

Head Start Program Performance Standards General Structure

Beth Meloy: Hi I'm Beth Meloy.

Maggie Quinn: Hi I'm Maggie Quinn, and we are going to walk you through the organizational structure of the new Head Start Program Performance Standards.

Beth Meloy: That's right. The new Standards have been completely reorganized to provide a clearer blueprint for grantees, both new and old, on how to provide a high quality early learning program for both Head Start and Early Head Start programs.

Maggie Quinn: Instead of 11 different overlapping sections that evolved over time we are starting fresh with five clearly defined sections. Beth, why don't you tell us a little bit about the major sections of the final rule.

Beth Meloy: Sure. Part 1301 is program governance, which outlines the requirements imposed by the Head Start act for both governing bodies and policy councils to ensure well governed Head Start programs.

Part 1302 is program operations, which outlines all of the operational requirements for serving young children and their families. From who is eligible to receive services, the services programs must provide in both education, health, family, and community engagement. All the way to how programs must use data for continuous quality improvement.

Maggie, what about the other three sections?

Maggie Quinn: Part 1303 is administrative and physical requirements, and it lays out of the federal requirements that Head Start programs must follow, because of either the Head Start act or because of overarching federal requirements.

Part 1304 is the federal administrative procedures, and that governs which procedures the federal government takes to determine whether a grantee needs to compete for continued renewed funding, and results of competition for all grantees, any actions against a grantee, and other transparency related procedures required by the act.

Finally rather than having the definitions included separately in each part in the old standards, we now have a new part 1305. Which includes the definitions for all the terms we use throughout the regulation.

Beth Meloy: That's great.

Maggie Quinn: Each of these major parts follows a similar structure, and Beth is going to tell you a little bit more about that.

Beth Meloy: Within each part you'll find subparts related to major topic areas like education or health. These subparts organize most or all of the requirements related to that topic area, so that they'll be really easy to find when you're looking to use them.

Subparts are usually broken down into individual sections that have numbers. Subparts are labeled with capital letters like subpart A, or subpart B. Then each of those sections, each subpart starts over at the next multiple of 10 in the numbering system.

Maggie Quinn: That's right. Subpart A of part 1302 starts with 1302.10, subpart B starts with 1302.20, 1302.21, and subpart C starts with 1302.30, and so on.

Beth Meloy: Right.

Maggie Quinn: Numbered sections are usually broken down into paragraphs. The first level of paragraphs is labeled with a lower case letter, and these letter paragraphs may be broken down further into numbered paragraphs, and then lower case roman numerals, and then capital letters.

Beth Meloy: We know that that's a lot, and we also know that it's really hard to throw out your old standards and start over with the new, but we really hope that once you spend some time with these standards, and really dig into the organization you're going to find them a lot easier to use and understand.

Maggie Quinn: As you're reading the new standards we encourage you to look at a really helpful resource, which is the preamble to the final rule. That's a good place to go to find out what's different, and why we made the changes we made.

Beth Meloy: Right. In fact it actually summarizes all of the comments that we received on the notice of proposed rule making for the standards, and gives you some information in response to those comments about whether or not we made a change, and why we made the decision that we did.

Maggie Quinn: Thanks for joining us for the overall structure of the new Head Start program performance standards. Happy reading.