

HOUSEKEEPING ITEMS

- All participants are in listen-only mode.
- Participate in discussion via chat.
- Submit all questions via Q&A.



Participate in discussion with the presenters here.

The image shows a dark control bar with three icons: a speech bubble for 'Chat', a hand for 'Raise Hand', and two speech bubbles for 'Q&A'. A blue callout box points to the 'Chat' icon, and another blue callout box points to the 'Q&A' icon.

Ask your questions here.



OFFICE OF HEAD START

An Office of the Administration for Children & Families



Enrollment Forward:

Clarifying Expectations for Expanding Reach in Uncertain Times



Today's Presenters

From the Office of Head Start:

- Shawna Pinckney, *Acting Deputy Director, Office of Head Start*
- Heather Wanderski, *Director, Program Operations Division, Office of Head Start*
- Desmond Clayton, *Program Operations Division, Office of Head Start*



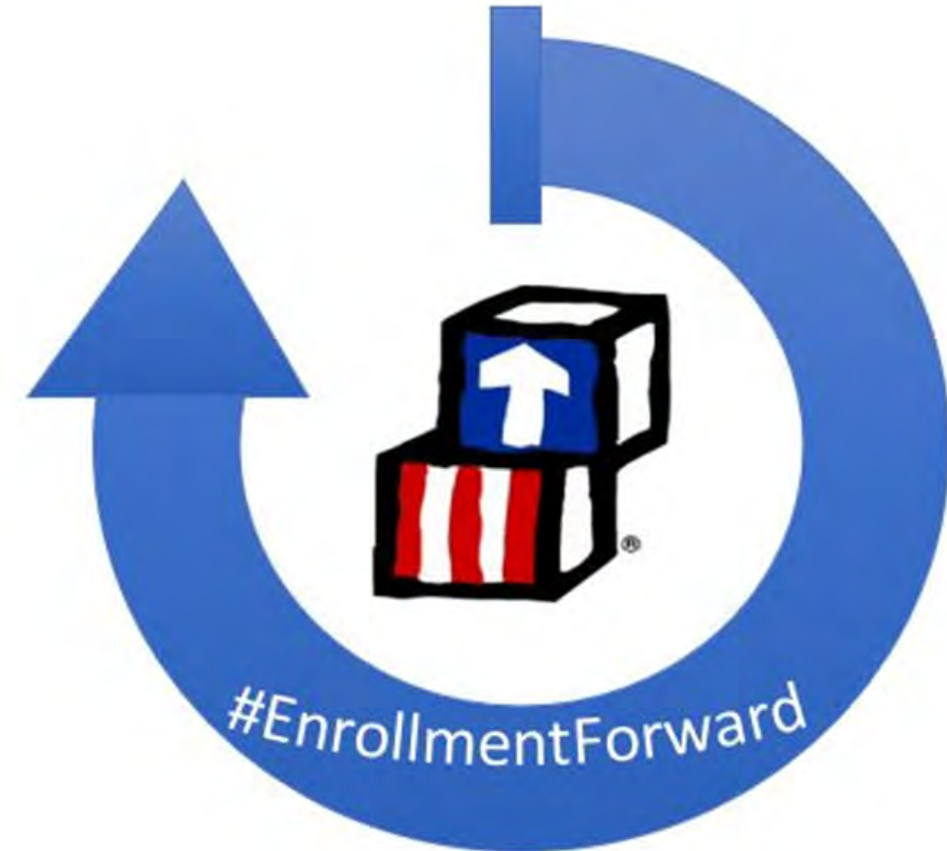
Session Overview



- Introduce Enrollment Forward
- Review of [ACF-PI-HS-21-04](#)
- Q&A
- Resources to consider

Introducing Enrollment Forward Campaign

- Enrollment Forward
 - Recruitment and Enrollment
 - Changing community need
 - Workforce planning



Defining Enrollment Forward

- The Enrollment Forward campaign is designed to support programs as they continue to work towards full enrollment and in-person comprehensive services, as local health conditions allow.
- Through webinars, guidance and other resources, the Office of Head Start (OHS) will focus on areas of concern to programs, including:
 - Program structure
 - Recruitment
 - Enrollment
 - Workforce
 - Health and safety considerations
 - Community needs



Program Instruction ACF-PI-HS-21-04:

Office of Head Start (OHS) Expectations for Head Start Programs PY 21-22

- Issued May 20, 2021
- Key Takeaways from PI 21-04

Operating Status and Enrollment

— For PY 2021 – 2022, OHS expects Head Start and Early Head Start programs to:

- Work toward full enrollment
- Provide comprehensive services
- Return to their approved program options

as CDC guidelines, state and local health department guidance allow, and in consideration of local school districts' decisions.

Program Instruction ACF-PI-HS-21-04:

Office of Head Start (OHS) Expectations for Head Start Programs PY 21-22

Operating Status and Enrollment *continued*

- In September 2021, OHS began reviewing monthly enrollment in the Head Start Enterprise System (HSES) and engaging in ongoing program plans for moving to full enrollment. OHS views this period as part of “ramping up” to full enrollment. Programs should be:
 - Returning to full enrollment in approved program options as soon as possible, understanding that various conditions may limit full ability to do so
 - Communicating with Regional Offices if they are unable to be fully enrolled or serve children in person in their approved program options
- All programs must have plans in place that allow for adaptation to changing guidance and to changes in community conditions. These may affect achieving full enrollment or cause programs to temporarily suspend in-person services

Program Instruction ACF-PI-HS-21-04:

Office of Head Start (OHS) Expectations for Head Start Programs PY 21-22

Virtual and Remote Services

- Virtual and remote services for children are considered an interim strategy in the presence of an emergency or disaster and will not be approved as a locally designed option
- For PY 2021 – 2022, it is unallowable to have a program option run entirely by technology or delivery of educational material, for example. OHS may still support some portion of services to continue remote, such as food delivery
- OHS recognizes that programs have discovered new virtual strategies for engaging families and reinforcing early learning and development at home. Innovations in virtual practices should be used as enhancements rather than substitutes for previously approved program options and service delivery, such as parent conferences

Program Instruction ACF-PI-HS-21-04:

Office of Head Start (OHS) Expectations for Head Start Programs PY 21-22

Recruitment and Selection

- All recipients should update their community assessment to guide their intensive recruitment efforts and to ensure they are reaching families most in need of services. If a program determines that their pre-pandemic approved program option will not meet the needs of the community, they must submit an updated community assessment and request approval for a change in scope
- Programs should also revisit their established selection criteria based on findings from their updated community assessment
- The funds recipients have received from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) and Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Acts, as well from the American Rescue Plan (ARP), can and should be used to support enhanced community partnerships and related recruitment efforts

How does this information impact the Program Instruction ACF-PI-HS-21-04 that was issued last spring?

Programs should continue to follow OHS expectations outlined in ACF-PI-HS-21-04 for Head Start programs to continue to work towards full enrollment and providing in-person comprehensive services for all enrolled children, regardless of program option.

The Office of Head Start will continue to monitor and review monthly enrollment reports in the Head Start Enterprise System (HSES) and discuss plans for moving to full enrollment. However, monthly enrollment reports will not be evaluated for the purposes of determining which programs enter into the Full Enrollment Initiative at this time.

Does this change the expectation for full enrollment?

No, programs should continue to work toward full enrollment and in-person comprehensive services, contingent upon CDC, state, and local health department guidance, and in consideration of local school districts' decisions. All programs are expected to continue providing or move toward providing in-person services, as local health conditions allow. During this time programs should continue to:

- Review their updated community assessment
- Adjust recruitment strategies and selection criteria in response to community data
- Consider staffing plan and how best to support staff
- Engage in planning for in-person comprehensive service for all enrolled children

Programs must communicate closely with their Regional Office during this time and discuss how they will reach full in-person enrollment consistent with their approved program options.

Will OHS consider approving program options such as hybrid or remote services?

No, virtual and remote services for children are considered an interim strategy in the presence of an emergency or disaster and will not be approved as a locally designed option. While OHS supports the use of virtual and remote services, they are not an acceptable replacement for in-person comprehensive services. OHS recognizes that programs have discovered new virtual strategies for engaging families and reinforcing learning and development at home. Innovations in virtual practice should be used as enhancements rather than substitutes for approved program options and service delivery.

If a service area is experiencing a surge, or high transmission of COVID-19 cases, can the HS program opt to temporarily use virtual or remote services?

OHS emphasizes the importance of programs regularly consulting CDC guidelines, state and local health department guidance, and taking in consideration of local school districts' decisions as they continue to work toward fully in-person, comprehensive services. OHS recognizes that the surge in COVID-19 cases, largely due to the Omicron variant, has impacted the return to in-person Head Start services in some communities.

Yes, in cases where a program is experiencing high COVID-19 transmission in their service area, programs may temporarily use virtual and remote services. All programs are expected to have plans in place to allow for changes in community conditions, such as high community transmission of COVID-19, that may result in temporary use of virtual and remote services for a short-term basis. These plans must be established within a program's policies and procedures.

Virtual and remote services can create instability and stress for children and families, as they disrupt children's opportunities for learning, socialization, nutrition, and continuity and routine. As such, programs must communicate with their Regional Office about any proposed short-term use of virtual or remote services in response to a surge, or high transmission in COVID-19 cases. Further, programs would need to reassess with their Program Specialist should their virtual and remote services extend beyond two weeks.

What resources and supports can OHS offer to support recipients with families hesitant to return due to safety issues?

Consistent, honest, and respectful communication with families is a cornerstone of Head Start family engagement. Engagement strategies and current channels of communication with families provides excellent avenues to talk about vaccination. OHS encourages Head Start programs to explore vaccine outreach and support community activities:

- Expand or create new vaccine communication channels with families
- Reach out to your local health departments and clinics to share articles, blogs, and social media messages
- Adapt and deliver COVID-19 vaccine messages from the CDC that will resonate in your program
- Become a vaccine site for families

What resources and supports can OHS offer to support recipients with workforce issues?

Recruiting and retaining qualified staff have been long-standing challenges in early childhood education. To address staff challenges, program may consider hiring individuals as teaching assistants or aides and work with those individuals to develop a plan for achieving the required degree or credential to move into a lead teaching position. Programs are strongly encouraged to work with interested parents and assist them with achieving necessary credentials to move into teaching or other staff positions. Additional strategies to recruit, train, and retain qualified staff may include:

- Consider staffing schedules and other benefits to support staff
- Create a culture of belonging
- Understand what drives staff motivation
- Develop collaborative efforts and initiatives to enrich the early childhood workforce
- Promote staff and family well-being

How long will the flexibilities last?

Current flexibilities will remain in effect until further notice.

How soon will recipients be notified of the restart of the Full Enrollment Initiative?

OHS will provide ample notice to programs to allow for preparation and planning before resuming pre-pandemic practices for tracking and monitoring enrollment. This will include evaluating monthly enrollment reports to determine which programs enter into the Full Enrollment Initiative.

Resources to Consider

- [OHS COVID-19 Updates](#)
- [Head Start Forward Campaign](#)
 - ERSEA and Program Structure
 - Moving Forward for ERSEA Success
- [ACF-IM-HS-19-01: General Disaster Recovery Flexibilities](#)
- [Vaccination for Head Start Families](#)
- [Resources to Build and Retain a Strong Education Workforce](#)
- MyPeers



Save the Dates



Enrollment Forward Webinar Series

Registration information coming soon!

Recruitment and Strategic Approaches to Enrollment

Tuesday, February 1, 2022, 1–2:30 p.m. ET

Workforce: Intentional Planning

Tuesday, February 22, 2022, 1-2:30 p.m. ET

Recipient Panel on Success Stories

Tuesday, March 15, 2022, 1-2:30 p.m. ET

ERSEA Institute 2022 - April 5-7, 2022



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