



*Head Start
Operations Manual
Staff Qualifications*

COMMUNITY ACTION PARTNERSHIPS
OF
NORTH ALABAMA

HEAD START

Staff Qualifications SERVICES PLAN

PREPARED BY _

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POLICY COUNCIL APPROVED: March 12, 2009 DATE

Performance Standard: Meet ACF 648A Performance Standard staff qualifications for classroom staff.1304.21-1304.41, 1304.51-1304.53

Objective	Strategy	Staff	Resources	Time Frame
Provide information and guidance on/for meeting staff education qualifications.	Provide information, resources and guidance	CTL, RS, ATL	Information/materials from local colleges, libraries and other community resources, Pre-service, Agency Policies and Procedures manual	As required and as requested

Objective	Strategy	Staff	Resources	Time Frame
Track course completion of required courses.	Complete courses needed for certification. Provide documentation.	Classroom staff, CTL, ATL, RS	Transcripts, registration, grades	Ongoing

Objective	Strategy	Staff	Resources	Time Frame
Act as CDA advisor.	Assist with application. Complete required paperwork and submit applications.	Classroom staff, CTL, RS	CDA Application materials.	As requested.

Objective	Strategy	Staff	Resources	Time Frame
Current CDA Credentials	Track expiration dates. Send reminders	RS, Classroom staff, CTL, ATL	CDA credential	On going

CDA/STAFF QUALIFICATIONS OVERVIEW

OBJECTIVE



OBJECTIVE: To ensure that Classroom Staff have training and experience in areas that include: the theories and principles of child growth and development; early childhood; and family support: the Community Action Partnership of North Alabama Head Start Program works with Classroom Staff to meet the current ACF 648A, Head Start Act of 2007, and subsequent guidelines to encourage classroom staff to pursue an age-appropriate CDA or other educational requirements to meet Staff qualifications. Licensing Content Staff will collaborate with local colleges on courses for college credit needed for a CDA Credential; State awarded child development certificate, associate or bachelor degree in Early Child Development.

The choice to work with infant to five (5) year old children is one of the most important career decisions that one can make. A preschool Teacher or caregiver is a special person in children's lives as they master skills, develop friendships, and grow in understanding about themselves and the world. It is an exciting and challenging responsibility to set up a supportive learning environment for a group of preschoolers, develop a relationship with each one and meet their needs as individuals and as a group. Children's learning experiences during this period in their lives can increase their self-confidence and readiness for elementary school.

Families place great trust in the Staff of preschool programs, since it is the daily performance of the Teacher or caregiver that determines the safety of their children and the quality of the children's preschool experience.

The Child Development Associate (CDA) National Credentialing Program is a major national effort initiated in 1971. The purpose of the program is to enhance the quality of childcare by defining, evaluating, and recognizing the competence of childcare providers and home visitors.

The CDA Competency Standards criteria, which define the skills needed by providers in specific child care settings, is a means for measuring the overall performance of caregivers. The Competency Standards are divided into six (6) competency goals, which are statements of a general purpose or goal for caregiver behavior. The six (6) goals are defined in more detail in 13 functional areas. These areas: Safe, Healthy, Learning Environment, Physical, Cognitive, Communication, Creative, Self, Social, Guidance, Families, Program Management and Professionalism, describe the major tasks or functions that a caregiver must complete to carry out the competency goal.

To provide caregivers that meet the standards developed by the Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition, Community Action Partnership of North Alabama Head Start Program is available to work with Classroom Staff to obtain an age

appropriate CDA for their setting, a State awarded Child Development Certificate, associate or bachelor degree in Early Childhood Education.

All Head Start Staff will work closely together to help meet each child's developmental needs. Through communication, each Content Team Leader will discuss ways of sharing responsibilities in order to meet objectives and goals set forth in the Performance Standards.

*****Staff should be aware, when taking courses on-line, to check for accreditation. Not all on-line courses will be accepted by local colleges.**

Subject: CDA Renewal
Section: Licensing Services/Staff Qualifications

Program: Early/Preschool Head Start (revised 6/09)

REGULATION REFERENCE:

(2006) 45-CFR – 1304.52(b)(1)(2); 1304.52(f)
(2005) NAEYC Standard 6
(2006, up-dated)) Alabama DHR Minimum Standards: F

POLICY:

Teachers, Teacher Assistants, and other staff that have a CDA Credential are to keep their CDA Credential current. **A copy of an up-to-date CDA Certificate will be on file at the Central Office unless a comparable level of training meeting staff qualifications can be documented.**

PROCEDURE:

Employees are responsible for ensuring that all requirements for CDA renewal have been met and an application for renewal has been submitted to the CDA Council. It is suggested that this be completed a minimum of **three (3) months prior to their expiration date** in order to ensure renewal in a timely manner.

**** Exception: If employee provides verification that they have met or surpassed the policy criteria for CDA Credential with a comparative level of training for the position.**

Candidates can contact the CDA Council (1-800-424-4310) or check their website for information required or to request a renewal packet. Candidates are advised to allow sufficient time to obtain the packet, prior to sending the renewal application. Failure to include all items required will delay considerably the receipt of an up-dated credential.

Staff will complete the CDA Renewal Application (NCR) and submit the following information when applying for renewal:

- A current Red Cross or other agency First Aid Certification. Candidate must ensure training is kept current for renewal.
- Verification of completion of at least 4.5 Continuing Education Units (45 Contact hours), or a three (3) credit-hour course in Early Childhood Education/Child Development, within the past five (5) years.
- Recent (within the past year) work experience with young children (minimum eighty (80) hours).

- Letter of recommendation from an Early Childhood Education Professional, included in the renewal booklet, regarding Candidate's competence with young children. They must also complete the bottom section of the application form.
- Documentation of current membership in a National or Local Early Childhood Professional Organization.
- Money order in the amount of the current fee.

Please call the Licensing Services if you have any questions.

**** It is the responsibility of the employee to ensure all requirements have been met and a new credential is obtained to meet staff qualifications.**

The Staff is encouraged to continue courses to obtain an Associate or Baccalaureate Degree in Child Development/Early Childhood Education.

Subject: Classroom Staff Qualifications
Section: Licensing Services/Staff Qualifications
Program: Early/Preschool Head Start (revised 6/09)

REGULATION REFERENCE:

(2006) 45-CFR – 1304.52(b)(1)(10), 1304.52(f)
(2006) Alabama DHR Minimum Standards – 37-1,2,3,4
(2005) NAEYC- Standard 6

POLICY:

Classroom staff will be encouraged to pursue child development courses to obtain an age-appropriate CDA or subsequent qualifications in the Head Start Act of 2007 unless they can provide documentation of having received one (1) of the certifications listed for their position;

PROCEDURE:

Licensing staff will work with and encourage classroom staff through use of college courses and transcripts to achieve one (1) of the following certifications;

- An age appropriate Child Development Credential
- A state awarded certificate for Preschool Education (Child Development Certificate).
- An Associate, Baccalaureate, or Advanced Degree in Early Childhood Education.
- An Associate or Baccalaureate with Related field**.

**30 hours child development in conjunction with a degree.

Subject: Verification of Courses
Section: Licensing Services/Staff Qualifications
Program: Early/Preschool Head Start (revised 6/09)

REGULATION REFERENCE:

(2006) 45-CFR – 1304.52(b) (1) (2); 1304.52(f)
(2006) Alabama DHR Minimum Standards: F
(200) NAEYC Standard 6

POLICY:

Classroom Staff that will not meet the requirements in the Head Start Authorization Act of 2007 are encouraged to enroll in and actively pursue courses at an accredited college to achieve certification. Licensing Content Team Staff will act as Advisor to program staff to make course recommendations. Classroom staff is encouraged to make Child Development courses a priority as they will enhance skills and knowledge to work with young children.

PROCEDURE:

VERIFICATION OF COURSES

1. Classroom Staff will be asked to provide verification of education qualifications upon date of hire. Certification(s) include; an age appropriate CDA, Child Development Certificate, Associate or Bachelor degree. To be considered a related field, 30 hours of Child Development must be documented.

Classroom Staff who do not meet the Head Start Act of 2007 requirements are encouraged to enroll in and actively pursue classes consecutively until requirements have been met. NOTE: Actively pursuing is defined as successfully completing (receiving a "C" or higher) a minimum of 9 credit hours over three consecutive semesters. Child Development **courses recommended for a CDA should be a priority when registering** even though a CDA is not being pursued. If recommended courses are not available, Licensing Staff may be able to advise an alternative course that could be substituted.

2. It is the responsibility of staff that are pursuing certification to provide documentation of enrollment in and verification of successful completion of courses. This information is used for Federal reports and budgeting purposes.
3. If an age appropriate CDA is the staff goal, it is their responsibility to inform the Licensing Staff. Licensing will advise staff throughout the process. A transcript of the required CDA courses will be needed before scheduling the final steps of the CDA assessment process. If an employee cancels or withdraws from a course, they are requested to notify the Licensing Content Team Leader in writing as this will affect steps taken within the process.

4. The Area Team Leader will inquire of staff steps being taken to meet or maintain staff qualifications.

Child Development Associate (CDA) Credentialing

To meet National CDA requirements, students should take the following courses at their local college. **CDA courses must be a priority when registering** in order to meet Council training criteria and should be taken consecutively until requirements have been met.

INFANT/TODDLER CDA

CHD209 Infant and Toddlers Education Program
CHD102 Children's Creative Experiences
CHD104 Methods and Materials for Teaching Children

PRESCHOOL CDA

CHD102 Children's Creative Experiences
CHD104 Methods and Materials for Teaching Children
CHD205 Program Planning for Educating Young Children

In addition it is strongly recommended that all CDA students take CHD106 Children's Health and Safety.

If a course is not available, contact Licensing Services. They will work with you to see if an alternate CHD course can be substituted.

On-line courses should be researched for accreditation and ability to transfer to state colleges. On-line courses may be offered to prepare for a CDA Credential and not for the award of a CDA Credential.