

## Communicable Disease

### Head Start Performance Standards

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§ 1302.47 (b) (4) (i) (a)

§ 1302.47 (b) (7) (iii)

#### Policy

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- To protect the health and safety of children, families, and staff, Community Action Head Start adheres to the **Washington County Department of Health and Human Services' Recommended Communicable Disease Guidelines for Schools** and the **State of Oregon Department of Early Learning and Care Rules for Certified Child Care Centers** (January 2024 edition).
- All staff and volunteers working in classrooms are trained to minimize the risk of spreading communicable diseases. Staff are required to complete a physical exam, including tuberculosis (TB) screening, prior to classroom work. Ongoing training, newsletters, hygiene practices, and parent meetings will promote healthy habits and reinforce prevention measures.
- The **Health and Mental Health Services Advisory Committee** ensures that the most current communicable disease information is provided to the program.

#### Prevention Procedure

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##### 1. Staff Training and Health Screening

- All new Head Start staff must complete a **pre-employment physical and TB screening** as part of the Human Resources onboarding process.
- **TB tests and physicals are repeated every one to two years per the provider recommendation.** The required screenings are paid for by Head Start.
- Staff must inform HR of any accommodation required and complete necessary screenings to keep health records current. See the *Employee Health Status Policy* for details.
- Head Start maintains a **confidential tracking system** for staff health records.

##### 2. Disease Guidelines Availability

- A **condensed copy** of the *Communicable Disease Exclusion Guidelines* is available in each Head Start center.
- The **full version** is accessible via the intranet under *Head Start Policies and Procedures*.
- Teaching staff review the guidelines **before the school year** and determine a central, visible location for family and staff access.

##### 3. Parent Communication

- Families are informed about the Communicable Disease Policy during **orientation**.
- The **Family Handbook** includes a list of illnesses and symptoms that require school exclusion.

**Community Action Head Start  
Washington County, Oregon**

**4. Classroom Practices**

- Staff must follow all **preventative and precautionary measures** outlined in the exclusion guidelines.
- If a condition is not listed, staff should **consult the Health Services Supervisor**.
- During mealtimes, **mildly ill children** will sit at the end of the table next to a staff member, who will serve them directly from **family-style bowls**.

**5. Oversight and Review**

- The **Health Department** periodically reviews Head Start's Exposure Notices and communicable disease procedures for compliance and updates.

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**Response Procedures: Communicable Disease in the Center**

**1. Daily Health Checks**

- **Teaching staff conduct daily health screenings** upon student arrival.
- Children showing exclusion symptoms will be sent home. If a parent is unavailable, staff will contact emergency contacts listed in the child's file.
- **All communication** regarding illness is documented in ChildPlus as a *Family Services Communication Log Event*.

**Note:** Staff at Hillsboro Child Development Center and Coffee Creek must contact the **Health Services Supervisor** if an infant has **unexplained diarrhea**, to determine whether exclusion is necessary.

**2. Reporting and Exclusion**

- If a child is diagnosed with a communicable disease, the teacher must notify the **Health Services Supervisor**.
- The Supervisor will determine whether exclusion is required and whether an **Exposure Notice** should be sent to families.
- **Classroom staff** will distribute notices when directed.

**3. Temporary Separation**

- If a child cannot be picked up immediately, they will be **separated from other children** in a supervised area with a cot, mat, or bed.
- Children must **never be transported in private vehicles** by staff.

**4. Return to School**

- Children may return to class once:
  - They have fully recovered, **or**
  - They have been **cleared by a health care provider** in writing.
- For **head lice**, a Head Start staff member must **recheck the child's head** before they return. No live lice may be present. (*Refer to the Head Lice Policy for more details.*)

**Community Action Head Start  
Washington County, Oregon**

**5. Extended Absence**

- If a child is absent for more than **one week**, the teacher must develop a **home education plan**, to be reviewed by the **Program Area Supervisor**