

CORRESPONDENCE

ACF Administration for Children and Families	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES	
	1. Log No. ACF-IM-HS-21-03	2. Issuance Date: 07/27/2021
	3. Originating Office: Office of Head Start	
	4. Key Words: Monitoring; FY 2022; CLASS®	

INFORMATION MEMORANDUM

TO: All Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees

SUBJECT: Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Monitoring Process for Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees

INFORMATION: Sec. 641A of the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007 requires the Office of Head Start (OHS) to implement ongoing monitoring of all programs receiving federal funds. In FY 2022, OHS will resume on-site monitoring reviews and Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®) reviews.

On-site reviews will begin in January 2022, as local conditions allow. While on-site, monitors will follow U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) health and safety guidelines. Further, OHS is committed to partnering with grantees when preparing for on-site reviews to maintain a safe environment for children, families, and staff within the program. If local conditions do not allow for an on-site review, OHS reserves the right to conduct an off-site review.

Upon request, grantees are required to submit an accurate calendar of availability. The availability information is used to schedule monitoring reviews and visits by Regional Office staff. As changes in program availability occur, grantees must update their calendars. OHS is unable to accommodate requests to reschedule reviews in program year 2021–2022.

In addition to outlining the status of monitoring reviews in FY 2022, this Information Memorandum reiterates updates to the CLASS® condition within the Designation Renewal System (DRS), including the creation of quality thresholds for each domain of the CLASS®.

FY 2022 Monitoring Reviews

Review Type	FY 2022 Implementation	Start Date
Focus Area 1 (FA1)	FA1 reviews will be conducted, as usual, through a virtual format.	October 2021
Focus Area 2 (FA2)	FA2 reviews will resume in-person for the 2021–2022 program year.	January 2022

Review Type	FY 2022 Implementation	Start Date
CLASS®	CLASS® reviews will resume in-person for the 2021–2022 program year.	January 2022
Follow-up	Follow-up reviews will be conducted either in-person or virtually by your Regional Office.	Start dates will coincide with the end of the corrective action period.
American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) Reevaluations	AIAN reevaluation reviews will be conducted either in-person or virtually by the applicable Regional Office.	Start dates will coincide with the Tribal DRS Consultation process and Plan to Improve Quality.
Other	OHS reserves the right to conduct special off-site or on-site reviews	TBD, as needed

Grantees scheduled to receive a monitoring review in FY 2022 will receive a notification letter at least 45 days prior to the start of their review event. Grantees can expect a planning call with their assigned review lead to discuss the review schedule. The FA1 and FA2 reviews will include conversations on the following content areas:

- Program Design and Management
- Education and Child Development
- Health Program Services
- Family and Community Engagement
- Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance (ERSEA)
- Fiscal Infrastructure

During the FA1 and FA2 review processes, grantees will be asked questions about the use of funds received from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) and Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Acts, as well from the American Rescue Plan. Grantees will also be asked about changes made to service delivery in the above content areas within the last 12 months. OHS will request information regarding grantee service delivery model (e.g., in-person services, virtual services, or a hybrid of both) with the understanding that, by January 2022, programs will have returned to in-person comprehensive services as local conditions allow. For additional details regarding expectations for Head Start programs in program year 2021–2022, please reference [ACF-PI-HS-21-04](#).

OHS recognizes that the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed persistent inequities within the early childhood education sector and is committed to advancing equity for all eligible individuals to support historically underserved communities. Based on this ongoing priority, grantees are expected to demonstrate how they create a workplace that reflects the diversity of the community served and promotes a culture of belonging. It is critical that programs create an inclusive and accessible environment for all enrolled children, families, and staff.

CLASS®

Effective November 2020, OHS published a final rule to update three of the seven conditions under the DRS. For the CLASS® condition, the final rule made three major changes. First, the final rule removed the lowest 10% criterion. Second, it raised the CLASS® competitive thresholds as follows: 5 for Emotional Support, 5 for Classroom Organization, and 2.3 for Instructional Support.¹ Any grant that receives an average score from a CLASS® review below one or more of these thresholds will be required to compete at the end of their current five-year grant period. Last, the final rule established quality thresholds for each domain of the CLASS® as follows: 6 for Emotional Support, 6 for Classroom Organization, and 3 for Instructional Support.

The new CLASS® quality thresholds represent the expectations of OHS for the quality of teacher-child interactions and the learning environment in every Head Start classroom. The CLASS® quality thresholds do not relate to competition, but instead reflect an opportunity for grantees to focus on quality improvement in the area of teacher-child interactions. For any grantee that receives a score below one or more of the CLASS® quality thresholds, OHS will offer support for quality improvement efforts. The establishment of CLASS® quality thresholds is intended to build on existing program quality improvement efforts to enhance classroom interactions beyond any set floor and will include more intentional OHS support for such efforts through training and technical assistance. For additional details on the final rule, please reference [ACF-PI-HS-20-05](#).

If you have any questions or concerns regarding FY 2022 monitoring, please contact your Regional Office.

Thank you for the work you do on behalf of children and families.

/ Dr. Bernadine Futrell /

Dr. Bernadine Futrell
Director
Office of Head Start

¹ The competitive threshold for Instructional Support is 2.3 for CLASS® reviews conducted through July 31, 2025 and raises to 2.5 for CLASS® reviews conducted on and after August 1, 2025.