

FY25 Focus Area One Monitoring Protocol

Purpose



Focus Area One (FA1) provides an opportunity for individual grant recipients to share the processes and systems that support their implementation of high-quality services for children and families served over the course of their grant cycle, including the:

- quality of education services;
- intentionality of family and community engagement;
- monitoring of fiscal operations;
- effectiveness of health and safety practices;
- focus on eligibility, recruitment, selection, enrollment, and attendance; and
- oversight of program structures.

The FA1 will determine if grant recipients are meeting the requirements of the Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS), the Uniform Guidance, and the Head Start Act.

This information collectively supports the Office of Head Start's (OHS) understanding of the effectiveness of each grant recipient's performance, as well as the performance of grant recipients nationally, regionally, and within communities. The FY25 FA1 review reflects relevant language updates to the HSPPS that were made by the final rule, *Supporting the Head Start Workforce and Consistent Quality Programming*, published on August 21, 2024. This resource highlights updated requirements that will be monitored through the FY25 FA1 review. See the Federal Laws and Regulations section on page 3 of this protocol for more information.

Methodology



Grant recipients will have multiple opportunities to showcase program strengths through the activities that make up the FA1 Monitoring Review. These activities include (1) a planning call before the review; (2) an introductory meeting with the Management Team; (3) discussions with leadership, the governing body, and the policy council; (4) data tours with directors, managers, and staff members; and (5) touchpoints with the director on each day of the review.

Exhibit 1: FA1 Review Activities



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FA1 Review Activity Overview

The FA1 is a three-consecutive day review event that will be conducted virtually. All review activities will be conducted by a Review Lead.

Planning Call

- Notification of the FA1 will be given to the grant recipient through the 45-day Letter through Head Start Enterprise System (HSES) Correspondence. Grant recipients can access resources through [HeadStart.gov](https://www.headstart.gov) and the [Aligned Monitoring System 2.0 Virtual Expo](#) to learn more about the FA1 review.
- The assigned Review Lead will reach out to the grant recipient director following the letter notification. The Review Lead will schedule a **planning call** with the director and any designees. This call will include general answers to questions the director may have, any requests for program data prior to the review, and confirmation of the three-day review schedule.

Introductory Meeting

- The **introductory program management meeting** will occur between the Review Lead and the grant recipient's Management Team on the morning of the first day to kick off the review. This virtual meeting will introduce the Review Lead and Management Team members. Management Team members will be invited to share initial context and insights about their respective content areas.

Discussion

- The **Program Governance Discussion** focuses on how the grant recipient engages with their governing body and the policy council. The discussion is conducted virtually during the review week.

Data Tours

- **Data tours** are conducted virtually throughout the review week with program managers and staff for each content area. Through the data tours, program managers provide the Review Lead with a real-time walk-through of data and reports to help the Review Lead understand how the grant recipient's services operate on a daily basis.
- The Human Resources data tour also includes a review of staff qualifications and criminal record check results.

Touchpoints

- **Touchpoints** are held daily between the grant recipient director(s) and the Review Lead. These conversations provide an opportunity to check in about the status of the review activities and discuss any coordination or scheduling challenges that may arise. Touchpoints also provide an opportunity for the director(s) to ask questions or to provide any additional information to the Review Lead, as needed.
- The FA1 review ends with the touchpoint on the last day of the review.

Post-Review

Following the FA1 Review, grant recipients will receive a final report that will share information on the grant recipient's performance.

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Road Map to the FA1 Protocol

This protocol and the accompanying *FA1 Monitoring at a Glance* resource documents are designed to guide the grant recipient in its preparation for the FA1. It includes the topic areas for discussion, specific performance areas for assessment, the Federal laws and regulations associated with each area of performance. This protocol also describes the monitoring approaches used during the FA1 monitoring review.

The protocol is divided into the following six sections:

- Program Design, Management, and Improvement (PDMI)
- Education and Child Development Services (ECD)
- Health Services (HEA)
- Family and Community Engagement Services (FCE)
- Fiscal Infrastructure (FIS)
- Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance (ERSEA)

The grant recipient will find the following headings in each content area:

Monitoring Approach

The protocol outlines the specific review activities (detailed in the Methodology section above) that are included in each content area, as well as data and documentation that grant recipients will be asked to provide. Grant recipients can navigate to individual sections of the FA1 Monitoring Protocol to learn more about the activities included in the review of each content area.

Federal Laws and Regulations

Each section of the protocol includes a list of Federal laws and regulations grounding the review activities. Grant recipients should note that they remain accountable for all HSPPS as well as other Federal, state, and local laws and regulations guiding program operations, management, and oversight.

On August 21, 2024, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) published a final rule, [Supporting the Head Start Workforce and Consistent Quality Programming](#), which included a number of updates to the HSPPS. Grant recipients must be in compliance with some of the updated requirements in the final rule as of October 21, 2024; other requirements have later compliance dates. A detailed list of the compliance timelines is available [here](#).

To support grant recipients in adjusting to and implementing the updated requirements, OHS has only made a limited number of changes to the language of the FY25 FA1 review based on the final rule. Federal laws and regulations included in the FA1 review that have been updated through the final rule will be marked with an asterisk in the table included in each content area.

Performance Areas and Performance Measures

The content of each section is organized into a set of Performance Areas. Performance Areas identify specific areas of performance associated with HSPPS. Each Performance Area is made up of Performance Measures that provide a more focused topic for the review event.

Collectively, the Performance Areas, Performance Measures, and review activities will support the OHS in understanding the strategies, practices, and systems programs have implemented, and how grant recipients are providing quality services to children and families and progressing toward program goals.

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Program Design, Management, and Improvement

Overview

The grant recipient must design a program that meets the community's needs and ensures program, fiscal, and human resources structure and systems that provide effective management and oversight of all program areas. The grant recipient must be intentional in its program design and its ability to address the characteristics, strengths, and needs of children and families they serve.

The Review Lead will monitor three areas in **Program Design, Management, and Improvement (PDMI)**: (1) program design and strategic planning; (2) program governance; and (3) staffing and staff member supports.

Monitoring Approach

PDMI will be monitored through:

Introductory Meeting with managers will start the review event and allow the reviewers to get to know the Review Lead and the grant recipient's program options

Discussion with leadership, the governing body, and the policy council will allow the Review Lead to understand supervision and oversight

Data Tour to review how managers track and use data relating to human resources, program design, and ongoing monitoring and oversight across content areas

The grant recipient will be asked to share real-time data and documentation in areas including but not limited to:

- Community assessment
- Organizational chart
- Data for ongoing monitoring and continuous improvement
- Standards of conduct
- Data or reports used to understand trends
- Data and reports shared with governing body and policy council

Federal Laws and Regulations in PDMI

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| ✓ 642(c)(1)(B) | ✓ 1302.11(b)(5)* | ✓ 1302.102(a)(1) |
| ✓ 642(c)(1)(E)(iv)(VII)(bb) | ✓ 1302.20(a)(1) | ✓ 1302.102(c)(1-2) |
| ✓ 642(c)(2)(B)(ii) | ✓ 1302.90(c)* | |
| ✓ 642(c)(2)(D)(2)(A-I) | ✓ 1302.91(a) | |
| ✓ 642(d)(2) | ✓ 1302.101(a)* | |

Requirements in the table above that have been updated through the final rule are marked with (*).

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Performance Area 1: Program Design and Strategic Planning

This area will focus on how the grant recipient uses data to inform program design, planning, and improvement. Community assessment and ongoing program data collection and monitoring should routinely guide data-driven decisions to best meet the needs of the grant recipient's children, families, and staff members, and the broader community served.

Performance Measure 1.1: The grant recipient's program structure and systems are designed to be responsive to community needs and are informed by community strengths and resources.

1302.11(b)(5) and 1302.20(a)(1)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Conducts a community assessment to understand shifts in community needs, strengths, and available resources
- Aligns program design and services based on community needs

**Note: This requirement has been updated through the final rule; however, in FY25 OHS will not issue findings based on the new language of this regulation.*

Performance Measure 1.2: The grant recipient has an established process for using data to monitor performance and progress toward goals and to inform continuous improvement. 1302.102(c)(1-2)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Accurately maintains, collects, and uses program data to monitor service areas
- Analyzes various data across service areas to inform continuous program improvement

Performance Area 2: Program Governance

This area will capture how the governing body and policy council use their expertise and experience to provide data-informed oversight to ensure the grant recipient provides quality services for children and families and progresses toward program goals.

Performance Measure 2.1: The grant recipient establishes program governance with sufficient expertise and representation that supports effective program oversight and engagement with families and the community. 642(c)(1)(B) and 642(c)(2)(B)(ii)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Maintains a governing body and a policy council that supports the grant recipient with its expertise

Performance Measure 2.2: The grant recipient has strategies to support collaboration across program staff members, the governing body, and the policy council to facilitate effective program governance.

642(c)(1)(E)(iv)(VII)(bb); 642(c)(2)(D); 642(d)(2)(A-I); and 1302.102(a)(1)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Provides the governing body and the policy council with data that are necessary to effectively conduct their responsibilities
- Collaborates with the governing body and the policy council to set and update program goals

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Performance Area 3: Staffing and Staff Member Supports

This area will focus on the grant recipient's established systems to provide effective oversight of all staff members and maintain effective staffing structures through focus on staff retention and recruitment.

Performance Measure 3.1: The grant recipient's leadership and management team has clearly defined, manageable roles and responsibilities and the appropriate experience to execute Head Start program operations. 1302.91(a) and 1302.101(a)(1)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Offers effective management and oversight of each program area through supportive program management structures
- Maintains qualified and competent staff members in leadership and management positions

Performance Measure 3.2: The grant recipient has a defined approach for ongoing supervision and support of staff members. 1302.90(c)*; 1302.101(a)(2)*; and 1302.101(a)(3)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Provides regular and ongoing supervision for individual development and delivery of quality services across content areas
- Provides a culture of safety across all program options through proactive Human Resources policies and procedures
- Allocates sufficient staffing resources to service areas to promote continuity of care

**Note: This requirement has been updated through the final rule and will be monitored through the FY25 FA1 review.*

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Education and Child Development Services

Overview

The grant recipient's services should lay a strong foundation for children's lifelong learning through high-quality early education and child development services that promote the cognitive, social, and emotional growth of children, including those with disabilities. The grant recipient should use data to assess progress toward meeting the program's school readiness goals, to understand and address children's individual needs, and to inform continuous improvement related to curriculum selection, instruction, and professional development.

The Review Lead will monitor four areas in **Education and Child Development Services (ECD)**: (1) *curricula, screening, and assessment tools*; (2) *teaching strategies and learning environments*; (3) *qualifications, professional development, and coaching*; and (4) *transitions*.

The Review Lead will also explore approaches to supervising and supporting staff members to help them provide quality services; monitoring and adjusting staffing to ensure staff members have the capacity to do their work; and using data to track services, monitor for quality, and assess progress and outcomes. These activities will contribute to assessment of the grant recipient's program oversight, ongoing monitoring, and continuous improvement capacity and efforts.

Monitoring Approach

ECD will be monitored through:

Data Tour with education management, education staff members, and human resources management to better understand how program oversight and ongoing monitoring ensure high-quality education services, and how staff member training and practices support individualized learning for children

The grant recipient will be asked to share real-time data and documentation in areas including but not limited to:

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| ➤ Child assessment data | ➤ Developmental screenings tracking | ➤ Education staff member qualifications |
| ➤ Instruction individualization for children | ➤ Referrals and follow-up services | ➤ Coaching implementation data |
| ➤ Curricula implementation tools | ➤ Examples of professional development approaches | |

Federal Laws and Regulations in ECD

- | | | |
|----------------|----------------|-------------------|
| ✓ 1302.31(a–b) | ✓ 1302.35(b–c) | ✓ 1302.91(e)(1–2) |
| ✓ 1302.32(a) | ✓ 1302.35(e) | ✓ 1302.91(e)(6) |
| ✓ 1302.33(a–b) | ✓ 1302.61(a) | ✓ 1302.92(b–c)* |

Requirements in the table above that have been updated through the final rule are marked with (*).

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Performance Area 1: Curricula, Screening, and Assessment Tools

This area will focus on how the grant recipient implements its curriculum, screening, and assessment tools and uses data to support the ongoing needs and progress of children.

Performance Measure 1.1: The grant recipient uses research-based and culturally appropriate curricula to support child outcomes. 1302.32(a)(1)(i); 1302.32(a)(1)(ii); and 1302.32(a)(2)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Uses a research-based curriculum appropriate for all provided program options
- Establishes a process for monitoring curriculum implementation

Performance Measure 1.2: The grant recipient uses appropriate screening tools to refer children for evaluation as indicated. 1302.33(a)(1); 1302.33(a)(2); and 1302.33(a)(3)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Performs developmental screenings for all children within the prescribed timeframes using research-based tools
- Uses tracking and monitoring systems to ensure that any developmental concerns identified through the screening are promptly addressed through referral or follow-up

Performance Measure 1.3: The grant recipient uses appropriate ongoing child assessment tools to support children's progress and to individualize for every child. 1302.33(b)(1)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Conducts ongoing child assessments of children's progress aligned with the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five

Performance Area 2: Teaching Strategies and Learning Environments

This area will focus on how the grant recipient uses data to provide high-quality instruction, teaching practices, and classroom environments that address the individual needs of children, as well as on the grant recipient's approach to home-based services to promote the caregiver role.

Performance Measure 2.1: The grant recipient's staff members identify effective teaching strategies that are responsive to children's needs. 1302.31(b)(2); 1302.33(b)(2); 1302.35(c)(4); and 1302.61(a)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Individualizes classroom practices to meet the needs of enrolled children, including dual language learners and children with disabilities
- Uses data to improve teaching and home visiting strategies

Performance Measure 2.2: The grant recipient develops engaging learning environments that promote healthy development for children. 1302.31(a)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Individualizes classroom environments to meet the needs of enrolled children

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Performance Measure 2.3: The grant recipient uses home visits and group socializations to promote parent engagement and extend children’s learning (if applicable). 1302.35(b)(1) and 1302.35(e)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Promotes parent’s role as the child’s teacher through intentional and focused home visit plans for home-based programs
- Offers parents and families the opportunity to help plan group socializations that promote opportunities to strengthen parent-child relationships and understanding of child development

Performance Area 3: Qualifications, Professional Development, and Coaching

This area will focus on the grant recipient’s established system to maintain qualified, competent staff members, and provide professional development opportunities that promote high-quality teaching practices.

Performance Measure 3.1: The grant recipient has qualified education staff members. 1302.91(e)(1); 1302.91(e)(2)(ii); and 1302.91(e)(6)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Has a process to ensure appropriate qualifications for center-based Head Start Preschool lead teachers, center-based Early Head Start teachers, and home visitors

Performance Measure 3.2: The grant recipient establishes a professional development system to support delivery of quality education and child development services. 1302.92(b)(6)*

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Establishes a comprehensive approach to professional development

**Note: This requirement has been updated through the final rule and will be monitored through the FY25 FA1 review.*

Performance Measure 3.3: The grant recipient uses a research-based coaching strategy to support education staff members in using effective teaching practices. 1302.92(c)(2)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Uses a research-based coaching strategy for staff members who would benefit the most from intensive coaching

Performance Area 4: Transitions

This area will focus on how the grant recipient supports Head Start and Early Head Start children to transition out of the program.

Performance Measure 4.1: The grant recipient establishes intentional transition strategies for Head Start Preschool and Early Head Start children.

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Incorporates strategies to support successful transitions to new learning environments

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Health Services

Overview

The grant recipient must provide high-quality health, oral health, mental health, and, if applicable, expectant family services that are supportive of each child’s growth and school readiness. The grant recipient must have an approach for maintaining a system of health and safety practices.

The Review Lead will monitor four areas in **Health Services (HEA)**: (1) *child health and oral health status and care*; (2) *mental health and social and emotional well-being*; (3) *safe and sanitary environments*; and, if applicable, (4) *expectant families*.

The Review Lead will also explore approaches to supervising and supporting staff members to help them provide quality services; monitoring and adjusting staffing to ensure staff members have the capacity to do their work; and using data to track services, monitor for quality, and assess progress and outcomes. These activities will contribute to assessment of the grant recipient’s program oversight, ongoing monitoring, and continuous improvement capacity and efforts.

Monitoring Approach

HEA will be monitored through:

Data Tour with health management, staff members, and human resources management to better understand how the grant recipient tracks data and routinely monitors services relating to child health, oral health, mental health and social-emotional well-being, and safe and sanitary environments

The grant recipient will be asked to share real-time data and documentation in areas including but not limited to:

- Training plans
- Oral and medical health determinations tracking
- Policies and procedures related to child behavior guidance
- Criminal record checks
- Vision and hearing screening tracking
- Referrals and follow-up services
- Child Incident tracking
- Maintenance plans and records
- Tracking of ongoing sources of health care and health insurance

Additionally, grant recipients that serve expectant families will be asked to share additional data and documentation including but not limited to:

- Examples of prenatal and postnatal supports
- Tracking system for newborn visits
- Expectant families’ referrals and follow-up

Federal Laws and Regulations in HEA

- ✓ 1302.17(a–b)*
- ✓ 1302.40(b)*
- ✓ 1302.42(a–d)*
- ✓ 1302.45(a)(3)*
- ✓ 1302.47(b)*
- ✓ 1302.90(b)

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Additionally, grant recipients that serve expectant families will also be monitored on the following Federal regulations:

✓ 1302.80(c-d)*

✓ 1302.81(a)*

Requirements in the tables above that have been updated through the final rule are marked with (*).

Performance Area 1: Child Health and Oral Health Status and Care

This area will focus on the grant recipient's established systems to assist children and families to connect to necessary health and oral care including referrals. The grant recipient also uses the expertise of the Health and Mental Health Services Advisory Committee to address program and community needs.

Performance Measure 1.1: The grant recipient has a process to ensure children become and remain up-to-date on a schedule of age-appropriate medical and oral health care, including needs for referrals and follow-up care. 1302.40(b)*; 1302.42(a)(1); 1302.42(b)(1)(i-ii); 1302.42(b)(2); 1302.42(b)(4)*; and 1302.42(d)(2)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Determines that all children have ongoing sources of health care and health insurance coverage within 30 days
- Confirms that a health care provider has made determinations of medical and oral care for all children within 90 days
- Monitors vision and hearing screenings for all children within 45 days
- Identifies children's nutritional needs, taking into account available health information
- Supports children and families to become up-to-date on preventative medical and oral health care
- Tracks referrals and follow-up services for children who were identified through the screening process
- Establishes a Health and Mental Health Services Advisory Committee

**Note: This requirement has been updated through the final rule and will be monitored through the FY25 FA1 review.*

Performance Area 2: Mental Health and Social and Emotional Well-Being

This area will focus on how the grant recipient provides mental health services to children, families, and staff members to address needs and promote continued social and emotional development.

Performance Measure 2.1: In partnership with a qualified mental health consultant, the grant recipient develops a positive program environment that promotes the mental health and social and emotional well-being of children. 1302.45(a)(3)*

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Maintains an active arrangement with a mental health consultant who is a licensed mental health professional or who is supervised by a licensed mental health professional
- Annually evaluates how the mental health consultation services meet the needs of the program

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- Uses the mental health consultant to build the capacity of adults to support the mental health and social and emotional needs of children

**Note: This requirement has been updated through the final rule; however, in FY25 OHS will not issue findings based on the new language of this regulation.*

Performance Measure 2.2: The grant recipient develops practices that prohibit the use of expulsion and severely limit suspension. 1302.17(a)* and 1302.17(b)*

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Prohibits the use of unenrollment from the program in response to children's behaviors
- Prohibits and/or severely limits the use of suspension in response to children's behaviors

**Note: This requirement has been updated through the final rule and will be monitored through the FY25 FA1 review.*

Performance Area 3: Safe and Sanitary Environments

This area will focus on how the grant recipient maintains safety in staffing, facilities, materials, and equipment through establishing and implementing effective monitoring, policies, and procedures.

Performance Measure 3.1: The grant recipient develops appropriate administrative safety practices and policies.

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Follows a process to ensure that all reportable incidents affecting the health and safety of children are reported to the Regional Office in a timely manner

Performance Measure 3.2: The grant recipient completes background checks prior to hire for staff members. 1302.90(b)(1); 1302.90(b)(2); 1302.90(b)(3); 1302.90(b)(4); and 1302.90(b)(5)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Completes all necessary background checks for staff members and assesses all relevant information
- Ensures the safety of children during the background check process
- Establishes a process to update background checks every 5 years

Performance Measure 3.3: The grant recipient has an approach to maintain safe environments through staff member training and ongoing oversight of facilities, equipment, and materials. 1302.47(b)(1)(ix); 1302.47(b)(2)(v); and 1302.47(b)(4)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Establishes systems to identify potential safety risks in facilities and equipment
- Conducts preventative maintenance and corrects identified safety issues
- Develops a plan to ensure that children are not exposed to lead in paint or water in any facilities*
- Provides training on health and safety practices and expectations to staff members

**Note: This requirement has been updated through the final rule; however, in FY25 OHS will not issue findings based on the new language of this regulation.*

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Performance Area 4: Expectant Families (if applicable)

This Performance Area will focus on how the grant recipient provides high-quality services to enrolled expectant families and supports the transition of the newborn.

Performance Measure 4.1: The grant recipient has a process to facilitate connections to comprehensive services for each expectant family and provide appropriate newborn services following the birth of the infant. 1302.80(c); 1302.80(d)*; and 1302.81(a)*

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Provides education and support across various topics relevant for expectant families, including pregnant women and their partners
- Facilitates connections and referrals for expectant families to access comprehensive services that meet families' needs
- Schedules a newborn visit with each expectant family and baby within 2 weeks of the baby's birth

**Note: This requirement has been updated through the final rule and will be monitored through the FY25 FA1 review.*

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Family and Community Engagement Services

Overview

The grant recipient must integrate parent and family engagement strategies into all systems and program services to support family well-being and promote children’s learning and development. Grant recipients are encouraged to develop innovative two-generation approaches that address prevalent needs of families across its program and leverage community partnerships or other funding sources.

The Review Lead will monitor four areas in **Family and Community Engagement Services (FCE)**: (1) *supporting family well-being and family engagement*; (2) *family partnerships*; (3) *promoting strong parent-child relationships and engagement in children’s learning*; and (4) *community partnerships*.

The Review Lead will also explore approaches to supervising and supporting staff members to help them provide quality services; monitoring and adjusting staffing to ensure staff members have the capacity to do their work; and using data to track services, monitor for quality, and assess progress and outcomes. These activities will contribute to assessment of the grant recipient’s program oversight, ongoing monitoring, and continuous improvement capacity and efforts.

Monitoring Approach

FCE will be monitored through:

Data Tour with family services management, staff members, and human resource management to better understand how the grant recipient tracks and monitors for accurate and timely family engagement data and services, provides staff oversight, and supports staff to use effective engagement practices to support families

The grant recipient will be asked to share real-time data and documentation in areas including but not limited to:

- Sample of communication with families
- Tracking system for family referrals and supports
- Tracking of father or male caregiver engagement
- Intake and assessment procedures
- Examples of family strengths, needs, and partnership goals
- Family services staff members qualifications

Federal Laws and Regulations in FCE

- ✓ 1302.50(b)
- ✓ 1302.51(a–b)
- ✓ 1302.52(b–c)
- ✓ 1302.53(a)
- ✓ 1302.91(e)

Note: None of the requirements in this content area have been updated through the final rule.

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Performance Area 1: Supporting Family Well-Being and Family Engagement

This area will focus on how the grant recipient integrates the family into the program through communication and maintaining competent staffing to provide high-quality services to families.

Performance Measure 1.1: The grant recipient has strategies to engage all families in the program through open and responsive communication. 1302.50(b)(2) and 1302.50(b)(5)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Uses methods of two-way communication with families
- Communicates in languages spoken by families

Performance Measure 1.2: The grant recipient has family services staff members who are qualified to support the needs of enrolled families. 1302.91(e)(7)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Monitors and maintains appropriate qualifications for family services staff members

Performance Area 2: Family Partnerships

This area will focus on the grant recipient's established systems for completing, monitoring, and supporting family partnerships for enrolled families.

Performance Measure 2.1: The grant recipient develops a family partnership process that supports family-driven goals. 1302.50(b)(3); 1302.52(b); and 1302.52(c)(3)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Aligns intake and assessment procedures with the Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework
- Collaborates with families to create goals based on family interests and needs
- Conducts ongoing review on the progress in supporting family goals

Performance Area 3: Promoting Strong Parent-Child Relationships and Engagement in Children's Learning

This area will focus on the grant recipient's selection and implementation of a parenting curriculum. The grant recipient's approach should encourage family engagement in program offerings and support the parent as the child's primary educator.

Performance Measure 3.1: The grant recipient builds on parents' knowledge and offers parents the opportunity to practice parenting skills. 1302.50(b)(1); 1302.51(a); and 1302.51(b)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Provides families with opportunities to improve parenting knowledge and skills
- Engages fathers and other male caregivers
- Uses a parenting curriculum that meets the needs of families served, builds on parent knowledge, and offers opportunities for parents to practice their parenting skills

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Performance Area 4: Community Partnerships

This area will focus on how community partnerships are developed and used to support the ongoing needs of the program, families, and children who are served.

Performance Measure 4.1: The grant recipient develops community partnerships that meet the needs and interests of families. 1302.53(a)(1)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Develops community partnerships that facilitate access to resources that align with families' needs or family partnership goals

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Fiscal Infrastructure

Overview

The Fiscal Infrastructure section of the review will focus on how the grant recipient shares information with the director, managers, the governing body, and the policy council; and how the grant recipient uses data to make sound fiscal decisions and ensure fiscal and legal accountability. The review event also monitors for the integrity of fiscal operations, with a focus on mitigating the risk or occurrence of fraud, waste, and abuse.

The Review Lead will monitor two areas in **Fiscal Infrastructure (FIS)**: (1) *budget development, implementation, and oversight*; and (2) *comprehensive financial management structure and system*.

The Review Lead will also explore approaches to supervising and supporting fiscal staff to ensure integrity and consistency in fiscal operations. These activities will contribute to assessment of the grant recipient's program oversight, ongoing monitoring, and continuous improvement capacity and efforts.

Monitoring Approach

FIS will be monitored through:

Data Tour with fiscal management and staff members to better understand how the grant recipient tracks and monitors for accurate and timely financial data and ensures effective fiscal oversight

The grant recipient will be asked to share real-time data and documentation in areas including but not limited to:

- Budget to actual report
- Financial management system
- Fiscal policies and procedures
- Cost allocation plan
- Monthly financial reports
- Reporting forms

Federal Laws and Regulations in FIS

- ✓ 75.302(a–b)
- ✓ 75.403(a)
- ✓ 1302.101(a)(4)
- ✓ 75.327(c)
- ✓ 1302.91(c)
- ✓ 1303.5

Note: None of the requirements in this content area have been updated through the final rule.

Performance Area 1: Budget Development, Implementation, and Oversight

This area will focus on the process the grant recipient follows to develop a budget that is reflective of program goals, and how the budget is monitored and adjusted to be responsive to ongoing needs.

Performance Measure 1.1: The grant recipient establishes a transparent, data-informed process to develop and maintain a budget that aligns with program goals and circumstances. 75.302(b)(5)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Engages stakeholders in the budget development process
- Uses the financial management system to capture actual-to-budgeted costs monthly

FY25 Focus Area One Monitoring Protocol

- Regularly examines and addresses financial impact of emerging program needs and changes

Performance Area 2: Comprehensive Financial Management Structure and System

This area will focus on the grant recipient's establishment and implementation of financial policies and procedures to manage financial records and safeguard Federal funds in accordance with all governing regulations.

Performance Measure 2.1: The grant recipient develops a system for maintaining financial records and generating information needed to manage and safeguard Federal funds. 75.302(a) and 1302.101(a)(4)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Maintains an automated accounting system for financial information and personnel costs
- Establishes a process to meet on-demand Federal reporting requirements

Performance Measure 2.2: The grant recipient develops a system to ensure effective control over all funds, property, and assets to avoid theft, fraud, waste, and abuse. 75.327(c)(1) and 1302.91(c)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Develops and maintains written fiscal policies and procedures
- Maintains qualified fiscal staffing

Performance Measure 2.3: The grant recipient develops a system to ensure that only allowable costs are charged to the Head Start award in accordance with Federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of the Federal award. 75.403(a) and 1303.5

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Determines and documents costs for goods and services that are necessary and reasonable to the program's Head Start award
- Ensures costs are allocated appropriately
- Tracks administrative costs and non-Federal match

FY25 Focus Area One Monitoring Protocol

Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, Attendance

Overview

Grant recipients must ensure compliance with Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance (ERSEA) Federal regulations, including mitigation of enrollment fraud. The grant recipient will share information about ERSEA practices and how data are used to ensure the grant recipient recruits, selects, and enrolls children based on eligibility criteria.

The Review Lead will monitor four areas in **ERSEA**: (1) recruitment; (2) selection; (3) eligibility; and (4) enrollment.

The Review Lead will also explore approaches to supervising and supporting staff members to help them provide quality services; monitoring and adjusting staffing to ensure staff members have the capacity to do their work; and using data to track services, monitor for quality, and assess progress and outcomes. These activities will contribute to assessment of the grant recipient's program oversight, ongoing monitoring, and continuous improvement capacity and efforts.

Monitoring Approach

ERSEA will be monitored through:

Data Tour with ERSEA management and staff members to better understand how the grant recipient tracks and monitors for accurate and timely ERSEA data and uses data to inform ERSEA practices

The grant recipient will be asked to share real-time data and documentation in areas including but not limited to:

- Eligibility tracking system
- Eligibility training records
- Selection criteria
- Enrollment tracking system
- ERSEA policies and procedures

Federal Laws and Regulations in ERSEA

- | | | |
|----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| ✓ 1302.12(h-i) | ✓ 1302.12(m) | ✓ 1302.14(a-b)* |
| ✓ 1302.12(k) | ✓ 1302.13 | ✓ 1302.15(a) |

Requirements in the table above that have been updated through the final rule are marked with (*).

Performance Area 1: Recruitment

This area will focus on how the grant recipient designs and implements recruitment strategies to reach children and families who may be eligible for program services, particularly focusing recruitment to the most vulnerable populations within the community.

Performance Measure 1.1: The grant recipient uses knowledge about the community it serves to develop its recruitment strategy to locate the families with the greatest need. 1302.13

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Identifies children and families with the greatest need in the community

FY25 Focus Area One Monitoring Protocol

Performance Area 2: Selection

This area will focus on how the grant recipient designs and implements a selection process that is responsive to community needs and prioritizes children and families with the greatest need.

Performance Measure 2.1: The grant recipient uses knowledge about the community it serves to develop its selection criteria. 1302.14(a)(1)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Develops and maintains selection criteria based on data from the community needs assessment

Performance Area 3: Eligibility

This area will focus on the grant recipient's established systems to determine eligibility for children and families. This Performance Area will also cover how the grant recipient deters fraud and maintains eligibility requirements as outlined by Federal regulations.

Performance Measure 3.1: The grant recipient has an established process for enrolling eligible families and supporting compliance with eligibility requirements. 1302.12(h); 1302.12(i); 1302.12(k)(2)(i); and 1302.12(m)(2)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Monitors and tracks eligibility of each participant in alignment with Federal regulations
- Retains eligibility documentation in alignment with Federal regulations
- Trains and monitors staff members on the eligibility determination process

Performance Area 4: Enrollment

This area will focus on the grant recipient's approaches to ensure full enrollment across program options, including the enrollment of children with disabilities.

Performance Measure 4.1: The grant recipient develops a process to maintain full enrollment and track current enrollment, including the percentage of enrolled children eligible for services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). 1302.14(b)(1)* and 1302.15(a)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Identifies, tracks, and fills program vacancies
- Maintains at least 10 percent of actual enrollment with children eligible for services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

**Note: This requirement has been updated through the final rule and will be monitored through the FY25 FA1 review.*