

Review of EHS COVID Program Guidance





2020-2021 COVID-19 Program Information Guidance

Early Head Start Program

Early Education Services

During the 2020-2021 program year, what are the Head Start requirements related to education, disabilities and wellness services to ensure the health and safety of children, families, and staff during the COV-19 Pandemic.

While providing center based and remote services during the COVID-19 Pandemic, the City of San Antonio Department of Human Services Early Head Start Program will follow the recommendations below:

Home Visits

Due to physical distancing guidelines, teachers may complete home visits by phone or virtual meeting. Teachers must review the information on the Home Visit form and complete the form according to the *Virtual/Phone Home Visit Completion Guide*.

If the parent requests an in-person home visit, home visits should be completed at the child care site or a safe place agreeable to the parent and teacher. Teachers must collaborate with their Center Director/Site Coordinator to ensure all health and safety guidelines are followed including face mask and physical distancing requirements.

All Home Visits must be completed by the established due date on the City of San Antonio Benchmark Due Date Guide and entered in ChildPlus according to the ChildPlus Due Date Data Entry Guide.

Parent Conferences

Due to physical distancing guidelines, teachers may complete parent conferences by phone or virtual meeting. Teachers must review all information on the Parent Teacher Conference form and complete the form according to the *Virtual/Phone Parent Teacher Conference Completion Guide*.

If the parent requests an in-person parent conference, parent conferences must be completed at the child care site. Teachers must collaborate with their Center Director/Site Coordinator to ensure all health and safety guidelines are followed including face mask and physical distancing requirements.

All parent conferences must be completed by the established due date on the City of San Antonio Benchmark Due Date Guide and entered in ChildPlus according to the ChildPlus Due Date Data Entry Guide.

Developmental and Behavioral Screenings

The Early Head Start Program uses the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3) as the developmental screening and Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social and Emotional, Second Edition (ASQ: SE-2) as the behavioral screening. The developmental and behavioral screenings are completed in collaboration with each child's parent/guardian on or before the 45th calendar day of the child's entry date.

The ASQ: 3 and the ASQ:SE-2 can be completed by providing the questionnaire to the parent or through telephone/virtual interview with the parent. Center staff must collaborate with parents to ensure ASQ-3 & ASQ: SE-2 questionnaires are completed on or before the 45th calendar day of the child's entry date. ASQ-3 & ASQ: SE-2 questionnaires must be entered in ChildPlus according to the ChildPlus Data Entry Guide.

Teachers must continue to follow up with parents to provide support, and address any needs or concerns related to development and/or behavior. If the parents express concerns with their child's development and/or behavior, a referral must be offered to the parent.

For children who score with concerns on the ASQ:SE-2 and are participating in remote services, the EHS Mental Wellness Contractor will reach out to parents/guardians to address any concerns the parent may have related to development and/or behavior.

Multi-Disciplinary Staffing (MDS/URS)

The Multi-Disciplinary Staffing can be conducted through virtual, phone or in-person meetings for this program year. If the MDS is completed through in-person meeting, staff must ensure all health and safety guidelines are followed including face mask and physical distancing requirements. The Multidisciplinary Staffing must include the Center Director/Site Coordinator, teachers, and the Family Support Worker in the meeting.

If the MDS is completed through virtual or phone meetings, indicate the event was completed by virtual/phone meeting on the MDS Signature Form and include the names of those in attendance.

All MDS must be completed by the established due date on the City of San Antonio Benchmark Due Date Guide and entered in ChildPlus according to the ChildPlus Due Date Data Entry Guide.

CLASS

The 2020 Fall CLASS Observation Window is pending. The safety of the children, staff and observers will be considered when finalizing the CLASS Plan. The CLASS Observation Team should complete the re-certification process to ensure their certification does not expire.

Family Style Meals

Children and teachers should continue to eat together and engage in conversation and learning during mealtime. Children should be served individual trays and should not serve themselves. Children and teachers must ensure that all health and safety guidelines are being followed including physical distancing to the best extent possible.

Fidelity Observations

BOY & EOY Fidelity Observations must be completed for the 2020-2021 program year by the established due date on the City of San Antonio Benchmark Due Date Guide. Peer/Instructional Coaches will review data from fidelity observations and set goals to support teachers in their understanding of Creative Curriculum and implementing curriculum with fidelity.

Individual Professional Development Plans (IPDP)

Individual Professional Development Plans must be completed according to the City of San Antonio Benchmark Due Date Guide. Center Director/Site Coordinator should review the IPDP with each employee to guide professional development.

A copy of the completed IPDP must be provided to the Senior Management Analyst (SMA) for Education Services for all teachers who do not have a current CDA.

Child Classroom Files

Teachers must ensure that child classroom files are kept for children who participate in center-based and remote services. The child classroom files must be kept up to date with current information including parent/guardian input, documentation from home visits and parent teacher conferences, developmental and behavioral screeners, formal assessment summary information (BOY, MOY, and EOY), IFSP/IEP (if applicable), transition activities (if applicable), and work samples.

Individualization

Teachers must continue to provide individualized activities to meet each child's unique characteristics, strengths and needs, taking into consideration the cultural and linguistic background, pattern of development and learning for children participate in center-based and remote services.

Individualized caregiving and/or activities should be provided to children using information from IFSP/IEP (if applicable), parent/guardian input, educational assessments, behavioral and developmental screeners, teacher observations and medical/dental evaluations and treatments.

Teachers must document individualized caregiving, and/or activities for all children on the Teaching Strategies Child Planning Form.

Educational Assessments

The Early Head Start Program uses the Early Learning Accomplishment Profile (E-LAP) and the Learning Accomplishment Profile 3rd Edition (LAP-3) as the formal educational assessments. E-LAP/LAP-3 will be completed for children participating in center-based and remote services. Additional guidance will be provided to ensure E-LAP and LAP-3 are completed with fidelity for all children.

Teachers must review assessment data and follow up with parents to discuss any needs or concerns related to development.

Children who receive Intervention Services

Currently, some intervention services are being provided through telehealth services. If a parent reports that their child is unable to participate in telehealth services due to not having access to technology, center staff must inform the SMA for Education Services.

The SMA for Education Services and Family Support Worker will collaborate with the parent to assist the family in obtaining access to technology.

Wellness Observations

The Early Head Start wellness contractor will complete classroom observations for wellness referrals received for children who participate in centers based services. The wellness contractor will follow all health and safety guidelines while at the child care centers.

Continued Guidance

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2020-2021 COVID-19 Program Information Guidance

Early Head Start Program

ERSEA

During the 2020-2021 program year, what are the Head Start requirements related to Early Head Start (EHS) Eligibility, Recruitment, Selections, Enrollment, Attendance (ERSEA) to ensure the health and safety of children, families, and staff during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

To ensure the health and safety of children, families, and staff during the COVID-19 Pandemic, the City of San Antonio Department of Human Services EHS Program will follow the recommendations below:

Eligibility – 2020-2021 applications will be completed by phone. In place of parent signatures staff will replace with “PHONE” in ChildPlus on the ERSEA modules to include: Student Residency Questionnaire, Home Language Survey, and Statement of Income (if applicable). Staff will capture their own original signature. Refer to Phone Applications –COVID 19 Procedures.

Recruitment – EHS staff will continue to recruit families through promotion with our Service Providers, Community Agencies, social media, and ESD, a third party digital marketing company.

Selections – will be conducted virtually to include at a minimum 3 staff members who may include, Head Start ERSEA Senior Management Analyst (SMA), EHS ERSEA Management Analyst and EHS Disability SMA.

Selection Exception – EHS program must give first priority to children experiencing homelessness during the selection process. This priority will remain in effect indefinitely.

Enrollment –

- To ensure the safety of children, families and staff, EHS will prioritize enrollment for returning children. Full enrollment may not be met at centers that are impacted by COVID-19. The EHS program will continue efforts to reach full enrollment and will continue to enroll new children as capacity and safety allows.
- The established selection criteria will be used to enroll and prioritize children on the waitlist. All programs are encouraged to revisit their selection criteria to ensure it is relevant to the current health crisis.
- Classroom sizes will be reduced to the extent possible to ensure physical distancing is a priority and based on local and state guidance in response to the pandemic. Two teachers in a classroom are still required for the reduced classroom size.
- Parents will be provided the options of In Person and Remote Services. Parents may choose to alternate options with advance notice to program staff to ensure adequate staffing and safety is met for in-person services.
- The program continues to prioritize children with disabilities.
- Service Providers may have adjusted operating hours.

Attendance –

- EHS will continue to track and analyze attendance for in-person and remote based services.

- EHS staff will work to reengage families with extended absences.
- Children will remain enrolled in the EHS program until the family has notified program staff the child will not return.

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2020-2021 COVID-19 Program Information Guidance

Early Head Start Program

Family and Community Services

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, what are the Head Start requirements related to the Early Head Start (EHS) program services for Family and Community Support Services?

During the COVID-19 Pandemic, the City of San Antonio Department of Human Services Early Head Start (EHS-) Program will follow the recommendations below. The program is expected to make every effort to complete requirements within the established timeframes and document all efforts according to the program's Data Entry and Benchmark Due Date Guide.

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES:

Family Engagement Approach – To minimize the gathering of large groups of people and to stay compliant with recommendations made by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the State of Texas and San Antonio Metro Health, face-to-face engagement opportunities will be limited. The EHS program continues to recognize parents/guardians as their children's primary teachers/nurturers and will continue to implement intentional strategies to engage parents/guardians in their children's learning and development, support parent-child relationships and work to include specific strategies for father engagement. Family Support Workers (FSWs) will host meetings and engagement opportunities virtually until face to face opportunities can be reintroduced safely.

Parent Communication –EHS develops relationships with parents/guardians and structures services to encourage trust and respectful communication. Ongoing two-way communication between staff and parents/guardian is used to create welcoming program environments that incorporate the unique cultural, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds of families in the program and community.

All EHS staff will ensure continuous communication between families and themselves. Family engagement services will be conducted in the family's preferred language or through an interpreter, to the extent, possible, to ensure families have the opportunity to share personal information in an environment in which they feel safe.

FSWs will communicate with parents through weekly check-ins regardless if they are receiving center based or remote services. Check-ins may occur face to face at the EHS site during drop off or pick up time, through telephone or email dependent upon the FSWs onsite schedule and the parent's preferred method of communication. Communication will be documented in ChildPlus.

EHS Site Communication –EHS recognizes the importance of ongoing communication between the Grantee and Provider staff. Ongoing communication between the Grantee and Provider helps to develop a sense of knowledge, trust and respect that allows all staff to work easily together to ensure that each child and family are receiving the full amount of benefits that EHS has to offer.

FSWs and Directors/Site Corrdinator will meet weekly either in person, while maintaining social distancing guidelines and safety protocols, or virtually to discuss any issues, concerns or simply to provide updated information.

Parent Connection Committee Meetings and Parent Activities –In order to minimize the gathering of large groups of people and to stay compliant with recommendations made by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the State of Texas and San Antonio Metro Health, face-to-face engagement opportunities will be limited.

Early Head Start will work with the Service Provider to ensure the establishment of a Parent Connection Committee (PCC) comprised exclusively of parents/guardians of currently enrolled children, who are receiving either center-based or home-based services, as early in the program year as possible.

Parent Connection Committee (PCC) Meetings and on-site family activities will be conducted virtually until face-to-face opportunities can be reintroduced safely.

Parent Activities to Promote Child Learning and Development – The EHS Grantee and Service Provider will share responsibility with parents/guardians in promoting their child’s early learning and development. FSWs support families by providing engagement strategies that are designed to foster parental confidence and skills in promoting children’s learning and development.

All families enrolled in the program receive monthly School Readiness Home Learning Activities regardless if they are receiving center based or virtual services. Activities provided are taken from Ready Rosie, Creative Curriculum and Conscious Discipline and are intended to support the parent child bond and enhance their learning experiences.

EHS also offers opportunities for parents/guardians to participate in a research-based parenting curriculum that builds on parent /guardian’s knowledge and offers them the opportunity to practice parenting skills to promote children’s learning and development. The program’s chosen parent curriculum is Ready Rosie. Parents will continue to receive weekly videos via text message or email. Face to face workshops are suspended until they can be reintroduced safely. Staff will attempt to provide workshops virtually through live and recorded methods.

Family Meetings – When a child is accepted into the program, staff (FSW and Home Visitors) meets with the family to complete a family meeting. The family meeting is an integral part of the enrollment process and allows an opportunity for staff to learn more about the family and the family to learn more about the EHS Program. Face to face family meetings are suspended at this time until they can be reintroduced safely.

FSWs or Home Visitors will contact families and complete the family meeting by phone, or virtually. All forms requiring signatures will be explained during the meeting. Forms needing signatures will be placed in a large envelope and left for the family at the EHS site or the family’s home. All forms must be received back within 10 days of the child’s entry date. If signatures are not obtained within 10 days, FSW or Home Visitor will seek further guidance from their supervisor and/or Health Management Analyst. Forms requiring signatures include:

- Release of Information
- Permission for Services
- University of Incarnate Word Consent (signature may be obtained at a later time)

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- San Antonio Metro Health (signature may be obtained at a later time)

For all other forms completed during the family meeting that do not require a parent signature, including the Family Meeting Form and Partnership Agreement, the following statement will be added to the signature block:

“Completed by phone due to COVID-19 crisis”

If a family has opted to receive virtual services and is unable to pick up a packet from the center a home visit may be conducted by following the guidelines written in the Home Visit Procedures. Safety guidelines will follow all CDC, the State of Texas and San Antonio Metro Health recommendations concerning COVID 19. All family meetings must be completed according the program’s Data Entry and Benchmark Due Date Guide.

Please refer to Procedure: Re-Enrollment and New Enrollment Process Change – COVID-19 for further details regarding forms.

Family Partnership Services –EHS collaborates with families in a family partnership process that identifies needs, interests, strengths, goals, services and resources that support family well- being, including family safety, health, and economic stability. This process must take into consideration each family’s readiness and willingness to participate in the process and must be engaged in jointly with parents.

- **Beginning of Year (BOY) Assessments** – FSWs and Home Visitors will complete the BOY Assessment by phone or virtual meeting. Face to face meetings are suspended until they can be reintroduced safely. All assessments must be completed according the program’s Data Entry and Benchmark Due Date Guide.
- **End of Year (EOY) Assessments** – FSWs and Home Visitors will complete the EOY Assessment by phone or virtual meeting. Face to face meetings are suspended until they can be reintroduced safely. All assessments must be completed according the program’s Data Entry and Benchmark Due Date Guide.
- **Goals** – FSWs and Home Visitors will continue to work with each family to offer and develop an individualized goal that includes strategies for success, time frame, and community resources available. The Goal form will be completed by phone or virtual meeting and the following statement will be added to the signature block:

“Completed by Phone due to COVID-19 crisis”

All goals must be completed according the program’s Data Entry and Benchmark Due Date Guide and scanned, attached and saved into ChildPlus.

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2020-2021 COVID-19 Program Information Guidance

Early Head Start Program

Health, Nutrition and Dental Services

During challenges related to the COVID-19 Pandemic, what are the Head Start requirements related to health services?

To ensure the health and safety of children, families, and staff during the COVID-19 Pandemic, the City of San Antonio Department of Human Services Early Head Start (EHS) Program will follow the recommendations below. The program is expected to make every effort to complete requirements within the established timeframes and document all efforts according to the ChildPlus Data Entry Guide.

While adhering to these procedures is vitally important, the program will not be penalized in the 2020-2021 program year if they are unable to meet these requirements within the required timeframes, due to challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- **Forms for Applications-** Applications are being completed via phone. In place of parent signature staff will replace with “Conducted by Phone due to COVID-19 Crisis” in ChildPlus on the health modules to include: Child Health History, Nutrition Assessment, TB Questionnaire, and Health Acknowledgement.
 - All forms requiring signatures will be explained during the meeting. Forms needing signatures will be placed in a large envelope and left for the family at the EHS site or the family’s home. All forms must be received back within 10 days of the child’s entry date. If signatures are not obtained within 10 days, FSW or Home Visitor will seek further guidance from their supervisor and/or Health Management Analyst (MA). Forms requiring signatures include:
 - Release of Information
 - Permission for Services
 - University of Incarnate Word Consent (signature may be obtained at a later time)
 - San Antonio Metro Health Consent (signature may be obtained at a later time)
 - If a family has opted to receive virtual services and is unable to pick up a packet from the EHS site a home visit may be conducted by following the guidelines written in the Home Visit Procedures. Safety guidelines will follow all Center for Disease Control, the State of Texas and San Antonio Metro Health recommendations concerning COVID 19.
 - Please refer to Procedure: Re-Enrollment and New Enrollment Process Change – COVID-19 for further details regarding forms.
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- **30 Day Medical/ Dental Home and Insurance:** EHS is required to determine whether a child has ongoing sources of continuous, accessible health care and health insurance coverage within 30 days of when the child first attends the program or, for home-based program option, receives a home visit.. The FSW or Home Visitor will continue to assist families in accessing medical and dental services and health insurance coverage when needed. FSW or Home Visitor will follow the ChildPlus Date Entry Guide on documenting their efforts to meet this requirement.

- **45 day Hearing and Vision screenings** – Completing the hearing and vision screenings are vitally important to ensuring a child’s success in school. Completing these screenings will be challenging in the 2020-2021 program year, particularly for children who are receiving virtual services. All efforts will be made to complete in-person hearing and vision screenings on site, but will depend on the COVID-19 guidance from The City of San Antonio, Metro Heath, CDC, TEA, and Office of Head Start.
 - The program will continue to obtain written consent from parents for all health and developmental screenings they administer.
 - In the event that hearing and vision screenings do not occur the following note will be added to the hearing and vision events in ChildPlus:
 - *This child was enrolled on or after August 17, 2020 and due to COVID-19, the 45 day Federal Head Start requirements for _____ has not been met and is postponed until further notice. (in the blank fill in: hearing, vision and/or ASQ’s)*

- **90 Day Well Child Exam**– Within 90 days after the child first attends the program or, for the home-based program option, receives a home visit, EHS staff will support parents/guardians to ensure their child is up-to-date on preventative well-child visits, for the 2020-2021 school year.
 - Family Support Workers (FSW) or Home Visitors with the assistance of the Health MA and Service Provider will make every effort to obtain a copy of the child’s most recent well child exam within 90 calendar days of the child’s enrollment for the 2020-2021 school year. Staff should follow the ChildPlus Date Entry Guide on documenting their efforts to meet this requirement.
 - If a child is not up to date, FSWs or Home Visitors will follow up with the parent and document in ChildPlus, accordingly..
 - Due to the COVID-19 crisis, children enrolled for the 2020-2021 program year may not have a 90 day well child exam. (i.e.: no immunizations, special diet, or care plan needed) The following note will be added to ChildPlus, if needed:
 - *This child was enrolled on XX/XX/XX, due to COVID-19, the 90 day Federal Head Start requirement was not met.*

- **Immunizations** –The program will work with parents to help bring their child up-to-date on immunizations and preventative well child visits as quickly as possible.
 - Family Support Workers (FSW) or Home Based Visitors with the assistance of the Health MA and Service Provider staff will make every effort to obtain a copy of the child’s most recent immunization records. Staff should follow the ChildPlus Date Entry Guide on documenting their efforts to meet this requirement.

- **A Parent/ Guardian not comfortable with taking their child(ren) to their Health Care Professional** –EHS will take actions that are feasible, reasonable, and safe in terms of continuing to provide services and implementing management and oversight systems. We will communicate with parents to understand the importance of keeping the child up to date on well child exams and immunizations.

- **Telehealth Services** – The City of San Antonio will accept screenings and annual well-child exams completed by a healthcare provider through telehealth services. During the COVID-19 Pandemic, children will need to receive the recommended immunizations and continue to schedule any well-child visits with their medical and dental homes.

Hemoglobin and Lead Testing Clinics – For the 2020-2021 program year, on site Lead Testing Clinics have been postponed until further notice.

- **Metro Health Dental Clinics** – Completing dental screenings are vitally important to ensuring a child's success in school. Completing these screenings will be challenging in the 2020-2021 program year, particularly for children

who are receiving virtual services. All efforts will be made to complete in person dental screenings on-site, but will depend on the COVID-19 guidance from The City of San Antonio, Metro Health, CDC, TEA, and Office of Head Start.

- **Tooth brushing** –EHS will follow guidance from the Office of Head Start and City of San Antonio Metro Health Department regarding tooth brushing. Tooth brushing in the classrooms is suspended until further notice. Staff should continue to discuss and model proper tooth-brushing techniques with props such as dental puppets and share resources on tooth brushing and supplies with families. In addition, encourage parents to brush their child's teeth with fluoride toothpaste before they start the school day, whether in-person or remote instruction, and before bedtime.
- **Family Style Meals** – For the 2020-2021 program year, children and teachers should continue to eat together and engage in conversation and learning during mealtime. The City of San Antonio will follow guidance from the Office of Head Start, Metro Health, USDA/CACFP, and Childcare Licensing regarding meal service. Children should have individual trays/plates and should not serve themselves. Staff should ensure children wash hands prior to and immediately after eating. EHS sites will develop a plan to distribute food to children participating in remote learning services. (i.e. Essential Needs Days)
- **Health Event Follow-up, Tracking, and Data Documentation** – Required follow-ups for any medical, dental, nutrition, other health related missing event or concern identified by the EHS Program or as indicated on screenings, health assessments, or well child exams is required for the 2020-2021 school year.
 - the FSWs will follow up with the parent and document in ChildPlus every 30 days for a child who enrolled in the EHS site and not up to date.,
 - The Home Visitor will follow up during the weekly home visit and document on the home visit form for a child who enrolled in the Home Based Program and not up to date.. FSW's, Home Based Visitor's, and EHS site staff should continue to contact families and provide support regarding health, wellness, dental, and nutrition services, including health insurance coverage. Staff should encourage families to contact their medical home regarding health concerns and well child exams.
 - EHS staff, Home Visitor's and Site staff will work together to identify priorities related to health and nutrition, including well child exams, immunizations, health concerns, special diets, etc.

Wellness Assessment – EHS staff will not complete the 2020-2021 Beginning of the Year (BOY) Wellness Assessment. Due to the current situation regarding COVID-19, many families with children enrolled in our EHS Program are facing additional hardships related to food insecurity and wellness. Further guidance will be provided by the program's Health Services Advisory Committee regarding the End of Year (EOY) Wellness Assessment.

- **Health Screening** – EHS sites will follow guidance related to COVID screenings, including checking an individual's temperature, and sign-in, from the CDC, Metro Health, TEA, CCL health screenings for staff, children, and visitors to a site or other buildings and children receiving transportation services.

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Early Head Start Program

Home-Based Services

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, what are the Head Start requirements related to the Early Head Start (EHS) program services for Home-Based Support Services?

During the COVID-19 Pandemic, the City of San Antonio Department of Human Services Early Head Start (EHS) Program will follow the recommendations below. The program is expected to make every effort to complete requirements within the established timeframes and document all efforts according to the program's Data Entry and Benchmark Due Date Guide.

HOME-BASED SERVICES:

Socializations – In order to minimize the gathering of large groups of people and to stay compliant with recommendations made by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the State of Texas and San Antonio Metro Health, face-to-face engagement opportunities will be limited.

Socialization opportunities will be conducted virtually until face-to-face opportunities can be reintroduced safely. Due to the late start up for the Early Head Start program [this program year](#), in addition to the COVID 19 pandemic, the Service Provider will maintain documentation if they are unable to provide 22 Socialization opportunities [per caseload](#) for the current program year.

Home Visits – Home visits are opportunities for the EHS staff and parents to engage in early learning opportunities that fosters the parent's role as the child's first and most important teacher. The program will make the determination at any given point and time, during the COVID 19 pandemic, when it is safe enough to conduct face to face home visits. The program will utilize information recommended by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the State of Texas and San Antonio Metro Health, when determining the reinstatement of home visits for the purpose of meeting the required 46 visits per year in the home-based program. In addition, according to Office of Head Start guidance programs must ensure the family is comfortable with a home visitor coming into the [home](#)^{AJ(1)}.

If a face to face home visit is not feasible the program may conduct a virtual home visit with the same considerations as a face to face visit. In addition, Service Providers must be considerate of whether the parent has the time and capacity to participate in this service model. To the best extent possible, virtual home visits must be:

- Planned jointly by the home visitor and parents, and reflect the critical role of parents in the early learning and development of their children, including that the home visitor is able to effectively communicate with the parent, directly or through an interpreter;
- Planned using information from ongoing assessments, if available, that individualize learning experiences;
- Scheduled with sufficient time to serve all enrolled children in the home and conducted with parents and not conducted when only babysitters or other temporary caregivers are present;
- Scheduled with sufficient time and appropriate staff to ensure effective delivery of the full range of program services
- The EHS program will make up planned home visits or scheduled group socialization activities that are canceled by the program, and to the extent possible, attempt to make up planned home visits cancelled by the family.
- Medical or social service appointments may not replace group for either the planned socializations activities or the required number of home visits.

If the family cancels and/or is not at home for the scheduled home visit for two consecutive visits, the Home Visitor will make every attempt to determine the reasons for the missed home visits by documenting their attempts to contact the family in the Child Plus data system. In addition, the Home Visitor will report this information to their Supervisor. The Supervisor will make every attempt to contact the family either by phone and/or making a home visit to discuss barriers to keeping scheduled appointments. The Supervisor may also discuss with the family if the Home-Based program is the best fit for the family. If parent cannot be found and the home is vacant, the child's slot may be then considered vacant with the Head Start Administrator's authorization.

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2020-2021 COVID-19 Program Information Guidance

Early Head Start Program

Program Monitoring

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, what are the Head Start requirements related to the Early Head Start (EHS) program services for Monitoring?

During the COVID-19 Pandemic, the City of San Antonio Department of Human Services Early Head Start (EHS) Program will utilize the Program Information COVID Guidance documents for each Service Area as guidance for monitoring projects.

The Program Monitor will be expected to use the Program Information COVID Guidance while completing all monitoring projects.

A Program Monitoring calendar for 2020-2021 has been developed to identify each Service Areas monitoring project and timeframe. The Program Monitoring calendar is subject to change applicable to COVID – 19.

Monitoring checklist per Services Areas will be used in the ChildPlus data system to complete monitoring projects. The monitor will document on the checklist if changes are needed to align with the Program Information Guidance.

Monitoring projects will consist of a desk review and on site review when deemed necessary of child files using the ChildPlus data system.

Ongoing Monitoring may consist of Services Area interviews by telephone, WebEx sessions and in person when deemed necessary.

EHS Providers will receive unannounced Safe Environment visits to ensure the COVID Re-opening Safety Plan of Action protocols are enforced. Monitor will ensure hand washing; physical distancing and screenings are done. During the site visits as permitted the monitor will observe facilities, classrooms and playgrounds for the environmental health and safety component of the program.

When on site, the monitor will request to review Curriculum to Fidelity tools, Human Resources files and other documents in a separate room to promote physical distancing and safety, dependent on the COVID climate at the time of monitoring.

Classroom child files, including those files with Special Diets and Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) may be requested and placed in the office area or a separate room for the monitor to review.

EHS Providers will still be responsible for maintaining Curriculum to Fidelity tools; E-Lap data entry, collecting ASQ's from parents and data entry and ensuring classroom daily checklist are completed.

Providers may be asked to email classroom lesson plans to the monitor for review, instead of the monitor visiting the classrooms.

Interviewing Director/Teachers for Education Services may occur by telephone and or WebEx sessions dependent on the COVID-19 climate at the time of monitoring. Monitor will coordinate with the EHS Provider to schedule.

EHS Providers and Services Area Managers will continue to respond to any noted findings during ongoing monitoring through the ChildPlus Data system.

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2020-2021 COVID-19 Program Information Guidance

Early Head Start Program

Safe Environments

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, what are the Head Start requirements related to the Early Head Start (EHS) program services for Safe Environment Services?

During the COVID-19 Pandemic, the City of San Antonio Department of Human Services Early Head Start (EHS) Program will work with the Child Care Service Providers to support their use and practices for the Reopening Safety Protocols as required by the Health and Human Services Texas Child Care Licensing and CDC for child care facilities. EHS Program staff will frequently visit websites for updates.

Screening

The following individuals must be screened every day before entering the facility:

- Operations staff;
- Persons with legal authority to enter e.g., law enforcement officers, Head Start staff, and Department of Family and Protective Services staff;
- Professionals providing services to children;
- Children enrolled at the operation; and
- Parents who have children enrolled and present at the operation. Parents should only enter when necessary.

Parent Drop-Off and Pick-Up

- The pick-up and drop-off of children should be completed outside of the operation, unless the operation determines that there is a legitimate need for the parent to enter. Should the parent have a legitimate need to enter the operation, the parent must be screened by the operation as outlined in this document.
- Hand hygiene stations should be set up at the entrance of the facility, so that children can clean their hands before they enter. If a sink with soap and water is not available, provide hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol next to parent sign-in sheets. Keep hand sanitizer out of children's reach and supervise use. If possible, place sign-in stations outside, and provide sanitary wipes for cleaning pens between each use.
- Consider staggering arrival and drop off times and plan to limit direct contact with parents as much as possible.
 - Have teachers or classroom staff greets children outside as they arrive.
 - Designate a parent to be the drops off/pick up volunteer to walk all children to their classroom, and at the end of the day, walk all children back to their cars.
 - Infants could be transported in their car seats. Store car seat out of children's reach.

- Ideally, the same parent or designated person should drop off and pick up the child every day. If possible, older family members such as grandparents or those with serious underlying medical conditions should not pick up children, because they are more at risk.
- Stagger arrival and drop off times.
- Plan arrival and drop off outside the facility.
- Provide hand sanitizer for sign-in/out.
- Limit direct contact with parents/guardians.
- Designated parent or person should not be a 'vulnerable' person.
- Refrain from hugging and shaking hands.

Screen Children Upon Arrival

Persons who have a fever of 100.4° (38.0°C) or above or other signs of illness should not be admitted to the facility. Encourage parents to be on the alert for signs of illness in their children and to keep them home when they are sick. Screen children upon arrival.

There are several methods that facilities can use to protect their workers while conducting temperature screenings. The most protective methods incorporate social distancing (maintaining a distance of 6 feet from others) or physical barriers to eliminate or minimize exposures due to close contact to a child who has symptoms during screening.

Staying Home when Appropriate

- Educate staff and families about when they/their child (ren) should stay home and when they can return to school.
- CDC's criteria can help inform when employees should return to work:

Signs and Messages

- Post signs in highly visible locations (e.g., school entrances, restrooms) that promote everyday protective measures and describe how to stop the spread of germs (such as by properly washing hands and properly wearing a cloth face covering).

Maintaining Healthy Environments

Intensify cleaning and disinfection efforts:

- Facilities should develop a schedule for cleaning and disinfecting surfaces and objects that are frequently touched, especially toys. This may also include cleaning objects/surfaces not ordinarily cleaned daily such as doorknobs, light switches, classroom sink handles, countertops, nap pads, toilet tables, chairs, cubbies, and playground structures. Use all cleaning products according to the directions on the label. For disinfection, most common EPA-registered, fragrance-free household disinfectants should be effective. If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- All cleaning materials should be kept secure and out of reach of children.
- Cleaning products should not be used near children, and staff should ensure that there is adequate ventilation when using these products to prevent children from inhaling toxic fumes.

Clean and Sanitize Toys

- Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized should not be used.

- Toys that children have placed in their mouths or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretions or excretions should be set aside until they are cleaned by hand by a person wearing gloves. Clean with water and detergent, rinse, sanitize with an EPA-registered disinfectant, rinse again, and air-dry. Do not share toys with other groups of infants or toddlers, unless they are washed and sanitized before being moved from one group to the other.
- Set aside toys that need to be cleaned. Place in a dish pan with soapy water or put in a separate container marked for “soiled toys.” Keep dish pan and water out of reach from children to prevent risk of drowning. Washing with soapy water is the ideal method for cleaning. Try to have enough toys so that the toys can be rotated through cleanings.
- Children’s books, like other paper-based materials such as mail or envelopes, are not considered a high risk for transmission and do not need additional cleaning or disinfection procedures.

Diapering

When diapering a child, wash your hands and wash the child’s hands before you begin, and wear gloves. Follow safe diaper changing procedures. Procedures should be posted in all diaper changing areas.

After diapering, wash your hands (even if you were wearing gloves) and disinfect the diapering area with fragrance-free bleach that is EPA-registered as a sanitizing or disinfecting solution. If other products are used for sanitizing or disinfecting, they should also be fragrance-free and EPA-registered. If the surface is dirty, it should be cleaned with detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.

Continued Guidance – All guidance offered in this document is subject to change upon direction from Office of Head Start (OHS) or recommendations made by the CDC, State of Texas, and/or San Antonio Metro Health. This guidance supersedes current DHS Head Start Procedures during the COVID-19 pandemic.