Series 3000: Operations, Finance, and Property

3100 General Operations

3120 Head Start COVID-19 Mitigation

On January 6, 2023, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services ("DHHS") issued a final rule imposing a COVID-19 mitigation policy requirement for Head Start Programs ("Final Rule").

A. Policy Duration

This Policy is effective immediately and will remain in effect for the duration of the Final Rule. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this Policy, the Superintendent may suspend or revise this Policy (in whole or in part) if, following consultation with the District's legal counsel, the Superintendent determines that legal authority requires or permits the suspension or revision. The Superintendent must report such suspension or revision to the Board at the next scheduled Board meeting for ratification.

B. Definitions

The definitions in this Section apply to this Policy.

1. "Administrator"

(District Is a Head Start Grantee)] [means the Superintendent or designee; except, if the District delegated responsibility for operating the Head Start Program to another entity in whole or in part, "Administrator" means the chief official of that entity or designee to the extent the Program is operated by that entity].

2. "Head Start Program" means a program funded under the Head Start Act, 42 USC 9831, et seq., including a Head Start, Early Head Start, migrant, seasonal, and tribal program.

3. "Mask" means a face covering that (i) covers one's mouth, nose, and chin, (ii) stays in place when a person talks and moves, (iii) does not contain vents or exhalation valves, and (iv) is consistent with the CDC's "Your Guide to Masks" (https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html).

4. "Staff" means paid adults who have responsibilities related to children and their families who are enrolled in Head Start Programs.

C. COVID-19 Mitigation

The Final Rule imposes a COVID-19 mitigation policy requirement on Head Start Programs. The mitigation provisions in this Section were developed in consultation with the applicable Health Start Program Health Services Advisory

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Committee to reduce COVID-19 transmission, infection, and severity. The provisions were also developed using DHHS guidance issued on January 6, 2023 (Supplementary Information on Establishing an Evidence-based COVID-19 Mitigation Policy) and objective evidence and findings from public health authorities such as the CDC, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services ("MDHHS"), and the local health department.

1. COVID-19 Levels

   The Administrator or designee will monitor COVID-19 levels in the local community using data from sources such as the CDC, MDHHS, and the local health department. Mitigation procedures identified below will apply to the District's Head Start Programs depending on whether COVID-19 levels are low, medium, or high, as determined by the Administrator or designee.

   At the time of this Policy's revision date (identified below), the Administrator or designee has determined that COVID-19 levels in the local community are low. The mitigation procedures for that category will continue to apply until the Administrator or designee announces a category change.

   a. Low: staff, contractors, volunteers, and children may choose to wear masks.

   b. Medium:

      i. Masks are recommended for staff, contractors, volunteers, and children who are at high risk for contracting COVID-19.

      ii. Staff, contractors, volunteers, and children are encouraged to stay at home when sick.

      iii. The Administrator or designee will research potential ventilation improvements and report any improvement recommendations to the Board.

   c. High:

      i. Masks are required for staff, contractors, volunteers, and children two years of age and older when there are two or more people:

         A) On a vehicle owned, leased, or arranged by the Head Start Program, and

         B) Indoors in a setting when Head Start services are provided.

      ii. Staff, contractors, volunteers, and children are encouraged to stay at home when sick.

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iii. If COVID-19 ventilation improvements have not already been made, the Administrator or designee will implement ventilation improvements within Board-approved parameters.

iv. This Section's mask requirement does not apply to the following:

A) When a person is eating or drinking, and

B) Children when they are napping.

The Administrator or designee will consider, in consultation with the District's legal counsel, an accommodation request under applicable federal or state law based on a person's disability; known limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions; or sincerely held religious belief, practice, or observance that conflicts with this Policy's mask requirement.

2. Communication

The Administrator or designee will notify applicable Head Start staff, contractors, volunteers, and children of changes in COVID-19 level categories as soon as possible. The communication will identify the rationale for the category change and will refer back to this Policy for applicable mitigation procedures. The communication will be made through email, using emails on file with the District, to staff, contractors, volunteers. Children will be notified through an appropriate medium, as determined by the Administrator or designee, such as through a PA system announcement or classroom postings.

D. Retention of Exemption Requests and Outcomes

The Administrator will retain copies of exemption requests, outcomes, and supporting documentation completed or obtained pursuant to this Policy.

E. Document Confidentiality

The District will maintain as confidential all medical information in accordance with applicable laws and policies.

F. Discipline

An employee or child who fails to comply with this Policy may be subject to discipline. A contractor or volunteer who fails to comply with this Policy may be removed from the facility.

Legal authority: 45 CFR Part 1302; MCL 380.11a

Date adopted: October 26, 2026

Date revised:

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