

Enrollment Policy

I. Eligibility

- a. Head Start Programs are the responsible entity for determining which children are eligible for services including Head Start/NJ Pre-K contracted classrooms.
 - i. Head Start must follow income and categorically eligibility regulations.
 - ii. Head Start must follow age eligibility regulations.

II. Selection

- a. Head Start Programs are the responsible entity for determining the selection of children by developing selection criteria.
 - i. Children must be at 100% of poverty guidelines or below.
 - ii. Head Start may accept up to 10% over income children. (Once all 100% of poverty income eligible children have been accepted.)
 - iii. Head Start may develop other selection criteria, as per its community assessment.
 - iv. Head Start is mandated to serve children with IEPs, at least 10% of its enrollment.

III. Recruitment

- a. Head Start Programs are the responsible entity for the recruitment of children to be placed in its Head Start/NJ Pre-K contracted classrooms.
 - i. Head Start Programs will recruit through a variety of methods of outreach to the community.
 - ii. Districts will inform parents of additional requirements and services that Head Start Programs provides including income eligibility, age eligibility, and services to children with disabilities.
 - iii. Districts must refer children to Head Start as part of its overall process for referring children to community providers offering NJ Pre-K services.
 - iv. Districts providing recruitment and enrollment events must include providers, as well as Head Start Programs.

IV. Enrollment

- a. Head Start Programs are the responsible entity for enrolling children to be placed in its Head Start-Pre-K classrooms.
 - i. Head Start Programs are to be given full enrollment packets and training in order to manage the enrollment process for its “NJ Pre-K /Head Start” classrooms.
 1. Districts will work collaboratively with Head Start Programs to provide administrative review of enrollment in Head Start/NJ Pre-K classrooms:
 - a. Using standardized “District” enrollment packets

- b. Providing training to the Head Start Programs and to the Districts regarding each entities' enrollment requirements.
 - c. Reviewing together completed packets provided by the Head Start programs and the Districts.
 - ii. In cases where parents are interested in Head Start Program, the District will provide the parent with Head Start Programs' contact information.
 - 1. Districts will work directly with the Head Start Program, not with the parent, to ensure that all enrollment documentation is completed.
 - 2. Districts and Head Start Programs must follow the State's administrative code N.J.A.C. 6A:22 Student Residency for accepted residency documentation.
 - 3. Districts will provide Head Start Programs with confirmation of enrollment with the District within a timely manner.
 - iii. Head Start Programs will also complete its own enrollment documents as per the Head Start Program Performance Standards.
 - 1. Documentation includes, but not limited to, collection and documentation of income, an interview, and age eligibility process.
 - 2. Head Start Programs may opt to enroll a child as a Head Start child, and not a "NJ Pre-K" child when there is conflict in required documentation for the "District."
 - a. Head Start Programs are required to follow the McKinney-Vento Act for enrollment purposes.
- Example: If a family is living with another family because they were evicted and cannot afford their own home, they are homeless. If the family has done nothing to change the situation and still has the same living arrangement a year later, are they still considered homeless?
- Yes, a family is considered homeless for as long as they are homeless, according to our definition. Homeless means the same as homeless children and youth in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act at 42 U.S.C. 11434a (2). Homeless children and youth in McKinney-Vento means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence (within the meaning of section 11302(a)(1) of this title); and children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason.