

Walking Field Trips and Special Activities

Head Start Performance Standard

§ 1302.31

Office of Childcare Regulation

#414-300-0030 (7) (e)

#414-300-0040 (6) (c) (A)

#414-300-0130 (2) (b)

Policy

Special activities such as walking field trips to nearby nature preserves, visits from fire fighters or other community members which are directly related to the classroom curriculum may be included in the weekly lesson plan.

For safety reasons, walking field trips for children under three are not permitted.

Planning and Preparing for Walking Field Trips and Special Activities

- Staff will develop plans to prepare the children for the experience and build on their learning afterward.
- Staff must submit a written request to their Program Area Supervisor (PAS) for activities in which the children either leave the school grounds or when community members come in for a presentation (e.g. fire fighters, police officer, OMSI personnel, etc.). Requests will include a description of the activity, how this activity is connected to the current study or emergent curriculum, as well as preparatory and follow-up planning.
- Before each field trip or special activity outside regularly used areas of the school (i.e. the parking lot, school assembly, etc), review the safety rules with children and accompanying adults. Be sure to include specific safety instructions for crossing streets, staying on sidewalks, staying with the group etc. as appropriate for the event.
- If a walking field trip requires special mealtime arrangements, staff must contact their regular food service at least two weeks before the trip to provide enough food for everyone planning to attend, including volunteers. Additions are not allowed within one week of the field trip.
 - Moist towelettes may be used for handwashing before and after eating if soap and running water are not available at the site.

During Walking Field Trips and Special Activities

- For special events outside the classroom (such as to view a fire truck in the parking lot or to join a school assembly) and on walking field trips, **a minimum of 1 adult for every 6 children** is required. **At least 3 staff members** who count for ratio must attend these events.
- **Field Trip Permission Forms** may be requested from the Education Services Supervisor.
- If children will be leaving school grounds, a **Field Trip Permission Form** informing parent(s)/guardian(s) of the planned outing, including the date, time, and destination of the trip must be sent home for parent(s)/guardian(s) to sign and return **before** the date of the trip. Staff will indicate if it is a one-time event or regularly recurring field trips to the same location (i.g. on the 4th Thursday of every month from 9:00-10:00, weather permitting). For example, recurring walking field trips may be used to document the seasonal changes in a nature preserve or observe the process of a nearby construction project.

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

- Walking Field Trips may only occur if ***all*** children have a signed **Field Trip Permission Form** prior to the date of the field trip. **Children may not go on the trip without permission from the parent(s)/guardian(s).**
- Staff are responsible for the safety of the children at all times and will maintain active supervision going to, during, and returning from any walking field trip or special events. See **Active Supervision Policy and Procedure.**
- Head counts must include all enrolled children, adults, and siblings in the group.
- Children, staff, and volunteers will wear easily identifiable badges with the program name and an emergency contact number, such as the classroom number (only if someone will be in the room to answer) or the PAS's number.
- Before leaving the classroom, staff must notify the school office (if leaving school grounds), and the PAS. Placing a sign on the classroom door with the date, destination, return time, and a contact number.