

ACF Administration for Children and Families	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES	
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PROGRAM INSTRUCTION

TO: Head Start/Early Head Start Grantees and Delegate Agencies

SUBJECT: Fiscal Year (FY) 2009 Program Improvement Funds
Fiscal Year (FY) 2009 One-time T/TA funds

INSTRUCTION:

In FY 2009, the Office of Head Start (OHS) will make available one-time funding that is designed to address two specific purposes:

Program Improvement funds (PA 4122 and 4125) are intended to allow Head Start and/or Early Head Start grantees to make one-time investments in addressing health and safety issues and/or in improving program quality that would not be possible without this supplemental funding.

One-time training and technical Assistance (T/TA) funds (PA 4120) are intended to assist Head Start grantees (Early Head Start grantees are not eligible for these funds) come into compliance with the teacher and teacher assistant qualification requirements of Section 648A(a)(2)(B)(ii) and 648A(3)(B) of the Head Start Act.

Program Improvement Funds

Any Head Start or Early Head Start grantee interested in applying for one-time funding to address health or safety issues and/or to improve program quality should forward a funding request to its OHS Regional Office with the following information:

- The funding level requested;
- The purpose for the funds requested;
- If the request is related to health or safety issues;
- The impact funding this request will have on the program's ability (for both this and future years) to deliver quality Head Start services;
- A discussion of why the grantee cannot fund this item from its annual Head Start grant award; and
- A discussion of the consequences should the funding request be declined.

Grantees should be advised that ACF will be using these one-time program improvement funds only to meet grantee needs for items which are non-predictable or non-recurring, i.e., grantees have a need for such an item only once every several years. A few examples of the types of one-time requests that will be considered include: needed renovations and repairs to buildings and operating systems, improvements to outside play areas, making a down payment on a new facility to be purchased or

constructed because the grantee's previous facility is not suitable for Head Start or no longer available to the grantee, and purchasing child restraint systems so that children may be transported safely and consistent with the requirements of 45 CFR Part 1310. In addition, this year OHS will consider one-time funding requests for buses. Grantees, however, will need to indicate in their application what other options they have considered to meet their transportation needs; i.e. leasing vehicles, entering into contracts with transportation providers or purchasing vehicles over time, and explain why none of these options are appropriate for their program.

All grantees that believe they have a legitimate one-time funding need related to health or safety or improving program quality are encouraged to submit a request to their Regional Office. All such requests must be received by the Regional Office no later than July 10, 2009. Decisions about the allocation of these funds will be made this summer, and successful grantees will be issued grant awards prior to the end of this fiscal year. As in previous years, health and safety requests will be given priority.

Grantees are advised that if they have one-time funding needs that are of an emergency nature, a request should be submitted to their Regional Office as soon as possible at any point in the fiscal year.

T/TA funding

There are two specific qualification requirements in Section 648A of the Head Start Act that these one-time T/TA funds are intended to assist grantees in meeting. The first is that, by October 1, 2011, absent an approved waiver, every Head Start classroom must be assigned a teacher that has, at a minimum:

- An associate's degree in early childhood education;
- An associate's degree in a related field and coursework equivalent to a major relating to early childhood education, with experience teaching pre-school age children or;
- A baccalaureate degree who has been admitted into the Teach for America program, passed a rigorous early childhood content exam, such as Praxis II, participated in a Teach for America summer training institute that includes teaching preschool children, and is receiving ongoing professional development and support from Teach For America's professional staff.

The second is that by September 30, 2013, all teaching assistants must have a CDA credential or be enrolled in a program leading to an associate's or baccalaureate degree or be enrolled in a CDA credential program to be completed within 2 years.

All Head Start agencies may, therefore, apply for one-time T/TA funding that would be used to assist that agency increase the number of teachers and/or teacher assistants that meet the statutory qualification requirements of Section 648A of the Head Start Act. Any agency wishing to do so should submit a funding request to its Regional Office with the following information:

- The funding level requested;
- The purpose for the funds requested;
- The impact funding this request will have on the program's ability to meet the requirements of Section 648A of the Head Start Act;
- The amount in the grantee's current grant award that is allocated for the purpose of credentialing classroom staff.

Any grantee wishing to apply for a portion of these one-time T/TA funds should submit an application to its regional office no later than July 10, 2009.

Grantees applying for both program improvement and T/TA funds need submit only one application.
(Delegate agencies may not apply directly for any of this funding.)

Please direct any questions on this matter to your OHS Regional Office.

/ Patricia E. Brown /

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