

Big Sandy Area C.A.P., Inc. - HEAD START  
Program Policies and Procedures

## Child Attendance

### POLICY:

To encourage regular attendance and assist families whose children are frequently absent.

- *This policy relates to Head Start Performance Standards 45 CFR Part 1302.16*

### PROCEDURE:

1. Each delegate program will have a written attendance policy. A copy of the policy will be given to and discussed with each parent during orientation.
2. If a parent cannot agree with the stipulations in the attendance policy, the child will not be given an enrollment slot.
3. BSACAP does not allow for the “part-time” enrollment/attendance of any child.
4. Teaching staff will designate the reasons why children are absent on the daily attendance record of COPA. Attendance will be monitored and analyzed monthly by delegate office staff, using COPA report #236.
5. If a program’s daily attendance rate falls below eighty-five percent (85%), the causes of absenteeism are analyzed carefully by delegate program staff and the grantee office. This will be done by using COPA report #236. Appropriate actions will be determined and implemented by the delegate program to improve the attendance whenever possible.
6. It is the policy of this program to encourage regular attendance and to withdraw from the program, children who are chronically absent without a medical reason or valid cause. Prior to withdrawal, the family advocate assigned to the child’s family will make multiple contacts to assist family with attendance obstacles and will document her efforts in the “Family Case Notes” section on the COPA tracking system.

### Valid reasons for absenteeism may include the following:

- ◆ child is hospitalized
- ◆ Child Attendance

- ◆ child is unable to attend due to serious illness or injury
  - ◆ child has a contagious disease
  - ◆ death in child's family
  - ◆ illness of parent
  - ◆ temporary family situation
  - ◆ receiving medical treatment or therapy at the time when class is held
7. If a child is unexpectedly absent and the family has not contacted the program within one hour of program start time, program staff will attempt to contact the family to ensure the child's well-being.
  8. If a child has two consecutive "unexplained" absences, the family advocate will make a visit to the family's home or have a face-to-face contact with them in a place other than the home. A conference with the family is held to determine how or if the program can assist in resolving problems which may be causing the child's absence. Contacts with the family emphasizes the benefits of regular attendance, while at the same time remaining sensitive to any special circumstances influencing attendance patterns.
  9. Within the first 60 days of each school year and ongoing thereafter, each program will use individual child attendance data to identify children with patterns of absences that total more than 10% of their total scheduled days. When a child is identified as having chronic absences (greater than 10%), the family advocate will develop strategies to help remove attendance obstacles including a meeting with the family either in the home or on-site.
  10. In circumstances where chronic absenteeism persists and it does not seem feasible to keep the child enrolled, the child may be withdrawn from the program. The child's slot is considered an enrollment vacancy.
  11. All contacts with the child's family as well as special family support activities provided by program staff are documented in Family Case Notes on COPA.

*Approved by the Policy Council: October 2021*