

FY24 Focus Area Two Monitoring Protocol



Purpose

Focus Area Two (FA2) provides an opportunity for individual grant recipients to demonstrate their effectiveness in implementing a high-quality program for children and families served over the course of their grant cycle, including the:

- quality of education services;
- intentionality of family and community engagement;
- monitoring of fiscal operations;
- effectiveness of health and safety practices;
- focus on eligibility, recruitment, selection, enrollment, and attendance; and
- oversight of program structures.

The FA2 will determine if grant recipients are meeting the requirements of the Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS), the Uniform Guidance, and the Head Start Act. Through the FA2, performance is evaluated in two ways:

- Determining whether a grant recipient is compliant with the Head Start Act and the Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS);
- Understanding strong practices that the grant recipient may be implementing to further promote quality services for children and families.

This information collectively supports the Office of Head Start's (OHS) understanding of the effectiveness of each grant recipient's performance, as well as the performance of grant recipients nationally, regionally, and within communities.



Methodology

Grant recipients will have multiple opportunities to showcase program strengths through the activities that make up the FA2 Monitoring Review. As Exhibit 1 demonstrates, these activities include (1) planning and introductory meetings with program leadership, (2) data testing and checks to review fiscal transactions and eligibility files, (3) discussions with education and family services staff, families and parents, the governing body, and the policy council, (4) data tours with directors and managers, (5) explorations in centers, classrooms, and socializations, and (6) touchpoints with the director on each day of the review.

Exhibit 1: FA2 Review Activities



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The following provides a brief overview of each of the activities comprising the FA2 review event:

Planning and Introductory Meetings

- Notification of the FA2 will be given to the grant recipient through the 45-day letter
- The assigned Review Lead will reach out to grant recipients following notification for the **planning call**. This call will include general questions, requests for basic program data prior to the review event, and confirmation of the five-day review schedule
- The **Management Team Kickoff Meeting** will occur the morning of the first day of the review. The in-person meeting will introduce the Review Team and Management Team members, and allow managers to give initial context and insights about their respective content areas

Data Testing

- Conducted both onsite and virtually
- Grant recipients should demonstrate internal controls that prevent, correct, and mitigate risk for fraud, waste, and abuse
- **ERSEA Eligibility File Review** will test for accuracy in collecting and reporting eligibility data
- **Fiscal Data Testing** will examine the grant recipient's fiscal transactions

Discussions

- Conducted onsite throughout the review week (virtually as needed)
- Focus on gathering perspectives and experiences from families, education staff, family services staff, the governing body, and the policy council

Data Tours

- Conducted onsite throughout the review week with program managers for each service area
- Real-time walk-through of data and reports to help reviewers understand how managers conduct daily activities
- Data checks for staff qualifications and criminal record checks

Explorations

- Conducted onsite throughout the review week
- **Classroom Explorations** focus on classroom management, individualized instruction, learning environments, and attention to safety
- **Center Explorations** focus on the organization and safety of facilities
- **Socialization Explorations** in home-based programs enable staff to demonstrate how group socializations support parent engagement and skill development

Touchpoints

- Occur daily between the grant recipient director(s) and the Review Lead
- Provide an opportunity to discuss the status of the review activities' completion, work through any coordination or scheduling challenges that may arise, and collect any additional information as needed from the grant recipient

Post-Review

Following the FA2 Review, grant recipients will receive a final report that will share information on the grant recipient's performance.

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Approach

The FA2 is a five-consecutive day review event that will consist of onsite data collection, although some components may occur virtually as needed. All review events will be led by a Review Team of onsite reviewers and a virtual fiscal reviewer.



Road Map to the FA2 Protocol

This protocol and the accompanying *FA2 Monitoring at a Glance* resource documents are designed to guide the grant recipient in their preparation for the FA2. It includes the topic areas for discussion, specific performance areas for assessment, the federal regulations associated with each area of performance, and describes the monitoring approaches used during the FA2 monitoring event.

The protocol is divided into the following six sections:

- Program Design, Management, and Improvement (PDMI)
- Education and Child Development Services (ECD)
- Health Services (HEA)
- Family and Community Engagement Services (FCE)
- Fiscal Infrastructure (FIS)
- Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance (ERSEA)

The grant recipient will find the following headings in each content area:

Monitoring Approach

The protocol outlines the specific review activities referenced in the Methodology section above that are included in each service area to understand the grant recipient's performance. Each service area's review activities could include discussions, data tours, explorations, or data testing and checks. Grant recipients can navigate to each individual service area section of the FA2 Monitoring Protocol to learn more about the activities comprising the respective service areas.

Federal Regulations

Each section of the protocol includes a list of federal regulations grounding the review activities. This list promotes transparency regarding the regulations used to assess program performance. Grant recipients should note that they remain accountable for all HSPPS as well as other federal, state, and local regulations guiding program operations, management, and oversight.

Performance Areas and Performance Measures

The content of each section is organized into a set of Performance Areas, with each Performance Area containing a set of discrete Performance Measures. Performance Areas identify specific areas of performance associated with HSPPS, whereas Performance Measures provide more focused measurement areas for the review event.

Collectively, the Performance Areas, Performance Measures, and review activities will support the OHS in understanding the strategies, practices, and systems programs have implemented, and how programs are providing quality services to children and families and progressing toward program goals.

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Program Design, Management, and Improvement

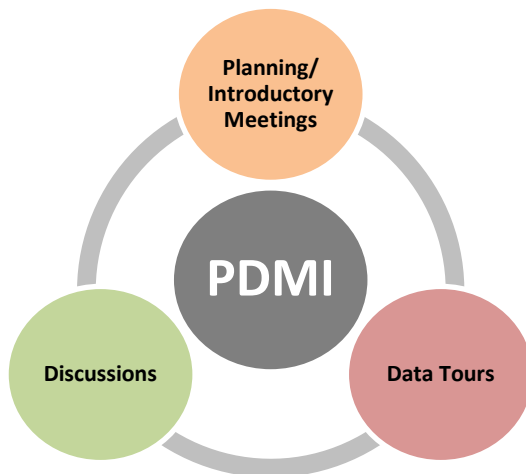
Overview

The grant recipient must use data to deliver high-quality services, continuously monitor program services, make improvements as needed, and achieve program goals and desired outcomes.

The Review Team will monitor three areas in **Program Design, Management, and Improvement (PDMI)**: (1) program design and strategic planning; (2) program governance; and (3) staffing and staff supports.

Monitoring Approach

Exhibit 2: PDMI Review Activities



PDMI will be monitored through:

- ❖ **Planning and Introductory Meetings** with managers will start the review event and allow the reviewers to get to know the team and the grant recipient's program options
- ❖ **Discussions** with education staff, family services staff, the governing body, and the policy council will allow reviewers to understand supervision and oversight
- ❖ A series of **Data Tours** to review how managers track and use data relating to human resources, program design, and ongoing monitoring and oversight across content areas

During the PDMI Data Tours, the grant recipient will be asked to share real-time data and documentation in areas including but not limited to:

- Community assessment
- Program retention data
- Data for ongoing monitoring and continuous improvement
- Organizational chart
- Self-assessment
- Data or reports used to understand trends
- Standards of conduct
- Wage study

Federal Regulations in PDMI

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| ✓ 642(c)(1)(B) | ✓ 1301.3(c) | ✓ 1302.91(a) |
| ✓ 642(c)(2)(B)(ii)(I) | ✓ 1301.5 | ✓ 1302.93(b) |
| ✓ 642(d)(2) | ✓ 1302.11(b)(2) | ✓ 1302.101(a-b) |
| ✓ 653(a) | ✓ 1302.20(a) | ✓ 1302.102(b-c) |
| ✓ 1301.2(b) | ✓ 1302.90(c) | |

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Performance Area 1: Program Design and Strategic Planning

This area will focus on how the grant recipient uses data to inform program design, planning, and improvement. Community assessment, self-assessment, and ongoing program data collection and monitoring should routinely guide data-driven decisions to best meet the needs of the program's children, families, and staff and the broader community served.

Performance Measure 1.1: The grant recipient adjusts its program design to remain responsive to shifts in community needs, strengths, and resources over time. 1302.11(b)(2) and 1302.20(a)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Conducts a community assessment to understand shifts in community needs, strengths, and available resources
- Aligns program design and services based on community needs

Performance Measure 1.2: The grant recipient maintains a system and procedures for collecting, managing, and reporting on accurate, timely data. 1302.101(b)(4)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Protects and keeps client data confidential
- Accurately maintains, collects, and uses program data to monitor service areas

Performance Measure 1.3: The grant recipient uses program data to routinely monitor performance, progress toward goals and desired outcomes, and drive program improvement. 1302.102(b)(2)(i); 1302.102(c)(1); 1302.102(c)(2)(i); and 1302.102(c)(2)(ii)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Analyzes data to identify trends, gaps, and areas to improve program services across content areas
- Uses self-assessment to inform progress toward program goals
- Uses enrollment data to identify program access and equity issues

Performance Area 2: Program Governance

This area will capture how the governing body and policy council use their expertise and experience to provide data-informed oversight to ensure the program provides quality services for children and families and progresses toward program goals.

Performance Measure 2.1: The grant recipient collaborates effectively across program staff, governing body, and policy council to facilitate effective program governance. 1301.5

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Supports the governing body and policy council to provide effective engagement and oversight
- Offers ongoing training to members of the governing body to support knowledge and understanding necessary to carry out duties

Performance Measure 2.2: The grant recipient's governing body is engaged and effective in providing its legal and fiscal oversight. 1301.2(b)(2); 642(c)(1)(B); and 642(d)(2)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

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- Maintains a governing body that supports the program with its expertise
- Provides the governing body with data that are necessary to effectively conduct their responsibilities
- Leverages the governing body's community relationships that align with community needs

Performance Measure 2.3: The grant recipient's policy councils and policy committees are effective in providing program direction. 1301.3(c); 642(c)(2)(B)(ii)(I); and 642(d)(2)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Ensures policy council membership consists of parents of children enrolled and members of the community
- Provides the policy council with data that are necessary to effectively conduct their responsibilities
- Supports parents to participate in the policy council
- Leverages the policy council's community relationships that align with community needs

Performance Area 3: Staffing and Staff Supports

This area will focus on the grant recipient's established systems to provide effective oversight of all staff, maintain effective staffing structures through focus on staff retention and recruitment, and offering intentional professional development.

Performance Measure 3.1: The grant recipient's leadership and management team has clearly defined, manageable roles and responsibilities and the appropriate experience to effectively execute Head Start program operations. 1302.91(a); 1302.101(a)(1); and 1302.101(a)(3)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Offers effective management and oversight of each program area
- Allocates sufficient staff to service areas to promote continuity of care
- Maintains qualified and competent staff in leadership and management positions
- Engages in succession planning

Performance Measure 3.2: The grant recipient supports staff members' continuous improvement and professional development. 1302.101(a)(2)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Provides regular and ongoing supervision for individual development and delivery of quality services across content areas

Performance Measure 3.3: The grant recipient establishes high expectations for staff and implements ongoing communication and training systems to reinforce organizational accountability. 1302.90(c)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Supports communication between all levels of program staff
- Promotes collaboration among staff and service providers to coordinate and individualize services for children
- Provides a culture of safety across all program options through proactive Human Resources policies and procedures
- Trains staff on established policies and procedures including standards of conduct

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Performance Measure 3.4: The grant recipient develops systems that support the Head Start workforce by providing fair compensation, opportunities for career advancement, and a positive work environment for staff. 1302.93(b) and 653(a)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Completed a wage study to provide staff fair and comparable wages and compensation
- Supports staff wellness through opportunities for staff to learn about mental health, health, and health education
- Engages in staff retention activities including opportunities for staff growth
- Focuses on long-term human resources planning through ongoing talent acquisition and recruitment strategies
- Offers frequent opportunities for staff to engage in team activities that foster safe and fun work environments
- Tracks retention data to identify and plan for any risks
- Actively seeks staff feedback regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion

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Education and Child Development Services

Overview

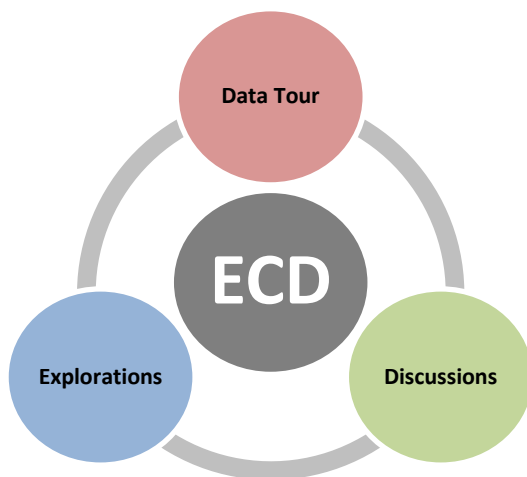
The grant recipient's services should lay a strong foundation for children's lifelong learning through high-quality early education and child development services that promote the cognitive, social, and emotional growth of children, including those with disabilities. The grant recipient should use data to assess progress toward meeting the program's school readiness goals, to understand, track, and address children's individual needs, and to inform continuous improvement related to curriculum selection, instruction, and professional development.

The Review Team will monitor four areas in **Education and Child Development Services (ECD)**: (1) *curricula, screening, and assessment tools*; (2) *teaching strategies and learning environments*; (3) *qualifications, professional development, and coaching*; and (4) *transitions*.

The Review Team will also explore approaches to supervising and supporting staff to help them provide quality services; monitoring and adjusting staffing to ensure staff have the capacity to do their work; and using data to track services, monitor for quality, and assess progress and outcomes. These activities will contribute to the Review Team's assessment of the grant recipient's program oversight, ongoing monitoring, and continuous improvement capacity and efforts.

Monitoring Approach

Exhibit 3: ECD Review Activities



ECD will be monitored through:

- ❖ **Data Tour** with education management staff to better understand how staff oversight and ongoing monitoring ensure high-quality education services
- ❖ **Discussions** with education staff to understand training, support, and practices
- ❖ **Classroom Explorations** to observe how practices are implemented and developmentally appropriate

During the review, the grant recipient will be asked to share real-time data and documentation in areas including but not limited to how the program uses:

- Child assessment data
- Developmental screenings
- Staff qualifications
- Instruction individualization for children
- Referrals and follow-up services
- Coaching strengths and needs data

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Federal Regulations in ECD

- | | | |
|----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| ✓ 1302.31(b–d) | ✓ 1302.35(b, d-e) | ✓ 1302.92(b–c) |
| ✓ 1302.32(a) | ✓ 1302.61(a) | |
| ✓ 1302.33(a-b) | ✓ 1302.91(e) | |

Performance Area 1: Curricula, Screening, and Assessment Tools

This area will focus on how the grant recipient implements its curriculum, screening, and assessment tools and uses data to support the ongoing needs and progress of children.

Performance Measure 1.1: The grant recipient implements research-based and culturally appropriate curricula with fidelity to achieve child outcomes. 1302.32(a)(1)(i); 1302.32(a)(2); and 1302.35(d)(1)(i)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Effectively implements a research-based curriculum appropriate for all provided program options, and trains staff to support their understanding of the curricula
- Routinely uses curriculum fidelity tools to support proper implementation
- Promotes the parent/caregiver role as the child’s first teacher

Performance Measure 1.2: The grant recipient implements the appropriate screening tools to refer children as indicated for evaluation. 1302.33(a)(1); 1302.33(a)(2); and 1302.33(a)(3)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Performs developmental screenings for all children within the prescribed timeframes using research-based tools
- Uses a tracking and monitoring system to ensure that any developmental concerns identified through the screening are promptly addressed through referral or follow-up

Performance Measure 1.3: The grant recipient implements appropriate ongoing assessment tools to support children’s progress and to individualize for every child. 1302.33(b)(1) and 1302.33(b)(2)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Conducts ongoing assessments of children’s progress aligned with the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five
- Individualizes lesson plans and teaching strategies using child assessment data

Performance Area 2: Teaching Strategies and Learning Environments

This area will focus on how the grant recipient uses data to provide high-quality instruction, teaching practices, and classroom environments that are inclusive and address the individual needs of children, as well as on the grant recipient’s approach to home-based services to promote the caregiver role.

Performance Measure 2.1: The grant recipient staff provide responsive, effective care and effective teaching practices that are tailored to meet the needs of all children. 1302.31(b)(1)(i); 1302.31(b)(2); 1302.31(b)(2)(ii); and 1302.61(a)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Supports staff to use teaching practices that are responsive, communicative, language rich, and promote critical thinking and persistence

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- Supports children’s social-emotional and behavioral development through effective classroom management skills
- Individualizes classroom practices to meet the needs of enrolled children, including dual language learners and children with disabilities
- Uses data from standardized observation tools to improve teaching and home-visiting strategies

Performance Measure 2.2: The grant recipient uses intentionally designed lesson plans to deliver developmentally appropriate experiences for children. 1302.31(b)(1)(iv)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Creates lesson plans that are developmentally appropriate for children and aligned with the progressions outlined in the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework
- Evaluates the success of lesson plans and activities in achieving desired outcomes for children

Performance Measure 2.3: The grant recipient provides well-organized learning environments and schedules that promote healthy development for enrolled children. 1302.31(c) and 1302.31(d)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Provides schedules that allow for various experiences throughout the day
- Individualizes classroom environments to meet the needs of enrolled children
- Promotes independent learning of self-help skills through various routines
- Uses data from standardized observation tools to improve the quality of learning environments

Performance Measure 2.4: The grant recipient uses home visits and group socializations to promote parent engagement and extend children’s learning. 1302.35(b)(1); 1302.35(e)(2)(i); 1302.35(e)(2)(ii); 1302.35(e)(3); and 1302.35(e)(1)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Promotes parent’s role as the child’s teacher through intentional and focused home visit plans for home-based programs
- Offers group socialization activities that align with the curriculum and are developmentally appropriate
- Provides families with opportunities for meaningful shared experiences during group socializations for home-based programs
- Offers parents and families the opportunity to help plan the group socialization

Performance Area 3: Qualifications, Professional Development, and Coaching

This area will focus on the grant recipient’s established system to maintain qualified, competent staff, and provide professional development opportunities that promote high-quality teaching practices.

Performance Measure 3.1: The grant recipient has qualified education staff. 1302.91(e)(1) and 1302.91(e)(2)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Ensures all center-based lead teachers have the appropriate qualifications

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- Maintains any needed waivers or professional development plans related to staff qualifications

Performance Measure 3.2: The grant recipient offers education staff a system of professional development to support delivery of quality education and child development services. 1302.92(b)(5)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Implements a comprehensive approach to professional development
- Follows up with teaching staff after professional development sessions to support them to apply their learning

Performance Measure 3.3: The grant recipient implements a research-based coaching strategy to support education staff to use effective teaching practices. 1302.92(c)(1) and 1302.92(c)(2)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Identifies strengths and needs for all education staff, and selects participants for coaching
- Implements a research-based coaching strategy for identified staff
- Uses data to make adjustments to coaching opportunities and priorities

Performance Area 4: Transitions

This area will focus on how the grant recipient supports Head Start and Early Head Start children's transition out of the program.

Performance Measure 4.1: The grant recipient implements intentional transition strategies for Head Start and Early Head Start children.

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Collaborates with receiving schools to support smooth transitions for children and families
- Incorporates strategies to support successful transitions to new learning environments

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Health Services

Overview

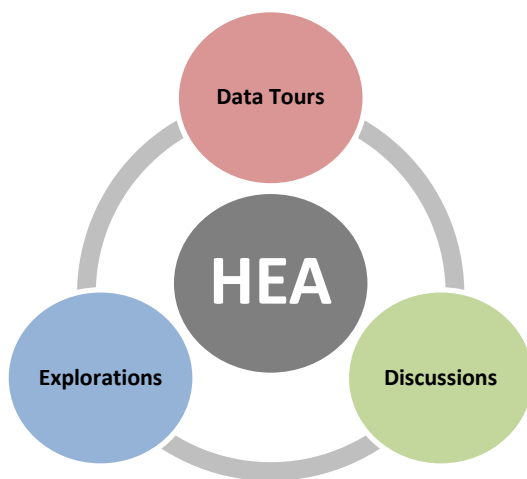
The grant recipient must provide comprehensive, high-quality health, oral health, mental health, nutrition and, if applicable, expectant family services that are supportive of each child's growth, development, and school readiness. The grant recipient must have an approach for implementing and monitoring health and safety practices to support the health, development, safety, and desired outcomes for children and families.

The Review Team will monitor five areas in **Health Services (HEA)**: (1) *child health and oral health status and care*; (2) *mental health and social and emotional well-being*; (3) *child nutrition*; (4) *safe and sanitary environments*; and, if applicable, (5) *expectant families*.

The Review Team will also explore approaches to supervising and supporting staff to help them provide quality services; monitoring and adjusting staffing to ensure staff have the capacity to do their work; and using data to track services, monitor for quality, and assess progress and outcomes. These activities will contribute to the Review Team's assessment of the grant recipient's program oversight, ongoing monitoring, and continuous improvement capacity and efforts.

Monitoring Approach

Exhibit 4: HEA Review Activities



HEA will be monitored through:

- ❖ A series of **Data Tours** to review how managers track data and routinely monitor services relating to child health, oral health, nutrition, mental health and social-emotional well-being, and safe and sanitary environments
- ❖ **Discussions** with families and education staff to understand training, support, and practices
- ❖ Both **Classroom** and **Center Explorations** to observe the safety of the program's environments and practices for selected classrooms and facilities

During the review, the grant recipient will be asked to share real-time data and documentation in areas including but not limited to:

- Criminal record checks
- Emergency plans
- Policies and procedures related to child discipline
- Referrals and follow-up services
- Maintenance plans and records
- Oral and medical health determinations tracking
- Example menu
- Lead testing for paint and water
- Vision and hearing screening tracking

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Additionally, grant recipients that serve expectant families will be asked to share additional data and documentation including but not limited to:

- Expectant families' access to health care and insurance
- Tracking system for newborn visits
- Expectant families' referrals and follow-up
- Example expectant families' family partnership agreement

Federal Regulations in HEA

- | | | |
|----------------|--------------|----------------|
| ✓ 1302.17(a–b) | ✓ 1302.43 | ✓ 1302.80(a–d) |
| ✓ 1302.21(d) | ✓ 1302.44(a) | ✓ 1302.81 |
| ✓ 1302.31(e) | ✓ 1302.45 | ✓ 1302.82(a–b) |
| ✓ 1302.40(b) | ✓ 1302.46(b) | ✓ 1302.90(b) |
| ✓ 1302.42(b–d) | ✓ 1302.47(b) | ✓ 1302.102(d) |

Performance Area 1: Child Health and Oral Health Status and Care

This area will focus on the grant recipient's established systems to assist children and families to connect to necessary health and oral care including referrals, resources, and overcoming barriers. The grant recipient also uses the expertise of the Health Services Advisory Committee to address program and community needs.

Performance Measure 1.1: The grant recipient supports children to become and remain up-to-date on a schedule of age-appropriate medical and oral health care, including needs for referrals and follow-up care. 1302.42(b)(1)(i); 1302.42(c)(1); and 1302.42(d)(2)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Confirms that a health care provider has made initial determinations of medical and oral care for all children within 90 days
- Supports child and families to become up-to-date on preventative medical and oral health care
- Tracks referrals and follow-up services for children who were identified through the screening process

Performance Measure 1.2: The grant recipient performs or obtains vision and hearing screenings for all children. 1302.42(b)(2)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Obtains vision and hearing screenings for all children within 45 days

Performance Measure 1.3: The grant recipient provides health education opportunities to parents, assists them with understanding their child's health needs, and supports parents to navigate health systems. 1302.46(b)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Assists families to navigate the health system
- Removes barriers to improve access to health care for Head Start children and families

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Performance Measure 1.4: The grant recipient leverages the Health Services Advisory Committee (HSAC) to address prevalent community health needs. 1302.40(b)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Maintains representation of the program, community, and health professionals in the Health Services Advisory Committee
- Leverages the expertise of the Health Services Advisory Committee in addressing program health services

Performance Area 2: Mental Health and Social and Emotional Well-Being

This area will focus on how the grant recipient provides mental health services to children, families, and staff to address needs, connect to services, and promote continued social-emotional development.

Performance Measure 2.1: The grant recipient develops a positive program environment, in partnership with a qualified mental health consultant, that promotes the mental health and social-emotional well-being of children. 1302.45(a)(2); 1302.45(b)(2); and 1302.45(b)(3)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Maintains an active arrangement with a mental health consultant
- Uses the mental health consultant to provide consultation and observation to support program staff to meet the mental health and social-emotional needs of children
- Implements various methods and approaches to build skills and capacity of all staff who regularly interact with children

Performance Measure 2.2: The grant recipient implements positive discipline practices and policies that prohibit the use of expulsion and suspension. 1302.17(a) and 1302.17(b)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Prohibits the use of expulsion in response to children's behaviors
- Prohibits and/or severely limits the use of suspension in response to children's behaviors
- Develops and implements developmentally appropriate behavior guidance and positive discipline policies and practices

Performance Measure 2.3: The grant recipient provides family support services for mental health and social-emotional well-being. 1302.46(b)(1)(iv)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Collaborates with families to understand and respond to children's behaviors and development
- Supports family mental health and wellness

Performance Area 3: Child Nutrition

This area will focus on how the grant recipient designs and implements nutritional services that incorporate individual needs and developmentally appropriate nutritional practices.

Performance Measure 3.1: The grant recipient implements nutritional services that accommodate children's unique nutritional needs. 1302.31(e)(2); 1302.44(a)(1); 1302.44(a)(2)(v); and 1302.44(a)(2)(viii)

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Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Provides accommodations for breastfeeding mothers
- Follows a process to accommodate the individual feeding requirements of children
- Ensures safe practices for bottle-fed infants
- Promotes conversations and learning during meals and snacks
- Develops strategies to address food insecurities

Performance Area 4: Safe and Sanitary Environments

This area will focus on how the grant recipient maintains safety in staffing, facilities, materials, and equipment through establishing and implementing effective monitoring, policies, and procedures.

Performance Measure 4.1: The grant recipient establishes appropriate administrative safety practices and policies. 1302.47(b)(5)(iii); 1302.47(b)(4); and 1302.102(d)(1)(ii)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Establishes health and safety policies and procedures
- Provides training on health and safety expectations to staff
- Follows a process to ensure that all violations of supervision, unauthorized release, and/or inappropriate discipline are reported to the Regional Office in a timely manner

Performance Measure 4.2: The grant recipient completes background checks prior to hire for all staff. 1302.90(b)(1); 1302.90(b)(2); 1302.90(b)(3); 1302.90(b)(4); and 1302.90(b)(5)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Completes all necessary staff background checks and assess all relevant information
- Ensures the safety of children during the background check process
- Follows a process to update background checks every five years

Performance Measure 4.3: The grant recipient establishes safe environments through daily and ongoing oversight of facility, equipment, and material safety. 1302.47(b)(1)(ix) and 1302.47(b)(2)(v)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Establishes systems to identify potential safety risks daily and ongoing
- Conducts preventative maintenance and corrects identified safety issues

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Performance Measure 4.4: The grant recipient establishes and follows emergency preparedness plans. 1302.47(b)(8)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Establishes emergency management and disaster preparedness plans
- Communicates about its emergency management and disaster preparedness plans with staff, families, and children
- Implements measures to protect facilities in emergency situations

Performance Measure 4.5: The grant recipient's facilities are safe. 1302.21(d)(1); 1302.47(b)(1)(ii); 1302.47(b)(1)(iii); and 1302.47(b)(1)(iv)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Maintains current licensure that meets all state, local, and tribal regulations, as required
- Maintains safe facilities that are free from pests, toxic substances that are accessible to children, and safety hazards
- Ensures that children are not exposed to lead in water or paint in any facilities

Performance Measure 4.6: The grant recipient's equipment, materials, and program environments are safe. 1302.47(b)(2)(i); 1302.47(b)(2)(ii); 1302.47(b)(2)(iii); 1302.47(b)(2)(iv); and 1302.47(b)(2)(v)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Maintains safe indoor and outdoor equipment and materials used for play or the care of children
- Designs classrooms to ensure appropriate supervision of children

Performance Measure 4.7: Staff are observed engaging in appropriate hygiene practices. 1302.43; 1302.47(b)(6)(i); and 1302.47(b)(6)(ii)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Implements hygienic practices
- Includes toothbrushing in the classroom schedule at least once a day

Performance Measure 4.8: The grant recipient staff engage in appropriate safety practices. 1302.47(b)(5)(ii); 1302.47(b)(5)(iii); and 1302.47(b)(7)(vi)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Follows appropriate practices to keep children safe during all activities
- Posts necessary information related to child food allergies

FY24 Focus Area Two Monitoring Protocol

Performance Area 5: Expectant Families

This area will only be monitored if the grant recipients provide services to expectant families. This Performance Area will focus on how the grant recipient provides high-quality services to enrolled expectant families and supports the transition of the newborn.

Performance Measure 5.1: The grant recipient designs and provides comprehensive services to expectant families. 1302.80(a); 1302.80(b); 1302.80(c); 1302.81; 1302.82(a)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Provides education and support across various topics relevant for expectant families, including pregnant women and their partners
- Ensures that expectant families have a continuous, accessible source of health care and health care coverage
- Engages in the family partnership process with expectant families
- Facilitates connections and referrals for expectant families to access comprehensive services that meet families' needs
- Employs or contracts with staff that have specific qualifications that meet the needs of expectant families and the community

Performance Measure 5.2: The grant recipient provides appropriate newborn and transition services following the birth of the infant. 1302.80(d) and 1302.82(b)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Schedules a newborn visit with each expectant family and baby within two weeks of the baby's birth
- Engages families in transition planning
- Integrates services for expectant families in other services offered by the program

FY24 Focus Area Two Monitoring Protocol

Family and Community Engagement Services

Overview

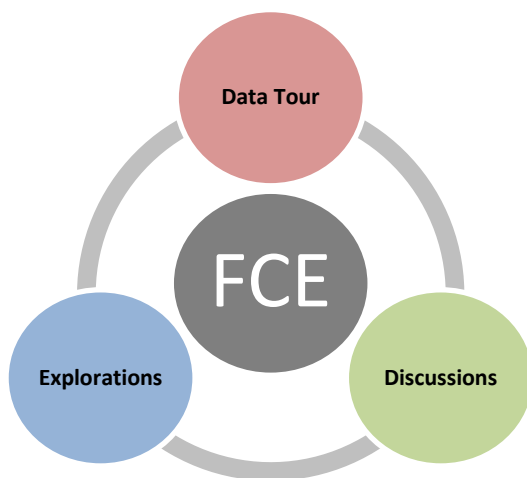
The grant recipient must integrate parent and family engagement strategies into all systems and program services to support family well-being and promote children’s learning and development. Programs are encouraged to develop innovative two-generation approaches that address prevalent needs of families across their program and leverage community partnerships or other funding sources.

The Review Team will monitor four areas are measured in **Family and Community Engagement Services (FCE)**: (1) *program foundations to support family well-being and family engagement*; (2) *family partnerships*; (3) *promoting strong parenting, parent-child relationships, and engagement in children’s learning*; and (4) *community partnerships*.

The Review Team will also explore approaches to supervising and supporting staff to help them provide quality services; monitoring and adjusting staffing to ensure staff have the capacity to do their work; and using data to track services, monitor for quality, and assess progress and outcomes. These activities will contribute to the Review Team’s assessment of the grant recipient’s program oversight, ongoing monitoring, and continuous improvement capacity and efforts.

Monitoring Approach

Exhibit 5: FCE Review Activities



FCE will be monitored through:

- ❖ **Data Tour** with family services manager to better understand how managers track and monitor for accurate and timely family engagement data, provide staff oversight, and monitor family and community engagement services
- ❖ **Discussions** with families, education staff, and family services staff to understand training, support, and practices implemented to support families
- ❖ **Classroom Exploration** to observe how environments are tailored for families

During the review, the grant recipient will be asked to share real-time data and documentation in areas including but not limited to:

- Family participation in volunteer opportunities
- Tracking system for family partnership goals
- Examples of father or male engagement
- Intake and assessment procedures
- Examples of family goals, strengths, or needs
- Community partnership data
- Sample family partnership goals
- Economic mobility opportunities
- Family services staff qualifications

FY24 Focus Area Two Monitoring Protocol

Federal Regulations in FCE

- | | | |
|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| ✓ 1302.34(b) | ✓ 1302.52(b-c) | ✓ 1302.101(a) |
| ✓ 1302.50(b) | ✓ 1302.53(a) | |
| ✓ 1302.51(a-b) | ✓ 1302.91(e) | |

Performance Area 1: Program Foundations to Support Family Well-Being and Family Engagement

This area will focus on how the grant recipient integrates the family into the program through communication and maintaining competent staffing to provide high-quality services to families.

Performance Measure 1.1: The grant recipient continuously engages all families into the program through open and effective communication. 1302.50(b)(2) and 1302.50(b)(5)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Uses methods of two-way communication with families
- Communicates in languages spoken by families
- Incorporates the unique cultural, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds and compositions of families in the program and community
- Assists families to become more familiar with program services

Performance Measure 1.2: Staff are qualified, supported, and develop family assignments based on the specific needs of enrolled families. 1302.91(e)(7) and 1302.101(a)(3)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Maintains qualified and competent family services staffing
- Maintains adequate staffing to support families' needs and goals
- Offers training and professional development for staff to build effective, strength-based relationships with families

Performance Area 2: Family Partnerships

This area will focus on the grant recipient's established systems for completing, monitoring, and supporting family partnerships for enrolled families.

Performance Measure 2.1: The grant recipient implements a family partnership process that includes supports for family-driven goals and progress toward outcomes. 1302.50(b)(3); 1302.52(b); and 1302.52(c)(3)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Aligns intake and assessment procedures with the Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework
- Collaborates with families to create goals based on family interests and needs
- Conducts ongoing review of the progress towards meeting family goals
- Offers families opportunities to support family goals or needs, including opportunities on economic mobility

FY24 Focus Area Two Monitoring Protocol

Performance Area 3: Promoting Strong Parenting, Parent-Child Relationships, and Engagement in Children's Learning

This area will focus on the grant recipient's selection and implementation of a parenting curriculum. The grant recipient's approach should encourage family engagement in program offerings and support the parent as the child's primary educator.

Performance Measure 3.1: The grant recipient implements strategies that promote parental skills and engage parents in children's development. 1302.34(b)(5); 1302.50(b)(1); and 1302.51(a)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Provides families opportunities to improve parenting knowledge and skills
- Engages fathers and other male caregivers
- Provides families opportunities to participate and contribute to the program
- Provides leadership opportunities for families

Performance Measure 3.2: The grant recipient chooses and implements a research-based parenting curriculum. 1302.51(b)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Uses a parenting curriculum that builds on parent knowledge and offers opportunities to practice their parenting skills
- Uses a parenting curriculum that meets the needs of families served

Performance Area 4: Community Partnerships

This area will focus on how community partnerships are established and used to support the ongoing needs of the program, families, and children who are served.

Performance Measure 4.1: The grant recipient has identified community partnerships that meet the needs and interests of families. 1302.53(a)(1)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Builds community partnerships that facilitate access to resources that align with families' needs or family partnership goals
- Uses data-driven strategies to evaluate and obtain new community partnerships as family and community needs shift
- Participates in community partnerships that support increasing quality of local or state early care and education systems

FY24 Focus Area Two Monitoring Protocol

Fiscal Infrastructure

Overview

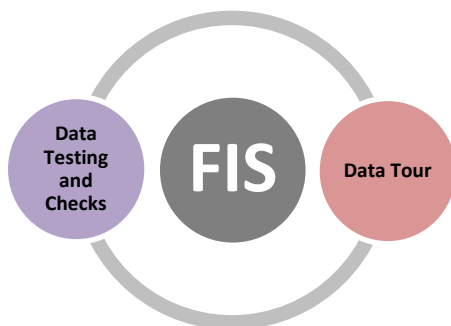
The Fiscal Infrastructure section of the review will focus on how the program shares information with the director, managers, the governing body, and the policy council; and how the program uses data to make sound fiscal decisions and ensure fiscal and legal accountability. The review event also monitors the integrity of fiscal operations, with a focus on mitigating the risk or occurrence of fraud, waste, and abuse.

The Review Team will monitor three areas in **Fiscal Infrastructure (FIS)**: (1) *budget development, implementation, and oversight*; (2) *comprehensive financial management structure and system*; and (3) *facilities and equipment systems*.

The Review Team will also explore approaches to supervising and supporting fiscal staff to ensure integrity and consistency in fiscal operations. These activities will contribute to the Review Team’s assessment of the grant recipient’s program oversight, ongoing monitoring, and continuous improvement capacity and efforts.

Monitoring Approach

Exhibit 6: FIS Review Activities



FIS will be monitored through:

- ❖ **Data testing and checks** will examine the grant recipient’s fiscal transactions
- ❖ **Data Tour** with fiscal staff to understand how managers track and monitor for accurate and timely financial data and ensure effective fiscal oversight

During the FIS Data Tour, the grant recipient will be asked to share real-time data and documentation in areas including but not limited to:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| ➤ Budget to actual report | ➤ Insurance documentation | ➤ Recent transactions |
| ➤ Cost allocation plan | ➤ Fiscal policies and procedures | ➤ Reporting forms |
| ➤ Procurement procedures | ➤ General ledger | ➤ Non-federal match tracking |
| ➤ Indirect cost documentation | ➤ Inventory | ➤ Bank reconciliations |
| ➤ Financial management system | ➤ Personnel record keeping system | ➤ Program grant application |

Federal Regulations in FIS

- | | | | |
|---------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|
| ✓ 75.302(a–b) | ✓ 75.327(c) | ✓ 75.416 | ✓ 1303.12 |
| ✓ 75.303(a) | ✓ 75.328(a) | ✓ 75.430(i) | ✓ 1303.46(b) |
| ✓ 75.303(c) | ✓ 75.403(a) | ✓ 1303.4 | ✓ 1302.91(c) |
| ✓ 75.320(d) | ✓ 75.414 | ✓ 1303.5 | ✓ 1302.101(a) |

FY24 Focus Area Two Monitoring Protocol

Performance Area 1: Budget Development, Implementation, and Oversight

This area will focus on the process the grant recipient follows to develop a budget that is reflective of program goals, and how the budget is monitored and adjusted to be responsive to ongoing needs.

Performance Measure 1.1: The grant recipient engages in a transparent, data-informed strategic process to develop and maintain a budget that aligns with program goals and circumstances.

75.302(b)(5)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Engages stakeholders in the budget development process
- Uses the financial management system to capture actual-to-budgeted costs monthly
- Regularly examines and addresses financial impact of emerging program needs and changes including cost repair, maintenance, or replacement of facilities and equipment

Performance Area 2: Comprehensive Financial Management Structure and System

This area will focus on the grant recipient's establishment and implementation of financial policies and procedures to manage financial records and safeguard Federal funds in accordance with all governing regulations.

Performance Measure 2.1: The grant recipient implements a system for maintaining financial records and generating information needed to manage and safeguard Federal funds. 1302.101(a)(4); 75.302(a);

75.302(b)(3); 75.430(i)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Maintains an automated accounting system for financial information and personnel costs
- Maintains complete and accurate financial records that identify Head Start funds and line-item cost categories that align with the Head Start operating budget(s)
- Meets on-demand and routine reporting requirements on the requested dates

Performance Measure 2.2: The grant recipient maintains effective control over and accountability for all funds, property, and assets to avoid theft, fraud, waste, and abuse of funds and property.

1302.91(c); 75.303(a); 75.303(c); 75.320(d)(3); and 75.327(c)(1);

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Maintains and implements written fiscal policies and procedures
- Maintains qualified fiscal staffing
- Engages in an internal monitoring process to ensure fiscal compliance
- Monitors financial statements for accuracy and checks for fraudulent activity
- Ensures safeguards to prevent loss, damage, or theft of program property or equipment
- Establishes a system for confidential and anonymous reporting of inappropriate financial management activities
- Promotes separation of financial responsibilities

Performance Measure 2.3: The grant recipient has implemented written procedures to ensure that only allowable costs are charged to the Head Start award in accordance with Federal statutes,

FY24 Focus Area Two Monitoring Protocol

regulations, and the terms and conditions of the Federal award. 1303.5; 1303.4; 75.328(a); 75.403(a); 75.414; and 75.416

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Determines and documents costs for goods and services that are necessary and reasonable to the program's Head Start award
- Establishes the cost allocation plan
- Establishes and implements a procurement process
- Tracks administrative costs and non-federal match
- Separately identifies allowable direct and indirect costs

Performance Area 3: Facilities and Equipment Management

This area will focus on how the grant recipient uses established systems to acquire and account for facilities and equipment that are purchased with federal funds. This Performance Area will also address the grant recipient's process for identifying and mitigating risk through necessary insurance acquisition.

Performance Measure 3.1: The grant recipient implements a system for ensuring compliance with requirements for the acquisition, record keeping, insurance, and disposal of facilities purchased, constructed, or renovated (major renovations) with Head Start funds. 1303.46(b)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Files or posts the required notices of federal interest for property and facilities

Performance Measure 3.2: The grant recipient implements a system for ensuring that equipment purchased with Head Start funds is acquired, used, and disposed of in accordance with requirements. 75.320(d)(1) and 75.320(d)(2)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Maintains required records for equipment purchased with Head Start funds including a physical inventory

Performance Measure 3.3: The grant recipient assesses and mitigates risk and maintains property loss, casualty, and liability insurance consistent with the replacement value of property and determined risk of liability. 1303.12

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Identifies risks and obtains adequate insurance to address those risks

FY24 Focus Area Two Monitoring Protocol

Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, Attendance

Overview

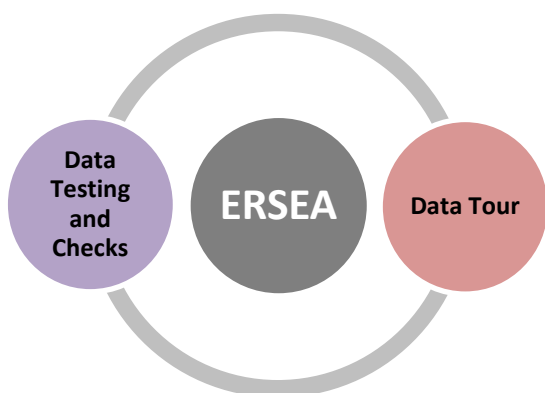
Grant recipients must ensure compliance with Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance (ERSEA) program requirements, including mitigation of enrollment fraud. The grant recipient will share information about ERSEA practices and how data are used to ensure the program recruits, selects, and enrolls children based on eligibility criteria.

Five areas are monitored in **ERSEA**: (1) recruitment; (2) selection; (3) eligibility; (4) enrollment; and (5) attendance.

The Review Team will also explore approaches to supervising and supporting staff to help them provide quality services; monitoring and adjusting staffing to ensure staff have the capacity to do their work; and using data to track services, monitor for quality, and assess progress and outcomes. These activities will contribute to the Review Team's assessment of the grant recipient's program oversight, ongoing monitoring, and continuous improvement capacity and efforts.

Monitoring Approach

Exhibit 7: ERSEA Review Activities



ERSEA will be monitored through:

- ❖ **Data Testing and Checks** through an ERSEA Eligibility File Review of sample client files to test for accuracy in collecting and reporting eligibility data
- ❖ **Data Tour** with ERSEA management staff to better understand how managers track and monitor for accurate and timely ERSEA data and ensure practices that mitigate risk of fraudulent enrollment

During the review, the grant recipient will be asked to share real-time data and documentation in areas including but not limited to:

- Attendance records
- Eligibility tracking system
- Eligibility training records
- Enrollment vacancies
- Sample child files
- Reports showing percentages of enrollment by eligibility category
- Selection criteria
- Waitlists
- ERSEA policies and procedures

Federal Regulations in ERSEA

- ✓ 1302.12(c-e)
- ✓ 1302.12(k-m)
- ✓ 1302.13
- ✓ 1302.14(a-c)
- ✓ 1302.15(a)
- ✓ 1302.16(a)

FY24 Focus Area Two Monitoring Protocol

Performance Area 1: Recruitment

This area will focus on how the grant recipient designs and implements recruitment strategies to reach children and families who may be eligible for program services, particularly focusing recruitment to the most vulnerable populations within the community.

Performance Measure 1.1: The grant recipient implements a recruitment strategy focusing on all families with eligible children, with specific efforts to families with vulnerable children. 1302.13

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Identifies children and families with the greatest need
- Strengthens recruitment and outreach efforts by evaluating strategies for effectiveness and customizing efforts based on current community needs

Performance Area 2: Selection

This area will focus on how the grant recipient designs and implements a selection process that is responsive to community needs and prioritizes children and families with the greatest need.

Performance Measure 2.1: The grant recipient establishes selection criteria and a waitlist based on community needs. 1302.14(a)(1) and 1302.14(c)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Develops selection criteria based on data from the community needs assessment
- Maintains a prioritized or ranked waitlist across all program options

Performance Area 3: Eligibility

This area will focus on the grant recipient's established systems to determine eligibility for children and families. This Performance Area will also cover how the grant recipient deters fraud and maintains eligibility requirements as outlined by Head Start regulations.

Performance Measure 3.1: The grant recipient implements a clear, consistent, and compliant process for enrolling eligible families. 1302.12(c)(1); 1302.12(c)(2); 1302.12(d)(1); 1302.12(e); and 1302.12(k)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Manages enrollment including the percentages of applicants who are eligible for Head Start services and who are over income for Head Start services including:
 - Maintains less than 10% of children enrolled who may benefit from services but do not meet other eligibility requirements; and
 - Maintains less than 35% of children enrolled whose incomes were between 100% and 130% of poverty
- Trains and monitors staff on execution of eligibility interviews
- Ensures eligibility records are free from documentation errors
- Maintains an eligibility verification process to protect against fraudulent enrollment

Performance Measure 3.2: The grant recipient trains staff to follow ERSEA regulations and establishes written policies and procedures to ensure compliance with eligibility requirements. 1302.12(l) and 1302.12(m)(2)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

FY24 Focus Area Two Monitoring Protocol

- Establishes written ERSEA policies and procedures
- Provides ERSEA training for eligibility staff within 90 days of hire

Performance Area 4: Enrollment

This area will focus on the grant recipient's approaches to ensure full enrollment across program options, including the enrollment of children with disabilities.

Performance Measure 4.1: The grant recipient establishes practices to maintain full enrollment and accurately tracks current enrollment. 1302.15(a)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Identifies, tracks, and fills program vacancies

Performance Measure 4.2: The grant recipient fills at least 10% of the program's total funded enrollment with children eligible for services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). 1302.14(b)(1)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Maintains at least 10% of funded enrollment with children eligible for services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- Collaborates with local early intervention and special education services to support enrollment

Performance Area 5: Attendance

This area will focus on the grant recipient's approach to encourage regular attendance in program services and how families are supported to overcome potential barriers to attendance.

Performance Measure 5.1: The grant recipient consistently employs strategies to encourage regular attendance. 1302.16(a)(2)

Elements of this measure include but are not limited to how the grant recipient:

- Promotes regular attendance for each child
- Provides targeted supports for children and families at risk for low attendance