



Governance, Leadership, and Oversight Capacity Screener

Introduction

Organizations that accept federal funds to operate a Head Start and/or Early Head Start program must have strong governance systems in place to safeguard federal dollars and provide oversight and direction to the Head Start program.

This screener organizes the Head Start requirements to help organizations to identify where they need to make changes and build capacity to fulfill their Head Start governance responsibilities.

Suggestions for Use

1. Print a copy of this screener.
2. Have your organization's governing body or Tribal Council chair, Policy Council chair, executive director, and Head Start program director work together to review the table beginning on page 3 and to identify (with a check mark or "X") the following items:
 - Required Head Start governance practices that your organization currently has in place
 - Required Head Start governance practices that your organization will implement within the first three months of funding
 - Required Head Start governance practices that your organization needs help understanding and implementing
3. At the top of page 10, list the governance practices and regulations that your organization needs assistance in understanding and implementing.
4. Enter any questions or concerns you have in the Comments Section on page 10.
5. Share this screener and your findings with your full governing body or Tribal Council, Policy Council, and Head Start program leadership. Assign people to begin implementation of the governance practices you have identified as not currently in place.

6. You can explore the [governance](#) page of the Program Management and Fiscal Operations (PMFO) section on Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC) to access other resources that can assist you as you move your governance system and practices forward.
7. At your next meeting with Regional Office staff, discuss those governance practices and regulations where your organization may benefit from technical assistance.

Head Start Governance, Leadership, and Oversight Capacity Screener

Head Start Governance Practices and Related Regulations	Practice is currently in place	Practice will be fully implemented within first three months of funding	Our organization needs assistance in understanding and implementing this regulation
1. The governing body (or Tribal Council) has the required composition. ¹ Head Start Act Sec. 642(c)(1)(B) (i-iv)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least one member has fiscal/accounting background and expertise. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least one member has early childhood education and development background and expertise. 	Not Applicable		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least one member is a licensed attorney. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members reflect the community served and include parents of children who are currently, or were formerly, enrolled in Head Start programs. 	Not Applicable		
2. The Policy Council has the required composition. Head Start Act Sec. 642(c)(2)(B)(i) Sec. 642(c)(2)(B)(ii)(I-II)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 51 percent of Policy Council members are parents of children who are currently enrolled in the Head Start program (including delegate agencies). 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Policy Council includes at least one member of the at-large community served by the program or any delegate agency. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members are elected by parents of children currently enrolled in the program. 			

¹ If the composition of the governing body does not include individuals with the required qualifications, the governing body must use consultants or other individuals with relevant expertise and qualifications to meet the composition requirements [Head Start Act Sec. 642(c)(1)(B)(vi)].

Head Start Governance Practices and Related Regulations	Practice is currently in place	Practice will be fully implemented within first three months of funding	Our organization needs assistance in understanding and implementing this regulation
<p>3. Members of the governing body (or Tribal Council) receive effective and ongoing training and technical assistance (T/TA) to ensure that they understand the information they receive and are able to provide effective oversight of, make appropriate decisions for, and participate in programs of the Head Start agency.</p> <p>Head Start Act Sec. 642(d)(3)</p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The agency has a system for identifying the T/TA needs of the governing body (or Tribal Council) and using this information to develop a T/TA plan. 			
<p>4. Members of the Policy Council receive effective and ongoing training and technical assistance (T/TA) to ensure that they understand the information they receive and can provide effective oversight of, make appropriate decisions for, and participate in programs of the Head Start agency.</p> <p>Head Start Act Sec. 642(d)(3)</p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The agency has a system for identifying the T/TA needs of the Policy Council and using this information to develop a T/TA plan. 			
<p>5. The governing body (or Tribal Council) exercises the following responsibilities:</p> <p>Head Start Act Sec. 642(c)(1)(E)(iv)(I-III) Sec. 642(c)(1)(E)(iv)(VI)</p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes procedures and criteria for recruiting, selecting, and enrolling children 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selects delegate agencies, as appropriate <p>Not Applicable</p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops procedures for selecting Policy Council members 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviews applications for funding and amendments to applications for funding 			

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6. The governing body (or Tribal Council) assumes responsibility for the following: Head Start Act Sec. 642(c)(1)(E)(iv)(VII)(aa)-(dd)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All major financial expenditures of the agency 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The operating budget of the agency 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The selection (except when a financial auditor is assigned by the state under state law or is assigned under local law) of independent financial auditors to report all critical accounting policies and practices to the governing body (or Tribal Council) 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The financial audit 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The agency's progress in carrying out the programmatic and fiscal provisions in the agency's grant application, including implementation of corrective actions 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring of the agency's actions to correct any audit findings and other actions necessary to comply with applicable laws (including regulations) governing financial statement and accounting practices 			
7. The governing body (or Tribal Council) is engaged in reviewing and approving each of the following: Head Start Act Sec. 642(c)(1)(E)(iv)(V)(aa-cc) Sec. 642(c)(1)(E)(iv)(IX)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Self-Assessment 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personnel policies of the agency regarding the hiring, evaluation, termination, and compensation of agency employees 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Results from monitoring conducted under section 641A(c), including appropriate follow-up activities 			

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personnel policies and procedures, including those regarding the hiring, evaluation, compensation, and termination of the Executive Director, Head Start Director, Director of Human Resources, Chief Fiscal Officer, and any other person in an equivalent position with the agency 			
<p>8. The Policy Council engages in the oversight of program operations in each of the following decision-making areas:</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Head Start Act Sec. 642(c)(2)(D)(i-viii) Sec. 642(c)(2)(A)</p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities to support the active engagement of families in the program 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program recruitment, selection, and enrollment priorities 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applications for funding and amendments to applications for funding 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget planning for program expenditures, including policies for reimbursement related to participation in Policy Council activities 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bylaws for the operation of the Policy Council 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program personnel policies and decisions regarding the employment of program staff, consistent with 642(c)(1)(E)(iv)(IX), including standards of conduct for program staff, contractors, and volunteers and criteria for the employment and dismissal of program staff 	Within guidelines of District policy		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing procedures for how members of the Policy Council of the Head Start program are elected 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommendations on the selection of delegate agencies and the service areas for such agencies 	Not Applicable		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program design and operation 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning program goals and objectives 			

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9. The following reports are received by the Policy Council and members find them useful: Head Start Act Sec. 642(d)(2)(A-I)			
Annual reports:			
• The financial audit			
• The Self-Assessment, including any findings related to such assessment			
• Program Information Reports (PIRs)			
Monthly reports:			
• Financial statements, including credit card expenditures (if the program uses credit cards)			
• Program information summaries			
• Program enrollment reports, including attendance reports for children whose care is partially subsidized by another public agency			
• Reports of meals and snacks provided through programs of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)			
Additional reports:			
• Community Assessment, completed every three years with annual updates			
• The strategic plan, including program goals, school readiness goals, and short-term programmatic and financial objectives			
• Applicable and current updates from the Secretary (e.g., Program Instructions, Information Memorandums, etc.)			

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10. The following reports are received by the governing body (or Tribal Council) and members find them useful: Head Start Act Sec. 642(d)(2)(A-I)			
Annual reports:			
• The financial audit			
• The Self-Assessment, including any findings related to such assessment			
• Program Information Reports (PIRs)			
Monthly reports:			
• Financial statements, including credit card expenditures (if the program uses credit cards)			
• Program information summaries			
• Program enrollment reports, including attendance reports for children whose care is partially subsidized by another public agency			
• Reports of meals and snacks provided through programs of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)			
Additional reports:			
• Community Assessment, completed every three years with annual updates			
• The strategic plan, including program goals, school readiness goals, and short term programmatic and financial objectives			
• Applicable and current updates from the Secretary (e.g., Program Instructions, Information Memorandums, etc.)			

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<p>1. The Head Start agency works with the governing body (or Tribal Council) and Policy Council to make available to the public a report published at least once each year that discloses the following information from the most recently concluded fiscal year:</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Head Start Act Sec. 644 (a)(2)(A-H)</p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The total amount of public and private funds received and the amount from each source 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An explanation of budgetary expenditures and proposed budget for the fiscal year 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The total number of children and families served, the average monthly enrollment (as a percentage of funded enrollment), and the percentage of eligible children served 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The results of the most recent review by the Secretary and the financial audit 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The percentage of enrolled children that received medical and dental exams 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information about family engagement activities 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The agency's efforts to prepare children for kindergarten 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any other information required by the Secretary 			

Our Organization Needs Assistance in Understanding and Implementing the Following Governance Regulations:

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Additional Comments, Questions, or Concerns:

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