



issued Friday, June 23, 2023

Removal of the COVID-19 Vaccine and Testing Requirements for Head Start Programs

On June 26, 2023, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) will issue Final Rule **[Removal of the Vaccine Requirements for Head Start Programs](#)** in the Federal Register. It removes the COVID-19 vaccine and testing requirements that were originally included in the November 2021 Interim Final Rule with Comment Period. Specifically, this Final Rule removes the Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS) requirement that all Head Start staff, contractors whose activities involve contact with or providing direct services to children and families, and volunteers working in classrooms or directly with children are fully vaccinated for COVID-19. The HSPPS requirement that staff who are exempt from vaccination have "at least weekly" COVID-19 testing is also removed.

Currently, Head Start grant recipients are required to have an evidence-based COVID-19 mitigation policy to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and reduce the likelihood of illness or death from infection (**[45 CFR §1302.47\(b\)\(9\)](#)**). Although ACF has formally removed the vaccine and testing requirements, Head Start programs are strongly encouraged to include them in their mitigation policy. For more guidance for Head Start grant recipients, refer to **[ACF-PI-HS-23-01 Supplementary Information on Establishing an Evidence-based COVID-19 Mitigation Policy](#)**.

Office of Head Start (OHS) | 330 C Street, SW | 4th Floor Mary E. Switzer Building | Washington, DC 20201 | <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov> | 1-866-763-6481 | [Contact Us](#)

Head Start® and Early Head Start® word marks and logos are registered trademarks owned by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).