

ERSEA Essentials: 5 Steps in Determining and Documenting Eligibility

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Narrator: Hello from CAP Tulsa Head Start. Today, I want to share five key steps in determining, verifying, and documenting Head Start eligibility. Remember as you progress through these steps, many families who turn to Head Start are in sensitive situations. Consider how you can help all families feel comfortable sharing their personal information. First, take some time to get to know the family. Questions you might ask are, How many children live with you? What are their ages? Who else lives with you?

Next, establish income information. How have you supported your family during the past year? Are you currently employed? Do you receive public assistance benefits such as TANF, SSI, or SNAP? Third, collect and verify supporting documents. Provide ways for the family to submit their documentation. If a family is unable to produce official proof, ask them to submit a self-declaration regarding their situation.

Fourth, for recordkeeping purposes, preserve the family's documentation in their ERSEA file. For the fifth and final step, determine the family's eligibility and complete the Head Start Eligibility Verification Form. Accurately document the family's situation and place this in their ERSEA file. These steps will help you ensure that qualified children and families participate in Head Start services.