

# District Transportation for Children Receiving Disability Services

## Head Start Program Performance Standards

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§ 1303.75

### Policy

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Children receiving services from the Northwest Regional Education Services District (NWRES D) may be eligible for district transportation when Head Start transportation is not available and the family has barriers that prevent them from self-transporting their child, or when the family is experiencing barriers that prevent them from accessing Head Start transportation. School district transportation is a service considered for children who need it in order to access their special education.

It is important to note when talking with parent(s)/guardian(s) that transportation can only be offered in very limited situations after all other options have been explored. School district transportation is **never** guaranteed.

### Procedure

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When a child who is currently receiving services from NWRES D is accepted to the program, enrollment will notify the Disabilities & Mental Health (D&MH) Supervisor and the Program Assistant 3 (PA3). The complete communication process is outlined in the **Enrollment Communication Process for Children Receiving EI/ECSE Services P&P**.

#### Before the Program Year Begins

When a family is offered a placement in Head Start, the enrollment team will inform them if they are required to self-transport to the classroom. If the family expresses barriers to self-transport, the enrollment team may inform the family to reach out to their NWRES D service coordinator, making sure to let them know that school district transportation is not guaranteed. If the family communicates with their NWRES D Service Coordinator that they have barriers to self-transporting their child, the Service Coordinator will call a meeting of the child's team, which includes all NWRES D specialists providing services to the child and the parent(s)/guardian(s). The purpose of the meeting will be to problem-solve barriers to self-transportation.

If the barriers cannot be resolved, the Service Coordinator will arrange for district transportation. The plan for transportation will be added to the child's Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) by the Service Coordinator.

#### During the Program Year

If Head Start is unable to provide transportation, and the family is experiencing barriers to self-transportation, the Teacher will call a Coordinated Care Meeting of the child's team to problem-solve. The team will include:

- The parent(s)/guardian(s)
- The Teacher and FST
- The NWRES D Service Coordinator

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Additionally, the Teacher will email the Transportation Supervisor and the D&MH Supervisor to notify them that the family has barriers to self-transportation and that they have scheduled the meeting.

The purpose of the meeting is to problem-solve with the family and work to overcome barriers to self-transportation.

If the team is not able to resolve the barriers to self-transportation, the Teacher will complete the **NWRESD Transportation Referral Form** and email it to the following people:

- The NWRESD Service Coordinator
- The Transportation Supervisor
- The D&MH Supervisor

The Service Coordinator will submit the request to the district.

### **When Head Start Transportation is Provided to the Site**

If the child is attending a location that has transportation provided but is unable to make it to their community stop, the Teacher will fill out an **Address Check for Bus Transportation Form**, listing hardships and problem solving completed to try to overcome barriers. The Teacher will email the form to the following people:

- The Transportation Supervisor
- The D&MH Supervisor
- The Program Area Supervisor
- The NWRESD Service Coordinator

The Transportation Supervisor will review the form and, if possible, modify the route to enable the family to attend. Once a decision has been made, the Transportation Supervisor will reply all to the initial email with the decision.

If the child does not live on the bus route, or if it is decided that the route cannot accommodate the family, then the teacher must request a referral to transportation from NWRESD. To request transportation for a child receiving services through NWRESD, a teacher must fill out and send the **NWRESD Transportation Referral Form** to the people listed above. The Service Coordinator will submit the request to the district.

### **After the Referral Form is Submitted**

The Service Coordinator will contact the family and the Teacher to let them both know the request has been submitted to the district.

If the request for district transportation is approved by the school district, the district will reach out to the family directly and notify them of bus pick up and drop off times and when transportation will begin. It takes about 2 weeks for district transportation to begin after a request has been approved.

If the request is not approved, the school district or Service Coordinator will reach out to the family to let them know.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) are responsible for notifying the district transportation department as soon as they know their child will be absent. If a child misses the bus 3 times in a row without contact from the parent(s)/guardian(s), transportation services will automatically stop. If services are terminated, the parent(s)/guardian(s) can request they be set back up by contacting their Service Coordinator.

If class is cancelled due to staffing shortages, the D&MH Supervisor is responsible for notifying the district transportation department as soon as possible.