

**Head Start Program Performance Standards Webinar
November 2016**

Ann Linehan: This is Ann Linehan, the deputy of the Office of – deputy director of the Office of Head Start. And I'm here with Adia Brown, our lead monitoring senior program specialist, whom you all know. And we are actually – today is an unusual day. We're broadcasting live from the state of: Crowd: West Virginia!

Ann: We were here joining their conference, and we decided what a wonderful idea to do, to have a live broadcast. They are sworn to silence while we are talking. They can clap when we, we say something that they think is terrific. And they can gasp when they, you know, when they think we're saying something that is not so terrific. I do want to let folks know this is a bit challenging experiment for us. We have our trusted colleagues in the Washington, DC office. Beth Meloy is there, and Alana, and, I think, Marissa may be there, and Byron. And, they're going to be helping us with some Q's and A's, with some of the PowerPoints, and also helping us with some of the questions. So, let us begin. And if we can go to the first slide. Now, Byron, what you have to help us out with is that we don't see the full slide. So, someone is going to have to help us out here. Going to have to slide it over. Slide it over.

Alana Buroff: All right. You got it?

Ann: I think we have it now. Okay. So again, we want to start off, well today's agenda, we want to go over some hot topics. And then, we're going to focus on human resources. And then, wrap up with some Q's and A's. We don't take live Q's and A's because it became a little bit unruly. But we are trying to answer the questions that you sent in ahead of time, and if you are not, if we're not able to get to those questions, we're certainly will have a vehicle to get those, to get those answers back to you. Now, for those of us who are here, we can't actually see the slide. We can see one-half of it.

So, hold on while we try to get the slide up here. Fred, do you think you could help? Hold on folks.

While they're trying to get our slide intact, why don't we go to November's Hot Topics. Clearly, the criminal record checks are a hot topic. We have, we've probably gotten more questions about the criminal record check than I think any other regulation that exists. We do have one Q&A, already have established that I think will bring some relief. But then, I want to bring up something else. But let me, I just want to rise this question and answer. One is, one question that came in about the criminal record checks, is do agencies have a complete background check conducted for all individuals they contract with, or are on any contract, even if they don't have contact with children or families.

So, the answer, if you take a look at 1302.90, and we have added some additional guidance for this, requires agencies to have a complete background check for contractors or individuals on a contract whose activities involve contact within or direct services to children and families, or anyone who could have unsupervised access to children and families. So, the guidance that we are getting to that question. Do we have to complete, conduct a complete background check for all individuals that you contract with, or are on a contract, even if they don't have any contact with children or families. I'm going to read the answer again. 1309.290 requires agencies to have a complete background check for contractors or individuals on a contract whose activities involve contact with and/or direct services to children and families, or anyone who could have, who could have unsupervised access to children and families.

So, I think that, that helps narrow the field of those that must have that complete background check, as identified in 1302.90. What I want to say is that we have heard from everybody across the country that the requirement is about the timing, that they're unable to get the checks in time. So let me just review with everybody what the requirements are, and then let's talk about the timing. So, before hire, or directly through contract, there are four things an agency must do. They must conduct an interview. They must verify references. They must conduct a sex offender registries check. And, they must obtain one of the following: state or tribal criminal history with fingerprints, or FBI history with fingerprints. One of those two. After, within 90 days if so if, the first three are done, the interview, the references, and the conducting a sex offenders registry check, and one of the two – state with fingerprints, or the FBI with fingerprints – you can then, that person can begin. But within 90 days of the hire, then you must obtain the other. If you didn't do the state with the fingerprints, you must obtain that. Or, if you haven't done the FBI, you must do that within 90 days. And you almost, also must obtain a child abuse and neglect state registry check if it's available.

Now, some of you have shared with us. "Wait a minute. You know, we get, we get, our state has said, well, we're not going to give you a criminal record check. We're going to give you a green light or a red light." If they get a green light or a red light, you can accept that as your documentation that will inform your decision if you want to hire that person. I'm assuming if you get a red light, it's going to be a lot of trepidation about making any, any, taking any chances. So, the red light, green light documentation, the letter you receive from the state will be acceptable as documentation. What we want to be clear about is that no unsupervised access to children until the complete background check is done. And by complete, we mean all four.

So, you've got to have the interview, the reference, the sex offender check. You've got to obtain – I should have said [Inaudible] – You've got to obtain one the following, the complete would be both. The state and the FBI with fingerprints. Now, we realize that many of you are saying – I learned today in some part of West Virginia, and it may be wider spread, that the state is saying, "We're not going to do that. We're going to do the state and FBI at the same time because you're going to make us do duplicate work." And we know that the FBI check takes longer. So, we know in some cases, it is month delayed, or even longer. We – I want to say probably didn't realize the burden this would be for states, and also what it puts you in a position because we're saying, "Hey. This is effective. Let's go."

So, we are exploring avenues where we can come back and say, we do not have an official position yet. So I want to tell the world here. We're exploring avenues where we could potentially allow folks more time to come into compliance with particularly the checks around the fingerprints. However, we don't want anyone to stop their efforts in trying to get these done. And what we also want to say is that remember we have statutory language that lays out what criminal record checks we had to do prior to these new Standards. And we're saying please, at the very least, ensure you're following what is in the Head Start Act as we work towards sorting out how we're going to get these done within the timeframes.

We do want to note we've tried, we did align these pretty much with the new childcare regulation. But with what the childcare regulation did was give the states a year to come into compliance. And so, the burden is really on the states, because they have to ramp up, because they're going to be getting lots of requests from lots of Head Start grantees across the country for both the state and the FBI checks. So, it

really is building an infrastructure within the states. And we certainly hope in our leadership role that we can support states in achieving what they need to do in building that infrastructure.

So again, we're saying at the very least, keep what is strictly in the Act, and where you can strive to get any part of the checks done that are doable, please do so, and strive to get the fingerprints done. We will continue to work towards, you know, getting some relief to the extent that we can. The other, I probably went way too long on that because it's just a hot topic that I want to skip and wait, but Adia, I know another issue that keeps coming up is the concern about the monitoring, and people are just trying to, you know, get it, take a breath to implement the Standards, and what the heck is going on with monitoring.

Adia Brown: Okay. Well, Ann, it's great to be here. And a lot of fun to always talk to the grantees across the country, and to be here with our friends in West Virginia. And you know, one thing that we thought about was monitoring and new Head Start Program Performance Standards was that people were going to need lots of time to really understand and implement the new Performance Standards.

And so, Dr. Enriquez sent out a letter a few months ago, a while back now, just sort of alerting grantees that we're going to actually limit monitoring for this year. We're still doing CLASS, which is ultimately very important. We have to make sure we don't skip CLASS and grantees. And we're still doing some ERSEA reviews. But other things, we slowed down on monitoring a lot just so that grantees will have the opportunity to learn about the Standards, and start to implement them in their programs. And also, we're thinking about how we can improve monitoring in the future.

One of the things we understood from grantees that our current monitoring systems sometimes causes a lot of burden to the grantee. We're there more often than you had actually anticipated. And so, we wanted to actually think about a new system that gives us some opportunity to come a little less. The other thing is that we thought about the new Standards and how we're giving grantees so much, the ability to really make these their own standards, and their own creativity in showing us how they are using the Standards. And we want to look at what really matters.

So in the old interaction of the monitoring system, we really looked at each individual standard. For example, we looked at did you have an electrical outlet plug. Did you have mulch? And so, those are things that are really at, very much at the basic standard level. And in this new monitoring system, we're really thinking about ways to look at performance, bigger level items, more systemic things for the grantee to help us understand how the grantee is actually making progress for children, what are their outcomes in the program, and how they are actually improving things for the communities and the families that they work in.

Ann: So I think, that's probably good news for grantees. And I just want to mention, though, the one small cohort of grantees that will have monitoring. Could you just speak to those Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships.

Adia: Oh, sure. So, we do, we have a nice new addition to our family, and that's the Head Start Partnerships. And they're about 86 grantees who've we never seen before. So we've never seen any of these partnerships. And so, the Head Start program, we always think it's a very good idea to go out, to see how programs are doing. How they are partnering, what's going on with those programs, and really see whether or not they're starting to meet those Head Start Performance Standards that we have. So,

we're actually going to take a look at 86 programs across 2017, and we actually are going to post the protocol for those programs later on this week.

Ann: But that is just for that cohort, and that in no way says oh, that's what the new protocol looks like.

Adia: That's right. It's just for this cohort, and it's really a way for us to understand how they're performing as partners, and also how are they getting along with starting to implement the Head Start Performance Standards.

Ann: So, let's move on. And I know we'd like to introduce a new resource. If we could move to another slide, Byron. And the new resource for the four or five seconds seems like a long time. We are going to the next slide. Nope. There we are.

Adia: No, one back.

Ann: You can stay with that one. That's totally fine. Let's go to the next one. So, we have a resource on the ECLKC, and it's a little bit hard to – Alana could you maybe walk us through it because our little slide here doesn't look too clear.

Alana: Yeah, if you look on the left-hand side of your slide, you'll see a little black box, and it says, it has the handout there on, under "Event Resources."

Ann: And the name of the handout is Staff Qualifications?

Alana: Yep. It's the chart up on Staff Qualifications.

Ann: I can't stress enough how helpful this is because if you take a look at this chart, it tells you about all the effective dates for, you know, what positions must have their qualifications, by when. It tells you about the effective dates around all the staffing positions. And it's really user-friendly, and it's something that will help programs easily understand in your own planning. If I have 18 months to do something, what do I have to do now in order to be there in 18 months. If I have a year from now, what is that we need to put into place. So, this is extremely helpful document that people can download very easily. Alright. Why don't we go to the next slide. Adia?

Adia: I'll just wait for – oh, there he is. The next slide. So great.

[Laughter]

There's a little delay here over us, for us, but we're really happy about this month's focus, and we're really going to talk about human resource management. So, we know that people out there and here are really excited to hear about, you know, what do the new Standards say as it relates to human resources and the management of those. And that's going to be our focus for this month, and hopefully you guys will be able to follow along and get lots of new information. So, let's go to the next slide. So, in this section, there are actually five parts to the Human Resources Management section. And if you look up on your screen, if you can see it really clearly. There are Personnel Policies. Staff Qualifications and Competency Requirements. Training and Professional Development. Staff Health and Wellness, and Volunteers. So, we're going to use today to really talk about all of those sections and give you some insight into what they all mean.

Ann: Next slide please.

Adia: So, here's a nice slide that really shows you one of the elements that are happening in human resources. And as you can see, there's two ladies. They're sitting there. They're talking. They look all happy. And, this is a great example of what coaching may look like in your program. And so, as part of this, as part of our talk today, we're going to talk a little bit about coaching, and what that means, and how it's written in the Standards. And so, we hope that you enjoy. As Ann said earlier, there are lots of people on the call to really help us through this, and help you understand what's happening in this section. We have Beth Meloy, Marissa Zut, we have Alana, and a lot of other central office staff members who are here with Ann and I to help us get through human resources.

Ann: So, let's start with, and then again, we'll go to the next slide. And we're going to keep calling out the numbers. 1302.90 Personnel Policies. And this section deals with the establishing of personnel policies, background checks, standards of conduct, and communication with dual language learners and their families. I think one thing that is new, is sort of new, is no longer in existence, is staff performance appraisals are no longer required. But that doesn't mean that grantees don't need to access their staff's needs and skill levels. And you'll clearly see that articulated, particularly for education staff.

Again, when we take something out of the, when we remove part of a regulation, our regulation, if it's something that has worked for programs, no one is saying you can't continue to do it. We're just saying it's not something that we require. It's something that your state, or licensing could require, but just no longer in, in the Head Start Standards. Written personnel policies and procedures are still required, and of course, standards of conduct. We talked, I think I went through pretty extensively the section on background checks. So, I don't think we need to spend more time on that. Beth, let me just point to you. Is there anything that I missed on the background checks that you think is important to bring people's attention to?

Beth Meloy: Ann, thanks so much. I think that the only thing that I would highlight is for folks if they're looking feverishly in their Standards, and they're looking for the language that you read around access to children, and which contractors actually need background checks, that that is language that we're going to be coming out with publically, clarifying. They won't necessarily find it in the Standards right now. And so, that's a preview. So, I just wanted to clarify for folk in case they're looking and they are unable to find it, that the reason that they can't find it is that it's actually not there, and that's why we feel the need to clarify.

Ann: And I am glad that you pointed that out, but I think, also, because we're probably stating that in which we did, folks can take it to the bank, and plan accordingly.

Beth: Yes.

Ann: So the next thing, and I always think this is a hidden jewel, and it kind of reminds me of a conversation we had today around the standards of conduct. You will see in 1302.90 there is a list and a regulations, it's not exhaustive, that grantees could add additional items to the standards of conduct. That applies to all staff, consultants, contractors, and volunteers. And really, your personnel policies and procedures must include appropriate penalties for staff consultants, contractors, and volunteers who violate the standards of conduct.

I think what is interesting, and I just want to put in a plug for, for training. I think sometimes programs have these standards in their personnel policies, or imbedded in other policies in their agencies, and not

enough time is spent on training. I think if people understand the consequences of I want to say negative, inappropriate, bad behavior, I think that people think a little bit more carefully about their actions, and I certainly think, as we were talking earlier with our folks in West Virginia, when we see findings, you know, where teacher grabbed a child, or the teacher, you know, slapped a child. One could hardly believe that the teacher would put a hand on a child in a negative way. But I think we can't train on these enough because, I think, as programs bring focus to what the expectations are for staff behavior and standards of conduct, then I think we tell, if the message we're giving to staff is critically important. I think the other thing that is new, and I think that this is a really important, is the whole issue of communication with dual language learners. We're here in West Virginia, it's not a huge issue, but it's probably going to be emerging over time.

We know that many of our communities are seeing an absolute amazing increase of children whose first language is not English. But, what we're really looking at in these Standards is a program must ensure staff, program consultants, contractors are familiar with the ethnic background and heritages of the families in the program, and are able to serve and communicate effectively, either directly or through interpretation and translation. I can remember many years ago, I was at a community, not, on the East Coast, and they had, I think, 40 percent increase in the number of children that did not speak, their primary language was not English. And, I remember they said that they communicated with the parents, they communicated with parents by putting a little message in the child's knapsack if the child went home that was an inter – it was in the child's home language.

This is, this is not just communicating with paper. It's communicating the way that you would communicate with a parent whose language was your own. And again, the, raising the sensitivity to this is just not what's happened in the classroom with dual language learners, but it really is about all the people who has touched the family. And again, another one we just want to mention that is not new to people but the majority of children or home-based program speak the same language, at least one staff member or home visitor must speak the same language.

And again, I think the point being made here is it really recognizes the importance of effectively communicating with dual language learners' families, and if not, if we don't communicate effectively, there's a chance that the parents will miss out on important information about the child's development. So, just a little – go to the next slide. So, we talked about the key themes of being more comprehensive about requirements around background checks, and now we're going to shift in this section to talk about focus on increased staff qualifications.

And this subpart really has been organized to capture all requirements related to personnel, including staff qualifications, training and professional development. And again, the Standards are designed to ensure the delivery of high-quality and intentional professional development. A program must provide ongoing training and professional development to support staff in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities. This is really, it's more than qualifications. This is about ongoing support, ongoing professional development. And, several of the requirements in this section are include in the background checks. Some staff qualifications and the coordinated coaching strategy have been delayed to allow programs enough time to plan and implement them, as well. And we can talk about some of those delays in the requirements a little bit later.

Adia: Next slide, please? You guys have done a great job in changing the slide. They really are. It's awesome. So, the next portion we want to talk about are really, it's really about the competencies and

what's required of the staff. In 1302.91 has six parts. There's a lot of parts to this section, lots to read here, lots of new understandings to get, and new things that we wanted to put into this section. But, what I really, really, really like about this section of the Standards is the purpose. So, when you get into this part of the section, it has the purpose. And it tells you why in the world did Head Start put up all the standards that are coming here. And, a lot of the purpose was really around making sure that we had staff that had the knowledge, that they had the competencies, that they had the skills in order to perform the duties that we want them to do in Head Start. And that seems like it makes a lot of sense. Right? It makes sense to have the people who kind of know what they are doing to do the job. And so, in this section, we giving you sort of a lot of, of regulation, and a lot of clarification on what we want people to have, to do this job.

Also, this section is really about making sure people have the ongoing training and knowledge around the job. So, it's not just about getting them in there and making sure that they have the degree, or they have their credential, or they meet the requirements. But this section is also about making sure that people get ongoing training and professional development that keeps them sharp on their skills, to keep them really understanding what's the newest thing, or the newest research that is related to what they do in their job. And I think that's really a cool thing. What do you think, Ann?

Ann: Absolutely.

Adia: So, in this section there's a minimum for a lot of things, and for management staff, most of the management staff in this section we require a minimum of a bachelor's degree. And, there's lots of people who we actually want that minimum for. So, we say directors. Seems like it makes sense. They should have a minimum of a bachelor's degree. Fiscal officers and family health, family, health and disabilities managers, they all should have those bachelor's degrees, as well. So, we're saying that this really applies to staff who are hired after the effective date of the rule. And so, that's really good. Gives you a chance to sort of start to beef up the qualifications of your staff if they didn't have them. But it also says that, hey, you had hire people who were there before November 7, that this rule applies to people who you are hiring afterwards. You still want to make sure that they get that ongoing professional development. I think that applies to everyone.

But I think, that, you know, some of the rules around who has to have a bachelor's degree, that really happens after the fact. So, there's also some things that timelines. And these people need, professional, BA degrees, as well. But they don't need them in, until different times. So for example, the child development specialist for FCC providers. They're supposed to have a BA degree, too, but they don't need to get that degree until August 2018. So we have a little bit of time to actually meet that requirement. That's exciting. It's new. We want to make sure that people can actually do it, and that they can find people to fit that rule. The other thing is coaches. So, for the services that are described in 1302.92, those coaches, they also need to have BA degrees, but they don't need to have them until August of 2017. So, it's a little bit shorter timeframe, but they still need to make sure that they have those.

Ann: Can we also point that, sort of that the issue with multiple hats here. You know, I'm the ed coordinator, I'm the ed manager, but I'm also the disabilities coordinator, or the health coordinator. What do I do about degrees?

Adia: Sure, Ann, people ask that all the time. Right? And especially, like, we're in West Virginia right now. Our really rural programs sometimes they have very small programs, and they don't have as many staff. It happens all around the country. But the regulation really says it allows for you to have that variation in staff structure. We want to make sure that you get to have the variation. So, when you fill the role with multiple people, you want to make sure the people have the degree that they need. So for example, if the ed manager, if the position is of an ed manager plus something else, you want to make sure that the ed manager actually meets the requirements that the Act says that they should. Or, if you have a health disabilities, a family services person, preferably, they would have a degree that was related to one or more of those disciplines in order to fulfill that job.

Ann: So, what's important here is if the ed manager, whether or not they're 30 percent ed manager, 50 percent, 70 percent, if part of their job is overseeing educational services, then they must have that degree in early childhood education.

Adia: That's right. And I think that that was a degree that we should have had in the Act for a very long time, for it. And people want to make sure that the ed manager definitely meets that requirement. So, this is just a reminder that staff who, staff have knowledge and training and experience to effectively fulfill their responsibility. The health manager, the disabilities manager, the family services manager, preferably these folks would have a BA degree. And, in the regulation, the word "preferably" is really there. So, you can see that there's a little bit of leeway there.

Ann: So, again. Words matter so much, and emphasis. And it's interesting when I listen to my colleagues, because I can imagine listening to myself, which is dangerous. So, we're saying that the health manager, disability manager, family services manager, a BA degree, period, preferably related to one or more of the disciplines that they oversee.

Adia: That's right.

Ann: So, it's so interesting [Inaudible].

Adia: And, and, thank you, Ann. Because I did that to you earlier. Right? And here, there was not a comma in my, on my slide. So, that really helped a lot. So, the education manager and, as Ann clearly pointed out, must have that degree as related to the Act. And, I told you about the topic, of the specialist in the [Inaudible].

So, there's also some minimum qualifications and requirements for other people in regulations. And so, there's lots of different things. You have to pay attention to the regulations very closely to see who needs what. So, there's no new educational requirements for infants and todd – infant and toddler, or preschool teachers and assistants. What this regulation does is it actually codifies the Act from 2007. So, 2007 sort of gave us all the rules about who needed what. Who needed a CDA, who had to have an AA, who had to have a BA, and then, what timeframe they need to have that. This, this regulation actually codifies that and helps you and clearly lays out who needs to get what.

Ann: And so, for those positions, the infant-toddler teacher, the preschool teachers, the assistant teachers, we're not talking about timelines here because the Early Head Start, the Early Head Start teacher needs –

Adia: A CDA.

Ann: Upon? Hire. [Inaudible] Got the answer right here.

Adia: So, you, so – It's really good to make sure that people are very familiar with the Head Start Act because it has all the timeframes, and it has all the rules around what you need to know for those teachers. We also have some goals around FCC providers. They must be enrolled in a degree, or a CDA equipped, a CDA program or an equivalent program for program credentials. They have to have 18 months to get this credential and must, they must have previous early child care experience. So, for home visitors, they must have a minimum of a home visitor CDA, or a comparable credential. Or, equivalent coursework as part of a degree, as well as competencies related to effective practices within a home visit that aids parents' supporting children's growth related to the ELOF by 2018. Boy, that's a mouthful.

Ann: So, I'm going to ask that, because I know you kind of, for the research there. This whole thing about this is where we begin to sort of include language, enrolling in a degree credential, to [Inaudible] program. We talk about comparable credentials. So, help us out, Beth. Because we've gotten a lot of questions around this, and this is where some of the flexibility comes in, where the grantees own system of determining whether or not something is measuring with something else. Could you comment a little bit on that?

Beth: Sure. So this is Beth. Thanks. I think what we're trying to say here is that we, we do recognize that we have a very qualified home visitor workforce in general, and this CDA is just really setting a minimum. So, we're not, I mean, I think that there is a lot flexibility here to define what's part of a degree in social work, or early childhood, or other things just as an example, would qualify as equivalent coursework. So, we're not trying to add on top our already qualified workforce a lot of additional requirements. Instead, we're trying to take that small portion of our workforce that really doesn't meet, that's, that really doesn't probably have the separation that they need in order to deliver all of the many complicated things that our home visitors really do have to do, you know, on a week to week basis. That those folks are getting a minimum of a home visitor's CDA to ensure that they are getting the training they need to have the skills they need to succeed.

Ann: Thank you.

Adia: So, there's one last group of people. So, we talked about the family child care providers and home visitors. And now, the new regulations really talk about family service staff. And so, these are people who work directly with families, and on the family partnership process. And so, what we're saying about those folks in the new regulations is that they must earn a credential or certificate within 18 months of hire after the rule is effective. So, people who are hired after the rule was effective, within 18 months, they should get their credential. And, there are a number of credentialing programs available for family service staff. Most of these can be accessed through national or state programs, and the National Center on Family – Parent, Family, and Community Engagement is working with the credentialing and degree program for family service worker database. So this is all, this is available for you on ECLKC if you need to find some place and get these credentials, there's a resource that you can tap into.

Ann: And Alana, are they available now, or, or will they be soon? Because I know this is a question we've gotten.

Beth: So, I don't believe that the, any list of family service worker credentials is available right now on the ECLKC. Instead, what we're saying is that we recognize that folks are looking for that, and that we will be providing that as a resource as soon as we are able to.

Ann: Okay. Thanks.

Beth: I will just mention one other thing, which is that there are some examples that, definitely not an exhaustive list, but there are some examples of such credentials in the Preamble. So, just a little bit of a shout-out to read the Preamble, because it does provide some grounding information that can help you as you're working on these things, as we we are working to really get our resources flushed out on the ECLKC.

Alana: And that's in response to comments part of the Preamble. Right, Beth?

Beth: Yes. In the response to comments parts of the Preamble. So you can find that on on the ECLKC, and in that, there will be some explanation. And then, I don't know if this is where you would like to talk, Ann, and just talk a little bit about some other questions that we have received related to this particular policy qualification.

Ann: Yeah, let's do that before we go to the health.

Beth: Okay. So, one of the questions we've received is it whether or not center-based family workers are required to have any early childhood experience, or early childhood college credits to be hired for their positions. And, we can say that the answer is no. So, the only current requirement in the Head Start Standards around family service workers, again, it's only for family service workers who are working on the family partnership process, who are hired after November 7, 2016, so who are new hires, and that requirement is that they within 18 months of hire have that credential or certification in social work, human services, family services, counseling, or related field.

So, I think that's just an important place to highlight. If it's not, if it doesn't say so within the Standards, then it's not a requirement. The thing that I think is important to always hark and fact to, however, as you're thinking about that, really is that section that Adia pointed out at the beginning of this staff qualifications and content [Inaudible] piece, which is that purpose, which tells us that the purpose of all staff qualifications and competencies really is to ensure that staff have the skills, knowledge, training, and experience they need to be able to fulfill their roles in a high-quality way. So, always thinking about that purpose, 1302.91(a) in addition to the requirements around minimum qualifications.

Ann: So, and if I were to interpret that in my laymen terms, even when we are talking about, you know, family service staff, and I think I heard you say, you know, we're really talking about the credentialing programs that really focus on more social work kind of aspects, not necessarily early childhood education. But that doesn't mean that a program would not say, you know, in addition to this, you know, family service worker degree programs, credentialing programs, we think that we want to add, we want to ensure training around early childhood. And so, nothing prevents a program from adding to what the requirement is. And, I just want to make that clear.

Beth: Yep, I think that's right. Great.

Adia: So, the next step of credentials is really for the health professional. And these are broken into three parts. So, there are health professionals who actually perform health procedures, and they need

to be licensed or certified. Then you have your mental health consultants. And these guys need to be licensed or certified, and if available in the community, they should have knowledge and experience of serving young children and their families. And then, there are staff or consultants supporting nutritional services. And these folks need to be registered dieticians, or nutritionists with appropriate qualifications. So that qualification is pretty clear and is broken down. There was some questions that I think we're going to talk about earlier, about what procedures are. So, there's a lot of new things in this section that you guys want to think about, and they apply to center-based teachers, assistant teachers, and family care providers, and also to home visitors. So, they, we want to make sure in this section that they have specific competencies. And also, there's another part of this regulation that really talks about their ability to demonstrate that competency. So again, it's not really, it's all about making sure the people have the knowledge, that they get ongoing training of the knowledge and skills that they need, but also that you as programs are really seeing whether or not people can demonstrate those competencies, and that they're related to implementing effective interactions and practices, and that they support growth related to the ELOF. So.

Ann: And, I wonder who, we could ask West Virginia to say, "What's the ELOF?" Adia. Right. [Laughter]

Ann: What's ELOF? Ahh, someone from West Virginia. [Inaudible] Outcomes Framework.

Adia: So, you want to make sure that people are actually demonstrating that they're using the knowledge that they acquired through the credentials, or through the qualifications, or through the trainings, you know, in their efforts to make sure that you have high-quality services for children.

Ann: And I have to say, so, when you talk about competencies related to implementing effective interactions, practices, and supporting growth related to the Early Learning Outcomes Framework, we're really talking about so many things that happened in the classroom between the teacher, and the child, and the interaction. And to me, that's banging on the table. To me, this makes me think about, also, when we're talking earlier today about the fidelity of the implementation of the curriculum. Is it done with fidelity? All of these are ways in which we are ensuring that what teachers, or those folks that are in the classrooms with our kids are having all the skills, and using all the tools in the way that they're intended to use to maximize, to maximize that child's growth and development.

Adia: I think that's right, Ann. And Ann can tell you a lot about what's going to happen with some of these timelines.

Ann: Yeah. Let's shed some light.

Adia: Yeah. There's a lot of things that, you know, happen now, but there's a lot of things that happen later. And it gives programs lots of time to really gear up, get their staff ready, and make sure that they're able to demonstrate what they need to.

Ann: So, you know, here we have highlighted a few compliance dates and timeframes for staff qualifications on this slide. But, I have to tell you, at the very beginning, when we referred to the staff qualifications, qualifications chart that's on ECLKC, that really goes into much more detail. This is just kind of, hopefully, wetting your appetite. And as you can see, there are things that the new hires honor after 11/7, the time after hire, and those that are a little bit closer in, the August 1, the coaches, and what August 2018 for the child development specialists and the home visitors. Again, we're not going to go into these again. We want to reiterate the only role that don't have a timetable are the infant-toddler

center-based teachers, preschool teachers and ed managers because those requirements were straight out of the Head Start Act.

Adia: So Ann, let's have some fun. We have questions here. Alright. You're ready for these? We had some questions that came in from the field, and we always like to try to answer your questions as best as we can. The team that's back in central office, they actually work really hard on collecting the questions and making sure that there's some good answers that really point back to the Standards. So, let's start with this one. So, if you guys look up on your screen, there's one that talks about the child development specialist. And, guess what, Ann? They want to talk about the old standard.

Ann: Okay.

Adia: So, they say here that the child development specialist, the old standards states that the child development specialist and other agency staff can fulfill the duties. The grantee has a child development specialist complete all of the duties except there is another staff person who oversees the compliance with the contract. Can they continue to split the responsibilities between the two staff members? Well. Went back to the old. Now we have to come to the new. So Ann, I looked at the answer that they gave us, that, from the central office. These guys are really on point. They gave us a lot of places to go. And so, the first thing that you have to do is really go back to the Standards.

Every time we want to answer these questions, we even go back to the book, we look at the Standards, and we determine what do they say. So, we sneak into 1302.91(e)(4)(2). It tells you right off the bat that by August 1, 2018 the child development specialist that conducts these duties must have a minimum of a bachelor's degree in child development, early childhood education, or related field. So, right off the bat, you know that the person, whoever these two people are that you're talking about in this first, in this question that they're saying, one of those two people has to have that degree. So then, you go to section 1302.23 that contains the requirements that are related to what that person has to do. So first they have to have the bachelor's degree, whoever they are. And then, the person who has that bachelor's degree can then conduct the regular visits to each classroom home.

Ann: And they must. They must.

Adia: They must conduct the regular visit to each home, some of which are unannounced, not less than once every two weeks. They must periodically verify compliance with either contract requirements or agency policy. They must also facilitate the ongoing communication between program staff, family childcare providers, and enrolled families, and they must provide recommendations and technical assistance and support for family childcare provider and developing relationships with other childcare professionals. So, whoever has that degree must do these things. So, the person is asking us, "Well, can we split it up between the two staff?" But, they don't tell us whether or not that the two staff both have that bachelor's degree.

Ann: And, we're assuming that they're probably asking because one doesn't.

Adia: And, we're assuming because one of them doesn't that one doesn't have it. And so, Ann, because one of those people don't have it, and the requirements say that the person, one, must have the degree, and two, must perform all of these duties, can they skip those two, can they split those things up.

Ann: So, the person, the child development specialist with a bachelorette must perform those core duties. No doubt about it.

Adia: No doubt about it.

Ann: However, when we talk about, one of the duties they have is periodically verify compliance, I'm not, that's something that the grantee can really define itself. What is periodic verification of compliance. That would not preclude, let's say they had something quarterly, that that bachelorette child development specialist was doing. And they said, "Well, we have other people, though, that are, we have a whole compliance team, and they look at fiscal, and the contracts." And, there's no reason why they can't supplement with another person doing other things to enhance the whole compliance effort. But you, but we can't dele – The child development specialist can't, can't delegate that periodic verification. So, they can add staff. They can probably alleviate some of the duties, but still, at the end of the day, they got to demonstrate how the child development specialist does do periodic verification of compliance. And that could be verifying, you know, the compliance checks that someone else does. But it's got to be part of their job. You want them to see the whole picture.

Adia: And that's some question?

Ann: No. It was [Inaudible] [Laughter] So, um, I think that the next question – But these – It shows you how tough these questions can be, and it, it's like threading needles at times, it's getting high deep in the grass, but I think we need to continue this tedious task throughout this year, having these kinds of dialogues so people get a sense of what's okay, where they have flexibility, and where they can combine, and where they can't. And, this leads into the next one, and again, I think we've already talked about this. Can management staff serve multiple management roles? Well, absolutely. It's a reality for many programs. Many smaller programs. And then, we ask what certifications or credentials are acceptable to meet the family services qualifications? And again, I think that we had talked about that. And again, if we want to – We talked about the management role, but I think people are clear. If you're, if you're wearing multiple hats, that one of those hats is the education manager, then that person has to have a degree in early childhood education even though they may be assuming other roles, other management roles. I think for the family services staff qualification.

Again, I think you just talked about it. I think we want to go back to 1302 Subpart 1, that contains the requirements for staff staff qualifications of family staff workers who work directly with families on partnership processes. And, that's in 1302.91(e)(7). And again, have a minimum credential or certificate in social work, family services, counseling, or related field. And obviously, this is, this is earned within 19, within 18 months of hire after the rule is effective. So, if you have a degree in social work, family services counseling related field, they may meet this requirement. And again, we're going to leave that up to the grantee. So long as they have a process in which they can take a look at what the, what the person has already accrued in credits and training, they can certainly make that determination.

Adia: Okay. Let's do another fun one.

Ann: Alright. Go ahead.

Adia: You want to do another one? Alright. We have another one. We have, I think one more question. So, this one, this one is a good one, Ann. So this one is in regards to health professionals' qualifications,

what are health procedures, and do we need a licensed or certified health professional to administer epi pens? What do you think, Ann?

Ann: Well look. I think, and here's where I kind of say common sense and what's reasonable. I think most people know what a health procedure is. I think of doing something that, you're sticking a needle. You're doing something, it could be invasive. You're doing something that really requires some level of certification, requirement around it. A procedure is something that is more medically than it is, it's medic – If we looked up what a health procedure is, it's probably much more medical. When you're talking about epi pens, when you are, when a child is going into, and I can never say it right, anaphylactic shock. Right? And, we got to wait around and find out whose got –

Adia: Call somebody who's got a medical procedure. [Laughter]

Ann: Right. I think there's got to be a level of reasonableness here. I know that children are taught to give themselves the epi pens when they're going into that stage. And, we don't expect that, that is just, you know, we appreciate the person asking the question, because it gives us an opportunity to say – Because that person is obviously scared and wants to be in compliance. And we're saying these are life conditions that require immediate, immediate attention that don't require a certified health professional to administer an epi pen.

Now, I think it's important that a program may want to consider, for if I have a child in my classroom that may need a, an epi pen, I want everyone to be comfortable in that classroom, because you don't want people to get nervous. So, I think there are training implications. But, I think that we can make, I think most reasonable people can make a distinction what a health procedure is, and what are things that people need to be doing for children just because it's the right thing to do at the right time.

Adia: And, although the regulations really don't tell people what health procedures are, there's other places where they can look. They can talk to their HAYSAC, or their Head Start advisory council to maybe help thing about maybe, well what do we want to define as health procedures. Also, sometimes their state or local government tells them what is a health – what is –

Ann: Absolutely.

Adia: And so, there are places where people can look. If they're not sure what a health procedure might be, that can be helpful. But the Standards don't really spell it out. So this is another place where agencies really have to make sure that they're clear on what health procedures are. We're not telling them. They can tell us.

Ann: Beth, is there anything you want to add to that?

Beth: Yeah, I do have just a few, a couple of things to add. I think all of what, what you guys have said is absolutely how, what our intent was. I think a couple of clarifications that we can make. We would not consider a health screening a health procedure. So, we've gotten that question several times, and then, we just want to make very clear that a health screening is not a health procedure. I think I would doubly highlight the health services advisory committee that maybe the state may have some stronger definition, or more prescriptive definition of what a health procedure is. And if not, your health services advisory committee is really is there to help you think about what, what might meet that bar, what might need a health professional to administer instead of something like an epi pen.

And also, if you look in our health and safety practices in 1302.47, there are requirements around having policies and procedures in place, as well as training, like Ann mentioned, around the administration of medication, and responding to emergencies. So, there are, and – I can't remember what it's called now. But there are several, there are several requirements that may help to clarify this that actually don't live here. So just remembering to look, and think about what's required in 1302.47, and again, having your HASAC involved, how you set those policies, and what training you put in place.

Adia: So, how we're doing over here, central office desk? Alana? Are we doing okay over here, West Virginia?

Alana: You're doing great. The sound is really good. And your answers are sounding all right.

Adia: Good, good, good. We'll take that.

Ann: Now, we'll punch to Beth to take us through the next couple of slides.

Beth: Sure.

Adia: Beth, take us home.

Beth: Hmm?

Adia: I said, Beth, take us home.

Beth: Oh, take us home. Okay. I'll do our best. So, we're just going to walk through 1302.92, which includes all of our requirements around training and professional development. And the first requirement that's sort of listed there is around orientation for new staff, consultants, and volunteers. And one thing to highlight here is that there's some flexibility for programs around the kind of orientation they provide, and the links to the orientation provided depending on the role or responsibility of that staff person. So, every single volunteer doesn't have to go to a day-long orientation, for example. So instead, you're providing orientation that's appropriate for what that volunteer's role is going to be.

There are requirements around child and family services staff. Having training on best practices for implementing family engagement strategies in a systematic way. And also, specific requirements around education staff receiving research-based approaches to support professional development that are focused on a couple of things. So, curriculum implementation, our Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework and content in that. Partnering with families. Supporting children with disabilities and their families. Adult-child interaction. Supporting dual language learners. Dealing with challenging behaviors. Transitions, and using data to individualize children's learning experiences to improve outcomes.

There's an exhaustive list, and certainly, a lot of things that we're saying our teachers are, our education staff are going to need support in. There's a 15 clock-hour requirement for all staff, including training, including requirements that all staff receive training on child abuse and neglect. We've gotten a couple of questions, and we do want to just clarify that yes, coaching hours are applicable to the 15 clock hours. And, I think we all know that 15 clock hours is not a really high bar for professional development. So, many, many of our staff are probably receiving many more hours than 15. But, that is our required minimum.

There's also new to the training and development requirements is a requirement that programs implement an intensive coaching strategy. And, the requirement is delayed by one year. And so, it's effective August 1, 2017. And, we talked a little bit about how that requirement for coaches to have a bachelor's degree is delayed until that point, as well. That's because the requirements for coaches to have a bachelor's degree is only for coaches that provide these services. So, the services explicitly listed under the coordinated coaching strategy. Programs really have a lot of flexibility around how they design their research-based coordinated coaching strategy.

So, we really wanted to best fit the needs of the professional development that their staff needs. And, programs have a lot of flexibility to decide how the coaching strategy is implemented. There are some clear requirements. So, the strategy must include accessing all education staff at a minimum. So, you could include other staff, but you must access all education staff. And then, provide intensive coaching to the education staff that the program determines would most benefit from coaching, and coordinated, and then, coordinating the assessment information to support staff ongoing professional development. The coaching strategy must utilize the assessment data to drive coaching strategies.

So, assessment data that you're gathering for your children in order to individualize, and also at a program level, to look at the direction of your program, and make decisions about your program design should also be used to implement the coaching strategy. Coaching strategy should also align with program school readiness goals, their curricula, and any other approaches that you're implementing related to professional development. So, really implementing the system development, and how coaching fits into that system. And then, also, there's a requirement that the coaching strategy establish policies and ongoing communication practices.

So, that those that are receiving coaching, or who are being assessed for coaching understand what the policies and practices are. Coaching, the coaching strategy is really strength-based, and includes opportunities for staff to be observed, receive feedback and modeling for effective teacher practices that tie the program goals from a trained and experienced coach. So, what, I think that we've gotten a lot of questions about this. So, I just want to pause, really briefly. And, we don't have a slide for these questions. But, I wanted to go ahead and see if we could address some of the questions that came in through the associations that folks put in before the webinar.

Ann: But, before you answer those questions, you know, as I have more and more experience with the Standards, what resonates to me is wow. We really put a lot of emphasis on coaching, and the professional development of the teaching staff, and this is really a lift for lots of programs around the coaching. Some programs have done it. Some programs are way ahead of us. Beth, could you talk a little bit about, sort of, what lead us to really, making, you know, drafting, and promulgating these regulations around coaching?

Beth: Sure. I mean, I think it really is based on the research that tells us that, you know, in order to really have effective and intentional teaching practices, there are many teachers that really need that ongoing supervision, that reflective supervision, the, the opportunity to be observed, reflect on the observations, and then, have someone with the experience and knowledge to be able to help them think about how to change their teaching practices to be more effective. So, I think there's a lot of research there. What's not, what's not in the research are the things that were not prescribing. So, what the research doesn't tell us is that the coach has to be in person. It doesn't tell us whether or not a coach should or shouldn't be someone's supervisor. So, there are a lot of questions that are still open. And, because the research

does not, has not been able to inform us on the best way to implement coaching, we really left that open to programs to determine what's best for their staff and their community.

Ann: Thanks.

Beth: Sure. So, that does also highlight some of the questions that we received. And so, I just want to go through a couple of, more specific questions to clarify some of the flexibility that programs do have in coaching. So, one is the question, again, are coaches allowed to be a staff person's supervisor? Yes. They are allowed, because there's nothing in the Standards that says that they can't be a supervisor. There's also nothing in the Standards that say that they must be. Instead, what the Standards say, that programs must ensure assessment results are not used to solely determine punitive actions for staff identified as needing support without providing time and resources for staff to improve. And, we don't want using a supervisor in that coaching role to lead to any kind of unintentional consequences for the staff that need the support.

There's also questions around, you know, and this is probably very applicable to West Virginia programs. You know, in a rural program, it's hard to identify someone who meets the qualifications, or you know, or do I have to hire a whole new staff person to fulfill this role. So, the answer to that is that no, you don't have to hire a whole new staff person. There are other methods for implementing, for implementing coaching that, that would absolutely meet the requirements in the Standards. So, some of those might be virtual coaching, could also be utilizing a consortium approach, where one coach might be providing coaching services to a number of programs.

So, just being really clear about what's not included in, in the requirements around coaching. There's a lot of flexibility there, and I think that there's already a lot of, there's already some resources on the ECLKC around coaching, and there will be more to come. Thanks. So, we'll move on to the next slide. The next slide is around 1302.93 Staff Health and Wellness. So, there's not a whole lot that's new here. What is here is that a staff person has to have an initial – all staff have to have an initial health examination and periodic re-examination. Here, the Standards say that a health examination may include screeners, and [Inaudible] for communicable diseases as appropriate by state, tribal, and local requirements.

So, here's where there may be a requirement, a very specific communicable disease in your state. But the Standards don't include those here. Staff, it really states that the purposes of staff should not pose a significant risk to the health and safety of those in their programs. I'm going to, it also requires that programs make available information about mental health and wellness. So, we all know that it's very important not only to have healthy children, but to have healthy staff people are providing those services to your children. So, mental health and wellness information must be available. And then, finally there's a requirement to provide staff with regularly scheduled opportunities to learn about mental health wellness and health education. So, those are some new requirements. Again, it's, there's some flexibility around how those are implemented. The requirements are exactly how they read. So, I don't think that we have more questions related to that, and I can send it back over to you guys to close it out.

Ann: You know, as you were talking about the last couple of things around mental health and wellness information, I was thinking about another standard, I don't think in this section, that I actually wanted to mention this morning with our colleagues from West Virginia, and I didn't. And that's the importance of the emergency preparedness plan. And I say that because we have seen now, we look at what our

colleagues are going through in Louisiana. We know what our colleagues went through in several places in Florida. Really such incredibly hard times. Whoever would have expected that, you know, 40,000 homes would be just wiped out. And when I think about Sandy particularly. You know, who could forget Sandy? And, I think about the health and wellness issues around staff, and I think about Head Start staff themselves may come from homes that are challenging. They may have economic situations that are not terribly different from the families that they are serving. And when you think about it, when you think about that on a daily basis, my heavens, having some standards that really speak to, you know, needing to care about the mental health and the wellness of our staff, to me, is really, I'm very proud that Head Start is, is saying hey, these are important, and these are requirements. And then, you think about if emergency or crisis, or tragedy strikes a community, and you haven't thought these things through, and you don't have a plan, then we could really, and I think not only for children and families, but this made me think about incredible disadvantages to staff. We had staff during Sandy that, you know, they lost their homes. They were going to work every day, taking care of everybody else who lost their homes. So, I think this whole, it is a comprehensive. Nothing is disconnected. So, I just wanted to make that plug. Beth, as you were talking about it, I couldn't help but thinking about how it's linked to our ability to be prepared to meet needs that are absolutely unexpected, and you want to be prepared, and have systems in place before these things really occur.

Adia: And, it's really close to people right here in West Virginia. I mean, they have floods in McDowell County, and there was a recent one in Kanahwa, just had one. So, it's very poignant to say that here. So, I'm on the last slide! West Virginia, you have done really well! They've hung, they've hung in here. Everybody, God, that's right. Clap for yourselves.

[Applause]

You've don't a great job, and all around the country, if people are paying attention the way West Virginians are. We're not going to have any problems implementing these Standards across the country. They've been taking notes. They've been paying attention. And this is after lunch at a conference. They've really done an excellent job. And so, my last slide is just about volunteers. Everybody's always, they always used to ask about volunteers. What do they need. What do they have to have? What's going on, we have to do for our volunteers? And the new Standards sort of laid these things out for you and made them very clear, put them in one section so you know what you need to do for volunteers. So, the first thing you have to do for volunteers is you have to make sure they are screened for the appropriate communicable diseases. And this is as appropriate for their state, and tribal, and local laws.

So, we're not telling you what they need to be screened by, but your laws will. And if your laws don't tell you, guess what? You just ask the health service, health services advisory committee as to what volunteers need to be screened on. And all purposes this is to make sure that people aren't sick, and giving communicable diseases to young children, or to other staff. So, it's a really smart thing to do. The other thing that the regulation say is volunteers are not to be left alone. Don't let leave them alone with the children. And, it's connected to another standard, so this is really smart for us to put this together like this. And, that's because volunteers don't have to have background checks. Right? So, if somebody doesn't have a background checks, and another part of the regulation that says anybody that doesn't have background checks, or all the background checks that are required, you can't leave them alone with children. Same thing happens with volunteers.

Ann: Unless the state is requiring. Sometimes the licensing in some states can require that, but we do not.

Adia: I was about to say that, Ann. I was about to say sometimes the states, though, says they have, they have more stringent laws, so make sure you follow that. And, your volunteers should receive an orientation, and 1302.92(a) tells you all about that orientation, and what it should include, and so forth and so on.

That's our last slide!

Ann: Nope! We got one more.

Adia: We got one more? I think its like a bye slide.

Ann: So, we want to promote December 14. I think we're, I think that this is our second or third webinar that we've done. I think it's our fourth?

Adia: How many of these have we done?

Beth: Our very last one was in November. So, we're moving on to December next month.

Ann: So, I think what we're doing is sort of, taking sort of a pause from the actual sections, and looking more at how programs are going to develop and, and implement their own, implement their comprehensive implementation plan for the Standards. That is a requirement in the new regulations, that programs have a comprehensive strategy for implementation, and I think how you get your arms around that, and figure out the who, what, when, and why, and the timetables, and what, what key partners need to be involved, and who do you train, when, and who do you engage, when. It's a big undertaking.

So, I do think that our December 14 webinar will help programs who, maybe are in the process, maybe shed a little light on the direction their going in, reinforce what they're doing. And for those that are still got their heads under their sheets saying, "Oh my heavens. When do we have to start this?" Hopefully, this will be a jumpstart and an early Christmas present, holiday present. So, you know, again for our folks that signed on and are with us remotely, we want to thank you for hanging in with us today. I think we did pretty good from two, from two locations. That worked well. I want to thank the people in the DC office for supporting us. And, I want to give a big shout out to West Virginia for just being so amazing.

Adia: Yay!

[Applause]

[Inaudible]

Ann: I don't know. But, I do want to, you know, you should never steal that idea. I do want to thank Becky who kind of made this all possible. And, I know she had, she was over to the hotel doing 16 trial runs with Alana at our headquarters. So, I want to thank everybody, and that's, that's, that's it. That's a wrap.

Adia: Signing off. That's a wrap. Thank you, central office. Thank you, West Virginia.

Ann: Thank you, grantees.

[End video]