



Illness and Injury: Short-Term Medical Exclusion Long-Term Medical Accommodation

POLICY/APPROACH:

SOCFC is committed to ensuring the health and safety of each of the children and families served. For this reason, and in compliance with Head Start Program Performance Standards and child care licensing requirements, this policy clearly defines procedures for short-term exclusion. At the same time, children's health care needs are accommodated as fully as possible over the long term.

The goal is to enable all enrollees to participate as healthy individuals and includes the following:

- The communicable diseases (respiratory, gastro-intestinal, and contact illnesses) and medical symptoms that require a child to be excluded from the program for a short term. These are consistent with local County Health Department policies and include "reportable diseases" as defined by the Center for Disease Control.
- Expectations for parents (e.g., picking up ill children, communicating with Early Head Start and Head Start staff).
- Criteria for sending an ill child home and for return to school after an illness, injury, or surgery (e.g., waiting periods, doctor's notes).

In keeping with its value of inclusiveness, SOCFC **will never exclude** any enrolled child from long-term program participation based on health care needs alone, provided that those needs can be accommodated (i.e., through reasonable modifications or auxiliary aids) without either fundamentally altering the Head Start or Early Head Start program or posing a significant health or safety risk to the child or anyone in contact with him/her.

The Health Services Manager will be the primary decision-maker on all issues related to short-term medical exclusion as well as long-term medical accommodation, conferring with Department Managers, healthcare providers, parents, and other leadership team members as needed. Health Services staff will provide all Head Start and Early Head Start staff with appropriate training and support to enable them to understand and implement this policy.

Policy Council Approval 2/18/2014
Board Approval 2/20/2014

**HEAD START PROGRAM PERFORMANCE
STANDARDS:**

1302.47(b)(7) – Safety practices; administrative safety procedures

Our procedures are subject to adjustment based on Public Health needs or advisory from either our local, state or federal governing bodies. Any temporary modifications to procedures in this event will be documented and shared with staff.

PROCEDURES:

A. Criteria for Temporary Exclusion

- Staff will use the Illness Flip Chart resource for specific exclusion guidelines and must call Health Services with any questions.
- At the Daily Health Check, or if the child becomes ill during school and it is determined the child should be sent home, the parent will be notified and asked to come pick up their child.
- If the parent cannot be reached, staff will follow the Emergency Information Card and Child Pick Up 0-5 Procedure
- Illnesses will be recorded in Shine in the Health tab under “Illness Documentation.”
- Any questions about the need for exclusion will be directed to the Health Manager, and/or Health Coordinators for clarification.
- In the event of a public health crisis our exclusion criteria will be modified to meet the guidance set forth by public health.
- If a child is ill and needs to be excluded, they will be separated from the other children until they can be picked up.

B. Expectations for Parents

- Parents will keep their child home when the child is ill and will notify the center that their child will be absent.
- If a child becomes ill at school, it is the parent/guardian’s responsibility to pick up their child.
- Sometimes, it will be necessary for a child to see their healthcare provider before returning to school, which is the parent/guardian’s responsibility.

C. Notification

- If a child in a classroom has a communicable disease, we will inform all parent/guardian’s in that classroom within 24 hours by posting a notice on the center bulletin board indicating the nature of the illness.

- If multiple children in the same classroom or within a center contract the same communicable disease, individual letters will be sent home to parent/guardian's to notify them of the illness and to ensure that they, too, will watch for signs/symptoms in their own children.
- Consult the Health Manager if there are any questions about notification.

D. Criteria for Return to School After Illness, Injury, or Surgery

- A note from a child's physician may be required if they were out with confirmed communicable disease or illness (e.g., strep throat, impetigo, etc.) stating the child is no longer contagious. This information must be sent to Health Services.
- Sutures or cast – a note from the child's physician regarding any restriction of activities and approval from Health Services, who will ensure that proper documentation, accommodations, and trainings have been completed before a child can return to class.
- For a child who has any surgery (including tubes or dental work under anesthesia) – a note from the child's physician regarding any restriction of activities and approval from Health Services, who will ensure that proper documentation, accommodations, and trainings have been completed before a child can return to class.
 - If a procedure is known about ahead of time, all steps will be taken to ensure child is cleared to return to class as quickly as possible after procedure.

NOTE: In some cases, direct communication with the provider is needed to get accommodation information, and, in this case, a Specialist ROI will need to be obtained.

E. Long-Term Medical Accommodation

- Health Services will implement an Individual Care Plan. See Individual Care Plans – Medical, Nutrition, and Safety Procedure for any child requiring a long-term accommodation before the child is cleared to be in class.