

East Missouri Action Agency, Inc.  
Head Start

**VOLUNTEER WORK SERVICE PLAN  
2011-2012**

## THE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

1. **Purpose of Volunteer Policies:** To provide overall guidance to both staff and volunteers in the Head Start program. Policies are intended for internal management only and do not imply a binding contractual or personnel agreement. The Head Start program may change any policies at any time and will expect said policies to be followed. Changes in volunteer policies will only be granted by the coordinator of volunteers with approval by the Policy Council and must be documented in writing before practice of the changed policies. Areas not specifically covered by these policies will be determined by the coordinator of volunteers after consultation with the Head Start Director.
2. **National Head Start Program:** Head Start was founded in 1965 at the beginning of the War on Poverty and income-eligible children and their families have benefited from this program for over forty-five (45) years.

The program recognizes parents as primary educators in the developmental growth of their children. Development in speech and language, cognitive, self-help, motor and social-emotional areas are stressed for overall effectiveness in Head Start children's lives. These areas are implemented into their daily living by learning through play. This does not involve classroom setting techniques, but by informal play which helps children to prepare for life experiences. Education is the key but it is done through games, music and other activities geared to the age group.

It is also a requirement of Head Start policies that disabled children make up ten percent (10%) of the children enrolled in the overall program.

This enables all children to develop skills to their fullest capacity and to get a 'head start' in life. Thus the title of this program aptly describes the basis for which it was developed.

3. **Head Start Performance Standards:** The Performance Standards are rules that Head Start programs must go by to keep in compliance with Head Start laws. Copies of the Performance Standards are kept at each Head Start location and volunteers are encouraged to review them. Supervisors will inform volunteers where these and other important issues are kept.
4. **Federal Policy Regarding Volunteers:** Project Head Start was founded on the belief that Head Start programs should promote meaningful citizen participation. This would involve not only parents, but other individuals as well.

Each Head Start grantee must apply each year for grant monies to run the program. When a grant application is approved, it requires the Head Start program to obtain in-kind contributions to be counted toward meeting the non-Federal share. This means that for every dollar we receive through this grant, the Head Start program must match it with twenty cents from in-kind. In-kind is simply a term used for contributions from volunteers.

Volunteer time is given a monetary value which can be counted as in-kind. If the program does not match the non-Federal share, the program falls short of its commitment to the grant requirements resulting in a decrease in funding or the program could be terminated. Unless

the program has the support of volunteers, it cannot provide the needed services which benefit Head Start children and families.

Volunteer services are compared to services of paid employee positions within the program or the local community. Volunteer time is then assigned a 'wage' which can be counted as in-kind to meet the non-Federal share.

5. **Program Option**: The center-based option provides classrooms for children to attend four days a week. There may be more than one classroom in a center and there are usually eighteen (18) children to a classroom. The number of classrooms and the locations of the centers are determined by the projected number of income-eligible children within a certain area.

The Full-Day option is also center-based, open every day of the work week throughout the school year. This program remains open all day which assists working parents as well as those attending colleges and other education programs. This program may have an enrollment of twenty (20) children.

The EMAA Head Start program currently has ten (10) centers; only one (1) site has part-day classes. We may enroll a total of 585 children and look forward to future expansion in the number of sites as well as the number of children and families we serve.

6. **Grantee/Relationship**: Law prohibits a Head Start program from directly receiving Federal funds. Therefore, a Grantee must be established and/or approved to receive this funding on the program's behalf. East Missouri Action Agency, Inc. is the Grantee for our Head Start program. The Agency has overall responsibility for the welfare of the program and in the administration of how these funds are used to provide effective services.

EMAA is also the Grantee for several other programs which include Community Services, Family Planning, Housing and Weatherization. A Fiscal/Administrative Department provides record keeping for all programs.

This Agency operates in eight (8) counties: Bollinger, Cape, Iron, Madison, Perry, St. Francois, Ste. Genevieve and Washington County.

7. **Board and Policy Members**: The Board of Directors is responsible for making policies for the agency as a whole. The Board consists of community representatives from private, public and low-income sectors. The Board usually meets the third Monday of each month at 7:00pm in Park Hills, Missouri.

The Policy Council is responsible for policy and decision making in the Head Start program. Members are community representatives and Head Start parents. One parent representative is chosen from each of the eight counties to sit on the Council, by their local parent groups, with the exception of Cape Girardeau, St. Francois and Washington Counties which have two (2) parent representatives due to the large area within each of these counties. Community representatives help to complement the Council and its effectiveness by the involvement of communities and promoting awareness of the Head Start program. One Community

Representative from each of the eight counties is chosen to sit on the Council. The Policy Council usually meets the first Monday of each month at 10:00 am in the EMAA Central Office in Park Hills, Missouri.

Major decisions of the Policy Council must also be approved by the Board of Directors and the Policy Council must agree with decisions made by the Board regarding Head Start. Therefore, both entities must work together to assist in providing an effective Head Start effort.

Members of both the Board and Policy Council are volunteers.

8. **Staff Members/Organization**: Staff will assist volunteers with names of staff and volunteers for the program site in which they will be contributing their services. This will be helpful to volunteers in remembering the names of staff in their area.

Head Start staff must utilize the 'chain of command' which must be followed to ensure that we remain in compliance with procedures and that everyone's rights and responsibilities are respected.

Volunteers need to know the chain of command and to whom they should report. In order for volunteers to understand how the chain of command works, they need to know the various Head Start positions and the roles they play.

The Deputy Director and Administrative Secretary report directly to the Director. The Deputy Director supervises Head Start Specialists/Area Coordinators.

Specialists/Area Coordinators are responsible for all Head Start programs within their respective assignment. They directly supervise Site Managers, Teachers and Area Support Assistants. Site Managers and Teachers are responsible for all other center staff.

Volunteers will have immediate supervisors who will provide on-the-job training and will be available to volunteers at all times. These immediate supervisors will report directly to the Site Managers (unless the immediate supervisors are the Site Managers) in center-based option. Volunteers in Central Office positions will report directly to whom they assist.

Site Managers and Central Office staff who utilize regular volunteers will work directly with the coordinator of volunteers. However, Site Managers must continue to keep the Area Coordinators informed of all happenings within their work sites.

9. **Curriculum**: A curriculum is the term for written guidelines by which to provide a planned schedule of activities geared both to the individual child and to groups of children as well. EMAA Head Start uses *The Creative Curriculum for Early Childhood*.

The *Creative Curriculum* is rooted in educational philosophy and theory as well as practice. It builds on Erik Erickson's stages of social-emotional development, Jean Piaget's theories of how children think and learn and on principles of physical environment and an appreciation of cultural influences.

The *Creative Curriculum* shows teachers how to foster positive responses to these three stages. The type of environment described the *Creative Curriculum* helps children develop a sense of trust and belonging. Children can feel safe and encouraged to explore not only materials but also relationships with peers and adults. They feel important and valued when others listen to them, seek out ideas and allow them to express themselves.

Competence and initiative are fostered in this type of environment. By setting clear, age-appropriate expectations for behavior and by letting children know what is expected of them, teachers can engender success and minimize frustration. Children's concerns about doing things 'right' diminish because they are encouraged to learn from their mistakes, to explore and to take risks.

10. **Positive Discipline – Policy and Guidance**: One of the most important facets in the organization and operation of a Head Start classroom is discipline and/or classroom management. The Head Start Performance Standards speak to this issue. As a part of our services we will provide an environment of acceptance which helps each child build ethnic pride, develop positive self-concept, enhance his/her individual strengths and develop facility in social relationships.

All volunteers must complete training as listed on the form, "**Non-EMAA Staff Orientation: Volunteers and Those Working with Children with Special Needs**" which involves the following:

a. **GENERAL – Volunteers who work over 8 hours/week or are part of adult: child staff ratio**

- Volunteer Handbook (give handout to regular volunteers)
- Physical, TB, child abuse and criminal record check on file

b. **CLASSROOM – *Anyone who volunteers in the classroom***

- "Promoting Literacy at Head Start" (handout)
- "Ways to change your child's behavior (and your own)" (handout)
- "The Basics of Creative Curriculum" (handout)
- Code of Conduct Agreement – signed and attached
- DISABILITIES PERSONNEL: "Orientation....Special Needs"

c. **KITCHEN**

- Mealtime poster
- Hepatitis A shots – all kitchen volunteers

*All volunteers and staff who trained, then sign the form.*

11. **Emergency and First Aid Procedures**: Each site has a plan for emergency procedures and a plan for emergency situations which require first aid. Your supervisor will provide you with clear rules about first aid treatment.

A map of exit routes or natural disaster areas are posted at each program site and emergency equipment is stored in a central location. It is the responsibility of volunteers to familiarize themselves with these routes.

Volunteers will be required to fill out an Emergency Medical Form which contains information to assist staff if volunteers are involved in an emergency or an accident. This form will be kept in a confidential file.

12. **Calendars**: Each center will post a calendar showing upcoming events, in-service trainings, vacations, etc. Staff will inform volunteers of any changes. Volunteers should review the calendar each time they arrive at their sites.
13. **Communication**: Volunteers should receive the same information that staff receive. Supervisors will direct volunteers to the area where they can review these communications on a regular basis.
14. **Definition of "Volunteer"**: A volunteer is anyone who performs any task at the direction of and on behalf of the Head Start program without compensation or the expectation of compensation. Volunteers who work in the center less than eight hours a week will not be required to have a physical and TB or criminal background check. Any volunteer at the center for eight hours or more per week will be required to have a physical, TB and background check.
15. **Special Group Volunteers**: Volunteers from groups in the community will be utilized as resources become available. A written agreement must exist between these groups and the Head Start Volunteer Program and must identify responsibility of management and care of the volunteers.
16. **Relatives of Staff as Volunteers**: If family members of staff are utilized as volunteers, they will not be placed under direct supervision of or in the same component as the staff person to whom they are related without prior approval of the Area Coordinator. If at any time this approval results in a conflict or any problem with the relationship between the volunteer and the Head Start program, the Area Coordinator/Director may revoke the approval.
17. **Head Start Parents and Relatives as Volunteers**: Head Start parent volunteers will be utilized where such services do not obstruct or conflict with the provision of services to the parent or to others. Relatives of parents may also serve as volunteers but will not be placed directly under the supervision of the parent or in the same component of the volunteer program as that of the parent volunteer without prior approval of the Area Coordinator. If at any time this approval results in conflict or any problem with the relationship between the volunteer and the Head Start program, the Area Coordinator/Director may revoke the approval. Younger volunteers must be 14 years or older to volunteer in the Head Start program, unless included in a cadet student group.
18. **Service at the Discretion of the Head Start Program**: The Head Start program will utilize all volunteers with the understanding that such services are at the sole discretion of the Head

Start program. Volunteers agree that the Head Start program may at any time, for whatever reason, terminate the volunteer's relationship with the program.

The volunteer may at any time, for whatever reason, decide to sever the volunteer's relationship with the Head Start program. Notice of this decision should be communicated as soon as possible to the volunteer's supervisor.

19. **Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities:** Volunteers are a valuable resource to the Head Start program, its staff and families. Volunteers shall have the right to be given assignments suited to their skills and interests, to be treated as equal co-workers, to effective supervision and the right to recognition for work done. In return, volunteers shall agree to actively perform their duties to the best of their abilities, to remain loyal to the goals and procedures of the Head Start program and to be consistent in attendance of their assigned position schedules.

20. **Grievance Procedures:** To eliminate misunderstandings regarding grievances, the Head Start Volunteer Program defines the term "grievance" as a concern involving the four volunteer rights listed in A19. If volunteers feel they have not been allowed these rights they may take the following action:

- A. Present their grievances in writing to the immediate supervisor within three (3) working days.
- B. The supervisor and Site Manager will set up a meeting with the volunteer within five (5) working days. If the volunteer contributes services to Central Office, the supervisor and the coordinator of volunteers will meet with the volunteer.
- C. If the issue remains unresolved the coordinator or volunteers will set up a meeting with those involved at the center within ten (10) working days. Those in the Central Office will meet with the Director and others involved.
- D. If no resolution is found, the issue will go to the next Policy Council meeting, provided that a quorum is present. The Policy Council is not required to give the volunteer an opportunity to address the issue at the meeting. The decision of the Policy Council will be final and there shall be no other recourse within EMAA.

Grievance forms will be available at all program sites.

Failure to follow the proper chain of command or procedures of policies will result in dismissal of a grievance.

## **VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES**

1. **Conflict of Interest:** No person who has a conflict of interest with any activity or component of the Head Start program, whether personal, philosophical, or financial will be accepted as a volunteer with the Head Start program.
2. **Representation of the Agency:** No volunteer will take any action to make any statement which might affect or obligate the Head Start program. Volunteers should seek prior

consultation and approval from appropriate staff. Volunteers are only authorized to represent the Head Start program as specifically indicated within their position descriptions and only to the extent of such written specifications.

3. **Confidentiality:** Volunteers are responsible for maintaining complete confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which they are exposed as a volunteer.

Failure to maintain confidentiality will result in termination of the volunteers services to the Head Start program or another corrective action.

4. **Dress Code/Positive Image:** Volunteers are representatives of the Head Start program and must present a good image to the community as a whole. Volunteers will dress appropriately for the conditions and performance of their duties. Revealing garments do not present the image the Head Start program wants to convey to the community. Volunteers in food service will wear hair nets and no shorts or short skirts for their own protection.

5. **Standards of Conduct:** All volunteers must abide by Head Start standards of conduct:
  - ✓ To respect and promote the unique identity of each child and family and refrain from stereotyping on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion or disability;
  - ✓ To follow program confidentiality policies concerning information about children, families and other staff members;
  - ✓ To never leave a child alone or unsupervised;
  - ✓ To use positive methods of child guidance and to no engage in corporal punishment, emotional or physical abuse, or humiliation, to not employ methods of discipline that involve isolation, the use of food as punishment or reward, or the denial of basic needs;
  - ✓ To not solicit or accept personal gratuities, favors, or anything of significant monetary value from contracts or potential contractors.

We cannot promote good social skills in the children if adults are not positive role models. Therefore, it is the policy of EMAA Head Start that improper use of language (cursing, telling improper jokes, etc) or other inappropriate behavior can be cause for immediate dismissal.

Anyone, whether it is parents, staff, volunteers or visitors, who causes a disturbance or conflict of any nature will be asked to leave and escorted from the premises immediately. These persons will not be allowed to return until a conference between all concerned has taken place and a solution has been determined.

6. **Identifying and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect:** Volunteers who suspect child abuse and neglect should consult immediately with their supervisors.
7. **Contribution Services:** Inkind forms are used to record the services and the hours the volunteers contribute to the Head Start program. Volunteers are responsible for the accurate completion and timely submission of their own Inkind forms. Volunteers will give these forms to their supervisors to be sent in to Central Office along with other Inkind forms on a weekly

basis. Site Managers and Central Office staff directly supervising a volunteer will sign Inkind forms to verify hours contributed.

8. **Insurance**: Agency volunteers have the same coverage as employees with regard to *liability* insurance. However, if volunteers feel they should have more insurance, they should consult with their personal insurance agents. Any further coverage will be the responsibility of the volunteers.
  
9. **Telephone Use**: Telephones in Head Start sites are business phones and should be treated as such. Personal calls are to be kept to a minimum. The phones must be kept clear for business communications and for parents to call in with as little trouble as possible. If volunteers receive telephone calls, the person responsible for answering calls will ask if the call is an emergency. If it is an emergency, the call will be put through to the appropriate volunteer. If it is not an emergency call, a message will be taken. The volunteer may return to call during break time; however, calls are to be kept to a minimum. If each volunteer had to return a personal call, this could become a problem during break periods. The best rule of thumb is: If it is personal, it does not need to be addressed during working hours.

## HEAD START HYGIENE INFORMATION FOR VOLUNTEERS

Hygiene is an important issue in the Head Start program. It is necessary that all volunteers and staff are constantly alert to the fact that we must keep our facilities and our children as clean and safe as possible at all times. In order to accomplish this, we must also be aware of what we can and must do to keep ourselves and our surroundings sanitary.

### **Performance Standard 1304.22 Child health and safety. (e) Hygiene.**

- (1) Staff, volunteers and children must wash their hands with soap and running water at least at the following times:
  - (i) After diapering or toilet use;
  - (ii) Before food preparation, handling, consumption, or any other food-related activity (e.g. setting table);
  - (iii) Whenever hands are contaminated with blood or other bodily fluids; and
  - (iv) After handling pets or other animals.
- (2) Staff and volunteers must also wash their hands with soap and running water:
  - (i) Before and after giving medications;
  - (ii) Before and after treating or bandaging a wound (nonporous gloves should be worn if there is contact with blood or blood-containing body fluids); and
  - (iii) After assisting a child with toilet use.
- (3) Nonporous (e.g. latex) gloves must be worn by staff when they are in contact with spills of blood or other visible bloody bodily fluids.

(NOTE: Bloodborne pathogens is defined as pathogenic microorganisms that are present in human blood and can cause disease in humans. Training on bloodborne pathogens are given annually to all staff and volunteers)

As always, it is important that staff and volunteers maintain a regular hygiene routine daily to ensure that they are always clean, neat and never offensive to others due to body odor, etc.