

Communicable Disease

Head Start Performance Standards

§ 1302.47 (b) (4) (i) (a)

§ 1302.47 (b) (7) (iii)

Policy

To protect children and staff in Head Start classrooms against communicable diseases, our program adheres to the Washington County Department of Health and Human Services *Recommended Communicable Disease Guidelines for Schools*. Head Start will also adhere to specific measures and regulations for licensed Child Development Centers as specified in the State of Oregon Department of Early Learning and Care *Rules for Certified Child Care Centers* (January 2024 edition).

Staff and volunteers working in the classroom are trained to ensure that they do not pose a significant risk to others because of communicable disease. Employees are required to complete initial physical exams that include tuberculosis screenings prior to starting work in the classrooms. The Head Start Health Services Advisory Committee will ensure that the most current information regarding communicable diseases is made available to the program. Ongoing education in a variety of formats will take place to encourage healthy habits that prevent the spread of communicable diseases. This will include newsletters, class activities, parent meetings, and hygiene practices such as good hand washing.

Prevention Procedure

Preventative Steps

- A condensed copy of the “**Communicable Disease Exclusion Guidelines**” is located in all Head Start centers. A complete version of the “**Communicable Disease Exclusion Guidelines**” is located on the intranet under Heas Start Policy and Procedures. Teaching staff will review this reference before school begins and decide on a location within the center where the guidelines will be available for use by families and staff.
- **Exposure Notices** and the **Communicable Disease Policy and Procedures** are reviewed by the Health Department on a periodic basis.
- Parents and guardians are informed of our **Communicable Disease** policy during orientation before their Head Start children begin school. Our Family Handbooks also include a list of school-excluded illnesses and symptoms for reference.
- Staff members are expected to follow the Health Department’s Preventative and Precautionary Measures specified in their “**Communicable Disease Exclusion Guidelines.**” For medical conditions or diseases not listed in these guidelines, consult the Health Services Supervisor to determine appropriate procedures.
- Mildly ill children at mealtime will be seated at the end of the table next to teaching staff. Teaching staff will serve the child from family-style serving bowls.
- New Head Start staff will complete physical exams, including TB screening, prior to beginning employment as part of HR new hire procedures. TB and physical exams are required for all Head Start staff every two years. Head Start maintains a confidential system for tracking employee health

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status and ensuring that further evaluations of staff are completed in a timely manner. Head Start funds are used to pay for required staff tuberculosis and communicable disease health screenings. Staff will inform HR of any special accommodation needed and will complete physical and TB tests as required to ensure that their health status information is current. For more information, see the **Employee Health Status Policy**.

Communicable Disease in the Center

1. The teaching staff will conduct Daily Health Checks of children present at school. If any child exhibits symptoms listed in the “**Communicable Disease Exclusion Guidelines**” or “**Rules for Certified Child Care Centers**” and is too sick to participate in regular classroom activities, the parent/guardian is called and asked to pick up the child. If the parent or guardian is not available, the staff will contact the person(s) listed on the Emergency form. All calls made are recorded in ChildPlus as Family Services Communication Log Event.
 - Hillsboro Child Development Center and Coffee Creek Infant teachers will contact the Health Services Supervisor when an infant is experiencing unexplained diarrhea. During infancy an infant can experience diarrhea as a symptom not related to a **Communicable Disease** or illness. We want to discuss the possible reason before sending a child home.
2. If a child in class has a communicable disease the teacher will inform the Health Services Supervisor. The Health Services Supervisor will determine if the child needs to be excluded from class and if **Exposure Notices** are needed. Classroom staff will distribute Exposure Notices when deemed necessary.
3. If the child cannot be taken home, the teacher will separate the child from the others while ensuring that the child can be seen and heard by staff. This classroom area should have a cot, mat, or bed for the child. *Staff may not transport children in their private vehicles.*
4. The child may be readmitted to Head Start when they have either recovered from symptoms *or* has a health care provider note that the child has been diagnosed and cleared for school attendance. In cases of head lice, a Head Start staff person must re-check the child’s head before they attend class. Live lice cannot be present (please see Head Lice P & P for more details).
5. In cases where the child is to be absent from Head Start for more than one week, the teacher will plan for home education visits. This plan must be reviewed by the Program Area Supervisor.