Advocate/EHS Specialist</th>
<th>Teacher/ EHS Specialist</th>
<th>Area Manager/ Center Manager</th>
<th>(HS)PFCE/ (EHS) ED/PFCE Sup</th>
<th>Health Services Dept.</th>
<th>Education Svs. /Dis. Dept.</th>
<th>Head Start/ Early Head Start Director</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance Campaigns</td>
<td>Contribute to planning process and carry out tasks as agreed</td>
<td>Contribute to planning process and carry out tasks as agreed</td>
<td>Develop center-based attendance campaigns and recognition strategies; oversee implementation</td>
<td>Support center teams with ideas and resources</td>
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<td>First Call</td>
<td>Consult phone logs and attendance roster for excused absence contacts. Call parents of all children with unexcused absence (i.e. no call from family before the start of class) <strong>within an hour of start of class.</strong> Encourage immediate attendance; address barriers, offer supports. Document contacts and supports offered in attendance log.</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Oversight and supervision of task; delegate to other staff in absence of FA/EHS Specialist (Follow steps in FA/EHS Specialist section)</td>
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<td>After class</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Review attendance log and call families who could not be reached during the first follow up call. Document results in the attendance log.</td>
<td>Oversight and supervision. Delegate to other staff in absence of T/HT/EHS Specialist (Follow steps in T/EHS Specialist section)</td>
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<td>Approval for extended absence less than 8 days</td>
<td>Discuss family request for extended absence (up to 8 school days) with: <strong>(HS) AM, HT or T, Ed Sup, PFCE. (EHS) Center Manager &amp; ED/PFCE Sup</strong> <em>Document as described in Special Service Plan Procedure</em></td>
<td>Discuss family request for extended absence (up to 8 school days) with: <strong>(HS) AM, HT or T, Ed Sup, PFCE. (EHS) Center Manager</strong></td>
<td>Discuss family request for extended absence (up to 8 school days) with: <strong>(HS) AM, HT or T, Ed Sup, PFCE. (EHS) Center Manager</strong></td>
<td>Provide support as needed. Monitoring</td>
<td>Connect with center team and families when illness is factor in extended absence</td>
<td>Develop special service plan if appropriate</td>
<td>Review, approve, or disapprove.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Approval for Special Service Plan more than 8 days</td>
<td>Discuss family request for extended absence (more than 8 school days) with: *(HS) Must be discussed with AM, HT or T, Ed Sup, PFCE Sup. for input prior to submitting for approval to PFCE Director and HS Director. *(EHS) Center Manager &amp; ED/PFCE Sup for input prior to submitting to EHS Director for approval. *Document as described in Special Service Plan Procedure If absences are medically related, it must be discussed with Health.</td>
<td>Discuss family request for extended absence (more than 8 school days) with: *(HS) Must be discussed with AM, HT or T, Ed Sup, PFCE Sup. for input prior to submitting for approval to PFCE Director and HS Director. *(EHS) Center Manager &amp; ED/PFCE Sup for input prior to submitting to EHS Director &amp; Ed Manager for approval.</td>
<td>Discuss family request for extended absence (more than 8 school days) with: *(HS) Must be discussed with AM, HT or T, Ed Sup, PFCE Sup. for input prior to submitting for approval to PFCE Director and HS Director. *(EHS) Center Manager &amp; ED/PFCE Sup for input prior to submitting to EHS Director &amp; Ed Manager for approval.</td>
<td>Provide support, and approval Monitoring Connect with center team and families when illness is factor in extended absence</td>
<td>Develop special service plan if appropriate Review, approve, or disapprove</td>
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<tr>
<td>Setting attendance goal / developing attendance plan</td>
<td>Set goal and make plan with family for children who are chronically absent (90% (missing 2 or more days per month) for 60 days. Document as an attendance goal in SHINE. Refer to Goal/Plan procedure as described above.</td>
<td>*(HS) Collaborate with family and FA on development of attendance goal and plan.</td>
<td>Monitoring and support</td>
<td>Monitoring and support</td>
<td>Develop special service plan if appropriate Include Disabilities Manager if child is on IFSP</td>
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<td>Follow up on attendance goal and planning</td>
<td>Immediate follow up after first absence. Ongoing monitoring of plan. Plan must be reviewed and follow up must be documented in the attendance goal every 30 days. Refer to Goal/Plan procedure as described above.</td>
<td>Ongoing monitoring of plan; reinforce plan with family</td>
<td>Monitoring and support</td>
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<td>When illness is factor in chronic absence, provide support as appropriate. Provide support as appropriate. Include Disabilities Manager if child is on IFSP</td>
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<td>Dropping child from program</td>
<td>If, after 60 days attendance is not above 90%, a consult must be initiated with PFCE Supervisor/Center Manager. Follow attendance procedures. Document in SHINE.</td>
<td>Participate in process as needed</td>
<td>Oversight and Supervision</td>
<td>Support, monitor</td>
<td>If child is on an IFSP, Disabilities Supervisor must be consulted before attempting a drop.</td>
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Area Assistants: support attendance policy by completing data entry as outlined in the procedures. Upload a copy of the completed Attendance Goal or Special Service Plan as an attachment to the goal tab in the database (SHINE) and other tasks as assigned.