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Revised May 2014

Five County Child Development Program, Inc.
An Equal Opportunity Employer

*Head Start
Personnel Policies
and Procedures Manual*

Dr. Jonathan Bines
Head Start Director

"Improving the Quality of Life of Children, Families, and Communities."

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WELCOME AND HISTORY

Welcome to our program! Five County Child Development Program, Inc. is an outgrowth of President Lyndon B. Johnson's "War on Poverty", which he presented to Congress on January 12, 1964. Five County is a non-profit Mississippi Charter Corporation that was organized to serve underprivileged children and families.

In 1965, community leaders organized the communities and mobilized public and private resources and established Sophia Sutton Mission Head Start. The Program started as an eight-week summer pilot program in March of 1965, in Jefferson Davis County, under the directorship of Dr. S. L. Richmond. The Head Start Program became full year in September 1966. In 1971, the program was chartered and the name was changed to Five County Child Development Program, Inc., serving the counties of Jones, Jefferson Davis, Covington, Simpson and Lawrence. In the late 70's Five County discontinued services to Jones County.

The program was directed by the Board of Directors from December 1971 through June 1972. In July of 1972, Ms. Magdalene White was selected as Head Start Director and served thorough June 1978. Mr. Preston White, Jr. served as interim Head Start Director from July 1, 1978 through June 1979 at which time Mr. Buford Graves was selected as Head Start Director and served from July 1979 through September 2000. Mr. Lee A. Frison, Sr. served as Head Start Director from October 2000 through May 2007. Five County was under the leadership of Dr. Jonathan Bines as Head Start Director since June 1, 2007. On June 30, 2014, Five County Head Start grant ended. The new Head Start grant was awarded to Five County as of July 1, 2014, with Dr. Jonathan Bines as Head Start Director.

The agency currently serves 900 three to five year old children full day in four counties; Jefferson Davis, Covington, Lawrence and Simpson. Five County's Mission is "Improving the Quality of Life of children, families and communities". The agency now owns two of our fifteen Head Start Centers; Collins and Magee Head Start Centers.

We realize we could not have attained our current stature without the superior services provided by our employees. We are glad you are part of our team of Head Start professionals dedicated to providing quality services to our children and families. We believe each employee contributes directly to the program's growth and success, and we hope you will take pride in being a member of our team.

We hope that your experience here will be challenging, enjoyable and rewarding. Again welcome!

MISSION STATEMENT

“Improving the Quality of Life of Children, Families, and Communities.”

VISION STATEMENT

Building on the past; Reaching for the future.

We believe that all people should be provided the necessary tools to enhance their educational, economic and social status. We further believe that the families we serve should have the opportunity to improve their quality of life through Head Start. Our Vision is to enhance the knowledge and skills of the children, families and communities we serve.

To realize the vision we will have to play the role of pulling the team together, look at indicators for the future to see where we want to be and get staff qualified to meet the future needs of our children, families and communities.

PHILOSOPHY

Assure that our mission is fulfilled by meeting the overall goal of increasing the social competence and school readiness of young children and families.

We believe that;

1. Children develop in the context of their family and culture and that parents are the primary educators and nurturers of their children.
2. A range of individualized services in all areas are necessary in the delivery of comprehensive and high quality services to children and families.
3. Partnering with community organizations and programs will enhance the agency’s ability to provide an array of individualized services to the children and families and utilize community resources in an efficient and effective manner.
4. Effective systems and procedures are necessary to the achievement of excellence in program management.
5. Strong governing bodies play a critical role in overseeing the implementation of Head Start legislation, regulations, *and policies*.

INTRODUCTION

The productivity and effectiveness of Head Start staff has a direct bearing on the quality and quantity of services offered to children and families. Therefore, it is essential that the administrative staff of Five County Child Development Program, Inc. provide specific guidelines for program management as well as day-to-day program operations. It is also the responsibility of the management staff to supply each employee with a copy of these policies and procedures and through training, assure that staff understand and follow these directives.

On the following pages are procedures of policies for the recruitment and selection of Agency staff, organizational structure of the program, fringe benefits, and other pertinent information relative to Head Start personnel and program operations.

Employment with the agency is voluntarily entered into, and employees are free to resign from their position with the agency at will, at any time, with or without cause. Similarly, the agency may terminate the employee's employment relationship at will, at any time, with or without notice or cause, so long as there is no violation of applicable federal or state law. This is called **Employment at Will**. The employment at will relationship exists regardless of any other written statements or policies contained in this Handbook or any other Agency documents or any verbal statement to the contrary.

The policies and procedures set forth in this manual apply to all employees of Five County Child Development Program, Inc. **However, this manual is not to be interpreted as a legal document or an employment contract. Policies contained herein are only summaries and are not all-inclusive.** Managers must still manage day-to-day activities and make policy decisions where there are, at times, no strict guidelines.

Five County reserves the right to alter, change, add to or delete any of these policies or procedures at any time without notice. Amendments to these personnel policies, procedures and practices are subject to change at Five County Child Development Program, Inc.'s discretion to maintain their legal compliance, operational effectiveness, and the general scope of desired workplace conditions. Upon amendment of any part of this manual, the agency will endeavor to use normal communication channels to appraise employees, in a timely fashion, of such changes and their effect, if any.

Each employee covered or affected by this manual is responsible for knowledge of and compliance with all provisions contained herein.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

CHAIN OF COMMAND: The Personnel Management Chart and Organizational Chart indicate the chain of command implemented by the Five County Child Development Program, Inc. It lists the lines of authority and the supervisory responsibilities of individual positions. The Board of Directors and Policy Council must be involved in making policy decisions regarding the operation of the Head Start Program. They must be involved in the planning stage, as well as final decision-making. The Board of Directors and Policy Council must approve all actions taken regarding the Head Start Program, or the proposed action cannot occur (see Revised Performance Standards, Program Governance and Head Start Act of 2007).

POSITION CLASSIFICATION: To develop and maintain a clear structure of job responsibility and work actively relationships within the agency, and to keep meaningful the relatedness of an employee's job and associated pay, performance standards, and other employment conditions, the agency has adopted a policy to maintain job descriptions on each separate position and to classify or reclassify positions as is necessary based on the best interest of the agency. While it is the intent of this policy to describe jobs in specific ways as a means of benefiting the organization's employment structure, this policy should not be misconstrued to restrict or confine job responsibility assigned to employees where flexibility in assigning employees new but related job activities is tantamount to the success of the agency operations.

The Human Resource Manager will be responsible for preparing and maintaining job descriptions on all separate positions with the aid and assistance of Head Start Director, supervisor and employees. Such job descriptions should contain the designation as to whether positions covered by the job description are categorized as exempt or nonexempt, in addition to duty and qualification specifications. All job descriptions should be reviewed periodically to determine their continued accuracy, completeness, compliance with applicable standards of state and federal laws, and relevance to the agency's pay and performance evaluation systems. Each employee will be allocated to a position approved by the Head Start Director and position vacancies will be filled on the basis of job description standards.

REVISION OF JOB DESCRIPTION AND POSITION ALLOCATION: Job descriptions and the allocation of employees to positions may be revised or altered from time to time at the sole discretion of the agency as a means of operational efficiency and the changing nature of the program. When and where it is deemed appropriate, the agency will endeavor to advise affected employees of changes in job description details or their allocation to a specific position, including the determination to abolish positions, in which case employees may be offered other positions for which they are qualified.

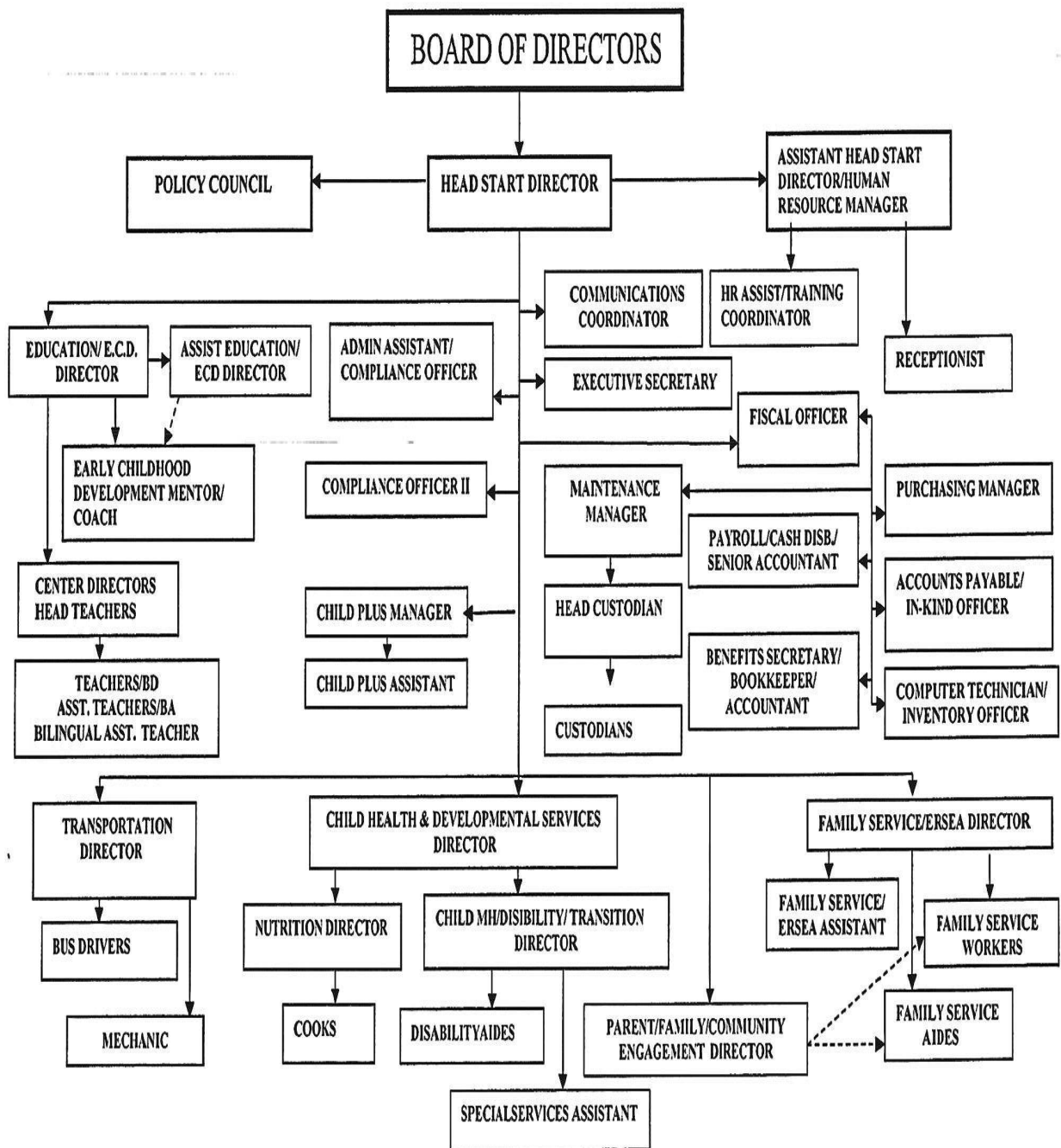
PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT CHART

Board of Directors	Head Start Director
Head Start Director	Fiscal Officer Assist Head Start Director/Human Resource Manager Executive Secretary Admin Assistant/Compliance Officer Child Health & Development Services Director Family Service/ERSEA Director Parent/Family/Community Engagement Director Education/Early Childhood Development Director Child Plus Manager Transportation Director Compliance Officer II Communications Coordinator
Fiscal Officer	Payroll/Cash Disbursement/Senior Accountant Purchasing Manager Accounts Payable/In Kind Officer Benefits Secretary/Bookkeeper Computer Technician/Inventory Officer Maintenance Manager
Assist Head Start Director/Human Resource Manager	Human Resource Assist/Training Coordinator Receptionist
Child Health & Development Services Director	Nutrition Director Child MH/Disability/Transition Director
Family Service/ERSEA Director	Family Service Workers Family Service Aides Family Service/ERSEA Assistant
Maintenance Manager	Custodians Head Custodian
Transportation Director	Mechanic Bus Drivers
Nutrition Director	Cooks
Education/Early Childhood Development Director	Assistant Ed/Early Childhood Development Director Center Directors Head Teachers Early Childhood Development Mentor/Coach
Child Mental Health/Disability/Transition Director	Disability Aides Special Services Assistant
Child Plus Manager	Child Plus Assistant
Center Director/Head Teachers	Teachers/Bus Drivers Assistant Teachers/Bus Aides Cooks Custodians Bilingual Assistant Teacher

FIVE COUNTY CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, INC.

An Equal Opportunity Employer

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART - HEAD START



CLASSIFICATION OF HEAD START POSITIONS

FULL- TIME EMPLOYEE

- A. An employee who works a full-time work week of forty- hour.
- B. An employee who works a full-time workweek of forty (40) hours, but less than 46 weeks per year receives all benefits except annual and sick leave. They will receive personal leave days.

TEMPORARY EMPLOYEE

- A. Temporary employee, who is hired for a certain period of time, to be designated by the Head Start Director. and/or for a specific activity; i.e., Classroom Disabilities Worker, for the operation year. This employee will be appointed by the Head Start Director and will be terminated when the time and activity is completed, and receives no benefits other than pay for hours worked.
- B. A person appointed by the Head Start Director to fill a vacancy created by an employee resigning, taking a leave of absence or terminated will also be considered a temporary employee. This type of temporary employee will work until the hiring process can be completed, until the employee returns from his/her leave of absence, or their services are no longer required. This process must be completed in a timely manner and should not exceed a six (6) month period. This employee will not receive the same benefits as a regular employee. The Head Director, along with other appointed interviewers, will interview a type B temporary employee prior to them being appointed to the position.

PART-TIME EMPLOYEE

An employee who works less than 40 hours per week; receives other than annual and sick leave; receives personal leave days, i.e., Part Time Bus Driver, etc.

SUBSTITUTE

An individual who for a certain period of time fill in for an individual who for various reasons are unable to report for duty or for specific activity. This person is subject to call and can be called to work for a few hours or for several months, depending on the need of the agency. The substitute will sign up to be placed on the list of persons selected to serve as substitutes, to be called as needed and receive no benefits other than pay for the hours worked.

VOLUNTEER

An individual who provides volunteer services to the agency and performs certain assigned work at no salary. Volunteers will be provided orientation and a job description. They will be expected to perform their duties in an acceptable manner. Their conduct, dress, and language must be appropriate for the assigned setting and task. Failure to meet these requirements can result in their forfeiting their role as a volunteer.

EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Five County Child Development Program, Inc. is committed to equality of opportunity in employment. All employees and job applicants shall be treated equally without regards to race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin, disability, citizenship, veteran status or service in the uniformed services in all employment practices. Discrimination or harassment, based on these factors, and sexual harassment, will not be tolerated. Any violation of this policy should be immediately reported to your supervisor, Head Start Director or Human Resources. All personnel actions will be analyzed to assure compliance with equal employment opportunities. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary actions up to and including termination of employment.

HARRASSMENT POLICY

The agency prohibit harassment of any employee based on race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin, disability, citizenship or service in the uniformed services. The agency's policy is to ensure and maintain a working environment free of coercion, harassment and intimidation. All employees should be able to enjoy a work place free of such harassment. Such harassment is a form of unlawful discrimination and is considered illegal under various local, state and federal laws.

We strongly encourage any employee who feels unlawfully harassed, in any form, to notify his or her supervisor, the Human Resource Manager, or Head Start Director. Any claims will be promptly investigated and appropriate action taken. All complaints will be kept in the strictest confidence except as necessary to complete an investigation. Retaliation against employees for complaining about such harassment is prohibited. Requiring an employee to properly perform his or her job is not unlawful harassment.

Violations of this policy will not be tolerated at the agency and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including possible termination.

DRIVER'S LICENSE REQUIREMENT

Each employee whose job will include driving a program vehicle or driving on program business is required to have a valid Mississippi driver's license and to have and maintain an acceptable driving record, i.e., must remain insurable under the program's liability insurance policy. All drivers must observe all safety, traffic and criminal laws of the state. If you are involved in a moving violation, lose your driving privilege and/or do not have a valid driver's license, you must immediately notify your supervisor and Transportation Director. The agency reserves the right to check your driving record periodically, without prior notice. Any illegal, dangerous, or other conduct while driving that would tend to place the lives or property of others at risk is prohibited. Any employee who violate any part of this policy, or who becomes uninsurable as a driver, will be subject to reassignment and/or disciplinary action, up to and possibly including termination from employment.

STAFF RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

The Five County Child Development Program, Inc. takes the position that employment consideration reflects upon the reputation of the agency in the community, as well as the quality of our employees, supervisors and managers. It is therefore the desire of the agency to make fair and impartial judgment of prospective employees, to leave a positive impression of the agency, and to be thorough in its selection determinations. In keeping with the agency's policy on taking reasonable measures to determine the overall suitability of new hires, and to provide the agency with greater assurance of a new employee's successful adaptation to employment conditions, the agency reserves the right to investigate and obtain prior employment, education, criminal background, character and other pertinent information about any prospective applicant under consideration for hire. While most reference investigations are conducted at the time of hire, the agency may additionally determine the need of gathering similar information on existing employees when doing so is deemed suitable and in the best interest of the agency.

It shall be the duty and responsibility of the Head Start Director and Human Resource Manager to coordinate the recruitment and selection of staff for the agency and submit to the Policy Council and Board of Directors as appropriate recommendations for personnel actions.

All current and prospective employees must sign a declaration. Prospective employees must sign the declaration prior to employment that lists the following;

- All pending and prior criminal arrests and charges related to child sexual abuse and their disposition.
- Convictions related to other forms of child abuse and neglect
- All convictions of violent felonies

The recruitment and selection plan for hiring staff for the Five County Child Development Program involves four basic steps:

1. **Public Announcement:** Available positions in the Head Start Program are announced through the news media and other public announcements so that Head Start parents and the general public will be aware of the available positions. Head Start personnel will be notified of available positions in the Head Start Program prior to or at the time of public announcement by posting the announcement. The announcement will be posted on bulletin boards at each site. The Personnel Committee may recommend that qualifying Head Start personnel be promoted to fill an available position, in which case the position will not be offered to the public.
2. **Recruitment:** Applications will be available at the Head Start Central Office. Promotion from within the organization will receive priority when practical and recommended by the Personnel Committee. Jobs posted are not necessarily reserved or held exclusively for current employees. The agency may concurrently advertise or otherwise recruit qualified persons in the appropriate labor market, and may, at its discretion, hire from outside the agency. The agency reserves the right to hire the most qualified person for the job.
3. **Selection:** (Revised February 3, 2010) The Head Start Director will appoint an in-house committee to screen applicants to be interviewed for available positions. This committee will, after selecting applicants to be interviewed, make recommendations as to which applicants are to be interviewed by the Interview Committee. The Interview Committee, the Head Start Director and any other person designated by the Head Start Director will interview the applicant recommended by the in-house committee, making first, second and third choice recommendations for the position. The ethnic makeup to the community, community residents and applicants who are present or former Head Start parents will be given extra consideration in the hiring of personnel. The Head Start Director, with the assistance of the Interview Committee, selects a candidate from the top three to be recommended for approval by the Policy Council. If for any reason the first candidate recommended to the Policy Council cannot or will not accept the position, the Head Start Director may select another candidate from the remaining top two (2) candidates. In the event the first candidate resigns, does not complete the introductory period satisfactorily, or another vacancy occurs for the same or related position within ninety (90) working days, the Head Start Director has one of three options:
 - Select another candidate from the remaining top two candidates
 - Appoint a temporary employee
 - Re-advertise for the position

All persons interviewed will be notified in writing or by phone of the disposition of their application within five working days after the hiring process has been completed.

4. **Vacancies:** In the event a Head Start employee resigns or takes a leave of absence at any level and the employee's paid leave is exhausted, the Head Start Director, upon the recommendation of the Manager, who supervises the position, can appoint a temporary employee until the position is filled. The time frame for the temporary employee should not exceed six (6) months.

5. **Nepotism:** (Revised August 2008) Nepotism applies to a position that is directly supervised by the family member mentioned below. NO person will be employed by Five County Child Development Head Start Program while the following member of his/her immediate family are employed in direct supervisory position over him/her. Immediate family includes:

- Husband/Wife
- Father/Mother
- Brother/Sister
- Son/Daughter
- Father-in-Law/Mother-in-Law
- Brother- in-Law/Sister-in-Law
- Son-in-Law/Daughter-in-Law
- Aunt/Uncle (niece/nephew)

JOB DISCRIMINATION

It is the intent of the agency to establish, by policy, our commitment to afford equal employment opportunity to qualified individuals regardless of their race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, physical or mental handicap, or veteran status and to conform with the content and spirit of applicable Equal Opportunity Laws and regulations; except where the doctrine of business necessity or a bona fide occupational qualification can reasonably be established. This policy is intended to apply to those actions related to both employees and applicants for employment.

In keeping with the intent of this policy, the agency will adhere strictly to the following practices:

- Recruitment, hiring and promotion of individuals in all jobs will be conducted without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, physical or mental handicap, or veteran status, except where a bona fide occupational qualification exists.
- Employment and promotional decisions will be made in such a manner as to further the principle of equal employment opportunity when possible, based upon selection criteria that are job related.

INTRODUCTORY PERIOD

1. The first ninety (90) days of employment is considered an introductory period. This will give the employee an opportunity to become familiar with the job and Five County and determine if this is the type organization they want to work. It also allows Five County to determine whether the employee can satisfactorily perform the assigned job. The supervisor, as well as the Policy Council, will be given the opportunity to observe the employee's character, ability and work record.
2. The introductory period is for an employee working in a regular full-time or part-time capacity who had not completed 90 days of successful job performance.
3. During the introductory period an employee who, in the judgment of the Head Start Director and the employee's supervisor, does not perform satisfactory work, has poor attendance, abuses rules, etc., can be summarily dismissed after proper notification on or prior to the completion of the introductory period. Such a dismissal prevents the employee from being entitled to any annual or sick leave pay. However, the Head Start Director has the right to extend the Introductory Period up to eight additional weeks in situations where warranted.
4. Supervision and training is offered to all employees.
5. Separation during introductory period may be affected without showing detailed cause and maybe based on such thing as stated in section three above. This type of separation is not subject to appeal unless the individual alleges discrimination because of a non-merit reason. In this latter case, it will be processed in keeping with pertinent agency policies covering grievances.

PROMOTION AND COMPENSATION

The agency seeks currently employed and qualified staff to fill vacancies that occur from time to time. This applies to all employees. Hence, Head Start employees may be given preference to fill a vacancy based on past performance. They may be given the opportunity to promote horizontally as well as vertically, subject to the approval of the Policy Council and Board of Directors. The purpose of our in-house training and development program is to help employees experience their full potential.

When position vacancies occur, the Head Start Director and supervisors will assist the Human Resource Department in determining whether there are eligible candidates within the agency. Candidates for promotion will be selected on the basis of their qualifications and work records without regard to age, sex, race, color, religion, mental or physical handicap or national origin. The standards will apply to all employees.

Service with the agency maybe a factor considered in the process of selecting a candidate for promotion. However, it will not be the deciding factor when determining which candidate is chosen. Promotions will always be based on education, ability, potential and actual performance. The agency reserves the right to hire and promote at its discretion and in its best interest.

CAREER LADDER

Management
Head Start Director
Administrative Staff/Area Managers
Support Staff
Center Level
Center Director/Head Teacher
Teacher
Assistant Teacher
Cook
Bus Driver/Custodians

ORIENTATION OF NEW EMPLOYEES

The Five County Child Development Program, Inc. believes that a smooth and thorough orientation of new employees results in a positive integration into the agency's operation, and will lead to a more productive and satisfying employment relationship. For this reason, it is the agency's policy to provide each new employee with a thorough orientation to the agency and its policies and procedures promptly following their report to work date. Orientation for new employees is the direct responsibility of Human Resources, area managers, and his/her immediate supervisor. A number of areas that will be covered in the orientation are;

- History/introduction to the agency
- Discussion of organizational structure, key employees, office/site location
- Review of policies and procedures, and the employee procedures manual
- Code of conduct
- Review of benefits and signing of all necessary forms
- Introduction to managers and co-workers
- New employee's role in helping to achieve agency's goals
- New employee's job content and performance evaluation standards
- Job Safety
- Promotional opportunities
- Professional Development

The topics covered by the Human Resource Department and supervisor, in a new employee orientation, shall be

documented on an Orientation Form prescribed by the agency; inclusive of the employee's signature, for placement in the employee's personnel file.

Following initial orientation, supervisor and manager should regularly check with employee concerning questions they may have, their working conditions, any problems or difficulties they may have encountered, and feedback concerning their performance or job progress.

TRAINING

Employees of Head Start will participate in the agency's Professional Development Program, Individual Professional Development Plan and Professional Development Needs assessment to ensure that training is relevant to the needs of staff. This information will be compiled, along with other relevant information, and a training plan for the year will be adopted. The training program for the agency will be composed of the following facets;

- To provide pre- service and in-service training for employees to add to their knowledge and capabilities in working with young children and families. These training sessions include all areas of the Child Development Program and related Head Start fields. Experts in the field of Child Development and other related fields from local colleges and universities and representatives from the Regional Office and the Technical Training and Assistance Office often participate in leading the training sessions.
- To encourage and help all employees who do not have a high school diploma prepare for and pass a GED test, which entitles them to a State of Mississippi equivalency high school diploma.
- To provide available resources for all teachers, and assistant teachers to receive a college degree.
- To keep Head Start staff informed about Child Development and other job related courses offered at the area vocational schools and, when the budget allows, pay participating staff's fees and material costs.
- To provide the money for staff to enroll in extension courses offered in their areas as well as correspondence courses in the field of Child Development or related Head Start programs, if funds are available.
- To encourage Head Start employees to participate in professional organizations related to Child Development and related fields, and when funds are available, to pay the expenses of attending various conventions, special training seminars, and meetings.
- To provide various books and materials related to child development and other Head Start areas, if funds are available.

All staff is required to participate in pre-service and in-service training sessions. These sessions will be conducted in such a way as to help employees improve the quality of services they provide and prepare for jobs of more responsibility. In addition, when funds are available, any staff who has performed satisfactory services and who has a genuine desire to further his education will be allowed to work toward a degree in Child Development or a Head Start related degree.

PRE- AND IN-SERVICE TRAINING POLICY (June 2011)

The Five County Child Development Program, Inc. is committed to supporting the development and learning of staff to ensure the services delivered to our children, families and communities are safe, effective and of a high quality. Five County has an obligation to meet local, state and federal requirements, ensuring that all staff operate within the guidelines. Therefore, all staff is required to attend specified training events. The agency recognizes that training is of vital importance to adequately protect and educate children, families and staff.

The provision of mandatory and other training is essential in managing risk and maintaining high standards within the agency. Increasing the skill levels of staff and other stakeholders will ultimately raise the standard and professionalism of Head Start, which will benefit the children, families, communities, stakeholders and the general public. It provides our staff with pertinent information to enhance their abilities to do their job. Therefore, it is very important that all employees are in attendance.

Five County has a clear responsibility to provide various training to our staff. The agency's vision is to create a comprehensive training plan for all staff, both initially through orientation and refresher training at specific intervals. The agency will ensure that all members of staff receive the mandatory training identified as being required for their role. It will also monitor attendance and non-attendance of these trainings.

The aim of this policy is to assure that Five County complies with all training requirements mandated by local, state and federal regulations and guidelines. Therefore, the agency will implement the following policy to assure maximum attendance of the agency's pre and in service trainings:

- Employees that do not attend the two days of In-Service Trainings in March and December will not be paid for any days during the week of In-Service Training. If, however, you cannot attend both days of In-Service Training because of a catastrophic situation/sickness you may utilize personal leave time for the excused day(s) of In-Service training only. The remainder of the days during the week of In-Service will be without pay.
- Attending scheduled training events is a vital part of what we must do at Five County, therefore, employees that continue to show a pattern of habitual absence from Pre or In-Service Training will be subject to disciplinary actions inclusive of suspension without pay and/or termination of employment. The disciplinary action will be considered on a case by case basis.
- Employees that do not attend Pre and/or In-Service Trainings to obtain the required annual 15 contact hours must show documentation that they have received the 15 contact hours required by the licensure agency, the Head Start Act of 2007 [648A(a)(5)] and Five County from other sources that meet the Head Start requirements. The source of the contact hours must be approved by our licensing agency and the Head Start Director. These hours must be verified and properly documented. If you do not receive the required contact hours within the 12 month period, your employment with the agency will be terminated.

CDA POLICY

Head Start assistant teachers will be given priority to obtain a Child Development Associate Credential. Failure to obtain CDA Credentials within the time allowed shall be grounds for reassignment, suspension or termination.

Any Head Start classroom staff participating in CDA training will be expected to complete training within one year. Under no circumstance will the Head Start grantee pay for more than one assessment fee for any one individual Head Start staff.

Any Head Start assistant teacher that allows their CDA to expire will be subject to termination or demotion to another position, if available.

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

It is the agency's policy to conduct performance reviews of all employees once a year. The appraisal is intended to be an employee development activity to assist and motivate employees to attain their maximum potential.

The objectives of the program are:

1. To motivate and guide employees toward greater self-development and improved performance by discussing significant strengths and areas needing improvement in a positive, constructive manner
2. To provide an objective and uniform means for supervisors to make determinations based on an assessment of employee performance

3. To identify training needs and succession planning activities.
4. To provide a record of employee's progress

The following procedures will be followed in performance appraisal;

1. Head Start employees shall be given a performance rating by his/her immediate supervisor at least once per year or at any time deemed necessary by the Head Start Director. An employee who has been given a written reprimand or have a grievance filed against them will be given a performance evaluation at the time of the reprimand or grievance. Another performance evaluation will be given this employee within sixty days. If this evaluation is substandard it may be grounds for dismissal.
2. Each employee may discuss their evaluation with their supervisor. This will help each to have a better understanding of the work being performed. After discussion, each employee must sign the evaluation to verify that it has been seen and discussed with employee. The employee must also be given the opportunity to write comments concerning his/her evaluation before signing.
3. Evaluation reports are submitted to Head Start Director for examination/review.
4. A copy of the personnel evaluation report is then filed in the employee's personnel record.
5. The employee's performance and ability must be of such quality as to ensure the guidelines set forth by the performance standards in all areas are met.
6. The employee evaluation can also serve as a basis for recommendations of pay adjustments.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Open communication between management and employees and the establishment of a friendly, cooperative work atmosphere go a long way toward eliminating serious disciplinary problems. If, however, disciplinary problems do arise, supervisors and management should make every effort to ensure that employees have an understanding of agency policies and an awareness of what is expected in the area of job performance.

The agency will take formal personnel action against an employee when his or her work or conduct necessitates doing so or when he or she fails to comply with rules and regulations promulgated by or made applicable to the agency. Such rules and regulations are subject to change. A summary of the findings shall be recorded and a copy of the document shall be placed in the employee's personnel file. The policy is to provide for progressive, evenhanded disciplinary action, in steps of increasing severity, whenever practical, in order to stimulate change in the behavior that activated the disciplinary process. Application of these guidelines must be consistent and equitable so that all employees receive like treatment for similar offenses.

Illustrative examples of the type of conduct, activities and performance that the agency expressly wants employees to avoid include the following. However, because conditions of human conduct are unpredictable, no attempt has been made here to establish a complete list. Should there arise instance of unacceptable conduct not included in the following list, the agency may likewise find it necessary and appropriate to initiate disciplinary action in accordance with these policies and procedures, up to and including termination of employment.

1. Unsatisfactory attendance, unexcused tardiness, unreported or unexcused absence, and abuse of sick leave.
2. Failure to maintain an orderly work area.
3. Inefficient performance of job responsibilities, including non-timely submission of reports, refusal or inability to improve job performance in accordance with written or verbal direction after a reasonable amount of time.
4. Taking lunch period or break at times other than the time established by the agency without prior approval of the appropriate supervisor.
5. Abuse of work time, including sleeping on the job or unauthorized time away from assigned work areas.
6. Destruction of, damage to, theft of, or unauthorized use, possession, loss or removal of agency property or personal property of others without prior approval.
7. Failure to promptly report a work-related injury or accident.
8. Falsification of employment application, resume, personnel or other records and records required in the transaction of agency business.
9. Insubordination, including but not limited to, resisting or failure to follow agency directives, failure or refusal to follow supervisor/manager's instructor or orders, failure or delay in performing assigned work and/or failure to comply with established policies.
10. Use of, abuse of or under the influence of intoxicating beverages or other non-prescribed chemical, substances while on the job or on agency premises.
11. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of controlled substances while on the job or on agency premises.
12. Disorderly conduct, fighting, threatening, coercing, or attempting to inflict injury to another, acts of violence, engaging in dangerous horseplay or other improper conduct while at work or on the agency premises, endangering the safety of or causing injury to personnel.

13. Gambling on agency premises.
13. Acts of conduct (by word or deed), on or off the job, that reflect negatively upon the agency or are adverse to the agency's duties to the children, other employees or the public.
14. Improper use of agency telephones, computers, internet access and e-mails.
15. Making malicious, false, or derogatory statements that may damage the integrity or reputation of the agency or its employees.
16. Solicitation or acceptance of personal gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from contractors or potential contractors.
17. Use of agency vehicle without prior approval or violating traffic regulations or improper operation of a motor vehicle while performing assigned job duties; driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs while on duty; suspension of driver's license where job duties require driving.
18. Unauthorized possession, display or use of explosive, firearms, or other dangerous weapons while on duty or on agency property.
19. Encouraging or engaging in any work stoppage or any other activity designed to restrict or delay the delivery of goods or services by the agency.
20. Directly or indirectly, breach of agency security or confidentiality including, but not limited to, the unauthorized disclosure of confidential agency or personnel information.
21. Absence without following proper procedures or notification or without justifiable and reasonable excuse for such absence.
22. Failure to report for work without properly notifying the supervisor or leaving assigned work site/station without proper permission.
23. Disrespectful conduct, use of insulting, abusive and/or obscene language on the agency's premises and/or to or about supervisors, co-workers, while on the job.
24. Conviction of a crime, a felony or misdemeanor, including conviction based on a plea of *novo contender* or of a misdemeanor involving moral turpitude, the nature of which reflects the possibility of serious consequences related to the continued assignment or employment of the employee.
25. Obscene or abusive language to fellow employees or the public during working hours. Conduct outside the agency of a criminal or dishonest nature.
26. Acting in excess of authority.
27. Unsatisfactory job performance.
28. Failure to report suspected corporal punishment/maltreatment of a child, which includes physical, mental, abuse, etc., to the correct authorities and supervisors.
29. Leaving a child unattended or the failure to have at least two (2) staff person present and supervising children at all times.
30. The use of corporal punishment, which includes physical, mental, verbal, sexual, etc., and/or total or extended isolation as disciplinary measures for a child.

31. Directly or indirectly, either for one's personal benefit or for the benefit of any other person or agency, revealing any agency or employee's confidential information.
32. Any act or conduct that is discriminatory in nature toward another person's race, creed, color, national origin, sex (including sexual harassment), age, religion beliefs, or political affiliations.
33. Engaging in conflict of interest activities.
34. Soliciting outside work for personal gain during business hours; engaging in off-duty employment for any business under contract with the agency; participating in any off-duty employment that adversely affects the employee's performance of work for the agency.
35. Violation or neglect of safety rules or contributing to hazardous conditions.
36. Distribution or posting information that is detrimental to the general interest of the agency.
37. Willful or negligent violation of the agency's published/established policies and procedures, operating rules, regulations or related directives.

ADVERSE PERSONNEL/DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

The purpose of an adverse personnel action is to correct unacceptable employee conduct or performance, or if this fail, to remove the employee from the program. Adverse actions may range from an oral reprimand to termination of the employee. Depending on the nature and circumstances of an incident, discipline will normally be progressive and bear a reasonable relationship to the violation. The types of discipline that may occur are as follows in general order of increasing formality and seriousness:

- **Oral Reprimand** - This is the mildest form of disciplinary action available to supervisors to informally attempt to correct a conduct or performance inadequacy. An oral reprimand is simply a verbal admonishment in which a supervisor tells an employee (1) the area of the employee's unacceptable conduct or performance; (2) the corrective action required of the employee; and (3) the consequences if the employee fails to upgrade their conduct or performance. An oral reprimand has no appeal.
- **Written reprimand** - A written reprimand is of a more serious nature than an oral reprimand. The supervisor indicates to the employee, with a written reprimand, that the employee's conduct or performance record and that the written reprimand will be retained in the employee's personnel file for a specified period not to exceed five (5) years. The written reprimand specifies (1) the area of the employee's unacceptable conduct or performance; (2) the corrective action required of the employee; and (3) the consequences if the employee fails to adequately upgrade his/her conduct or performance.
- **Disciplinary demotion** - Under circumstances of demotion for disciplinary reasons, an employee may be reassigned from a present job to having lower responsibilities, skill requirements, performance standards and rate of pay upon recommendation of supervisory personnel and approval of the Head Start Director. A copy of such written notice will be given to the affected employee and the Human Resource Manager for placement in the employee's personnel file.
- **Disciplinary Suspension** - A disciplinary suspension is used to make an employee aware of the severity of their unsatisfactory conduct, and to communicate to them that the program will not continue to tolerate their deficiencies. The Head Start Director can immediately initiate a disciplinary suspension against an employee to correct behavior that is in conflict with the standards of conduct as defined in the Agency's Personnel Policies and Procedures. Disciplinary Suspension is without pay. The employee must be notified in writing of the specific reason for the suspension, the length of the suspension, and the right to appeal the disciplinary suspension before the Head Start Grievance Committee.
- **Summary Suspension** - A summary suspension can be imposed by the Head Start Director if the employee's continued presence in the program would endanger the safety of staff or children, endanger property, or otherwise disrupt the operation of the program. A summary suspension will usually lead to termination. The summary suspension must immediately be followed by a letter confirming the summary suspension, stating the reason for the suspension, notifying the employee of the intent to terminate in accordance with the involuntary termination procedure, and notifying the employee of their right to appeal before the Head Start Grievance Committee. The summary suspension is without pay and in cases of subsequent termination, without accrual of leave benefits. The final decision to terminate an employee must be approved or disapproved by the Policy Council and Board of Directors.
- **Probation for Unacceptable Performance or Conduct** - An employee can be placed on probation as the result of unacceptable conduct or substandard formal employee evaluation. This office recommends a probationary period from three to six months. If the employee's performance or conduct improves sufficiently during the probationary period as determined by a formal re-evaluation, the employee is removed from probation. If sufficient improvement is not made, the employee is either terminated or transferred to a position he/she can adequately perform. The employee must be notified in writing of (1) the exact time period of the probation, (2) the performance or conduct improvements which will be required for removal from probation, (3) the consequences of failure to make the required improvements and (4) the right to appeal the probation of

it results in adverse personnel action, i.e. demotion to a lower pay scale, termination, etc. An employee must be formally re-evaluated at the end of the probationary period to determine what recommendations will be made.

- Probation and/or Suspension For Prohibited Political Activities - An employee can be placed on probation and/or suspended as the result of participating in prohibited political activities. This office recommend a probationary period from three to six months for political activities as listed under Employee Code of Conduct, Prohibited Political Activities, F - K, and suspension for A - E for eight weeks. If political activities do not cease, the employee will be terminated. The employee must be notified in writing of (1) the exact time period of the probation, (2) the conduct improvement which will be required for removal of probation or suspension, (3) the consequences of failure to make the required adjustment and (4) the right to appeal the probation and/or suspension.
- Training/Counseling - Program Managers will provide training and counseling to an employee who is in probation in order for the employee to improve his/her performance to an acceptable level.
- Repeated Occurrences - Three occurrences of any type of adverse personnel action within a period of one year will result in the termination of an employee.
- Optional and Recommended Investigative Suspension - If the offense, violation, or infraction requires investigative action to ascertain an employee's wrongdoing prior to the imposition of disciplinary action, an employee may be suspended temporarily, with pay, during the conduction of such investigation. If so informed, the affected employee will be notified by the Agency as to the conclusion reached as a result of the investigation and any further action to be taken by the agency.
- Involuntary Termination - An involuntary termination is the most serious adverse personnel action that can be taken against an employee. An employee will be terminated when he or she engages in conduct that justifies termination or does not correct the matter that resulted in less sever discipline. Reasons for termination must be specific, such as; prohibited political activities, outside employment interfered with job performance, used corporal punishment and total or extended isolation as a disciplinary measure, failed to perform job duties as outlined in the job description, unacceptable behavior which reflected negatively upon the Head Start program, convicted of a crime involving moral turpitude, etc.

Involuntary termination may consist of four basic steps:

1. Recommendation will be made to the Head Start Director, by the supervisor that the employee should be terminated, in accordance with agency policies and regulations, who will then make the recommendation the Policy Council.
2. The Head Start Director notifies the employee, in writing, of the intent to terminate, the specific charge and their right to a hearing. If a hearing is requested, in accordance with agency Personnel Policies and Procedures the employee will be informed of the date and time of the Policy Council meeting.
3. The Policy Council holds a meeting to hear the employee's appeal, if requested.
4. The program and the employee are notified in writing of the Policy council's decision (with Board of Director's approval).

EMPLOYEE PROCEDURES

HOURS AND ATTENDANCE

The normal working hours are scheduled by the supervisor and regularly scheduled attendance by the employee is required. Employees are expected to be at their assigned work station on time each work period ready and able to work.

For full-time nonexempt employees, the regular work week will consist of eight hours per day, five days per week. Most office staff will be assigned to the work schedule of 7:30 a. m. to 4:30 p. m., Monday through Friday, excluding the non-paid lunch period. However, the agency can assign employees to other days and hours within the workweek (the agency's workweek is from Saturday through Friday).

Employees unable to perform dual responsibilities as Teacher/Bus Drivers and/or Assistant Teachers/Bus Aides will work a percentage of the time. Employees unable to perform duties as Bus Driver and/or Bus Aide will work six (6) hours per day (8:30 AM – 2:30 PM), Monday through Friday.

Supervisory personnel, who may change such schedule based on the need of the office/center, will establish other work schedules for each employee, as needed. Supervisory personnel may also require an employee to work an unscheduled day in place of a scheduled day within the same workweek, in which case the unscheduled day worked shall be treated as a modified work schedule and not subject to overtime compensation on the basis of a changed workday.

Attendance: Consistent attendance and punctuality are considered imperative ingredients in the agency operations. Employees are expected and required to report to their designated work location at the prescribed time and manner work activity is to commence. Tardiness, unexcused absence, or failure to report as required may result in disciplinary action. In the event an employee cannot report to work as scheduled, the employee must so notify supervisory personnel at least one (1) hour prior to scheduled reporting time or be prepared to provide evidence of extenuating circumstances. In all cases of an employee's absence or tardiness, the employee shall provide supervisory personnel with a truthful reason for the absence and, if applicable, the probable duration of absence. If circumstances render the absence speculative or unknown, the absent employee will be required to call supervisory personnel daily to report the status of the absence.

Excessive absenteeism, regardless of reason(s) that render an employee insufficiently available for work will be evaluated in a case-by-case basis to determine the merits of correctional retention or termination.

Unauthorized Absence: An employee who is absent from his or her assigned work location or schedule without official leave approval from supervisory personnel for three (3) consecutive days shall be considered absent without authorized leave. In such cases, the agency shall regard the job as abandoned and the employee automatically terminated, unless the employee can provide the agency with acceptable and verifiable evidence of extenuating circumstances.

Employees who are absent without notice or authorization for less than three (3) days, and who subsequently report to work, shall provide a detailed written reason for such absence and, regardless of stated reason, may be subject to disciplinary action including termination.

Unauthorized leave or unexcused absence will not be compensated in any form by the agency, including agency sponsored employment benefits.

Meal and Break Period: In accordance with applicable law, nonexempt employees maybe provided lunch and break periods at times and under conditions prescribed by the agency and supervisory personnel. It is the intent of this policy to provide opportunity for employees to meet their dietary and health needs, as well as to break periodically from assigned work tasks.

Nonexempt employees will have at least thirty (30) minutes unpaid lunch period, except those required to eat lunch

with the children. Office staff working from 7:30 a. m. to 4:30 p. m. will have one hour unpaid lunch break and two fifteen minute breaks. During unpaid lunch break, employees are to be relieved of their job duties and permitted to leave their work station.

Breaks cannot be used in conjunction with lunch periods. Lunch and breaks must be taken at the time designated by the agency unless prior approval is obtained for programmatic reasons to deviate from the schedule. Any employee that does not follow agency policy and procedures will be subject to disciplinary actions.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Good employee-employer relationships can exist only if employees believe they have been treated equitably and fairly within the management policies, procedures, and actions that influence their relationship. It is recognized that there are occasions when honest differences of opinion can occur regarding the interpretation and application of policies, procedures, and actions. Thus, the agency will implement the following grievance procedure.

All grievances and complaints will be given prompt and fair consideration. Four basic types of grievances and complaints are addressed in the program:

1. Program Grievance that either person or persons other than employee initiated or staff initiated.
2. Grievance against an employee
3. Adverse personnel action/unacceptable working conditions complaint
4. Civil right complaint

A grievance is a method for correcting unacceptable conditions in the work place or at any level of program operation. A grievance can also be filed against an employee. An employee may also address an adverse personnel action through grievance procedures. Generally, grievances or complaints are filed through the chain of command. For example: If a parent files a complaint with the Head Teacher/Center Director, and it cannot be resolved at this level it is referred to the Education/Early Childhood Development Director or Family/Community Partnership Director and so on until a satisfactory solution is found.

An appeal is an effort to contest an adverse personnel action such as firing, demotion or suspension. Decisions by the Grievance Committee concerning program grievance can also be appealed to the Policy Council.

It is understood that any employee who elect to use the employee complaint procedure will be treated courteously and that the case will be handled confidentially at all times. An employee will not be subject to discourteous action or reproach of any form due to use of the complaint procedure. Only those members of management with a need to know and who are in the employee's chain of command may have access to complaint procedures documentation.

Grievance Committee: The Grievance Committee for Five County Child Development Program is composed of Policy Council member. At least one member from each county with fifty percent (50%) being currently enrolled Head Start parents. The Chairman of the Policy Council will serve as the head of this committee.

Employee Grievance Procedures: An employee who wishes to contest (appeal) an adverse personnel action or unacceptable working condition which cannot be solved through the chain of command must file his/her written grievance with the Chairperson of the Grievance Committee within five working days of the adverse personnel action. The Chairman of the Grievance Committee must call a meeting of the Committee within five working days of receiving the employee's complaint, or written notification given as to when the meeting will be held. The decision of the Grievance Committee must be approved by the Policy Council and Board of Directors. The steps of the personnel grievance are:

1. Employee files grievance with immediate supervisor within five working days of the adverse personnel action.

2. The supervisor attempts to resolve the complaint and replies to the employee within five working days. It is expected that every effort will be made to resolve the complaint in a fair and amicable manner at this level.
3. If the employee is not satisfied with the supervisor's action(s), the employee may file a written complaint with the next management level within five working days.
4. The next management level's response to the employee is written within five working days or notification given as to the date.
5. If the employee is not satisfied with the decision at this level the employee may file a written complaint with the Head Start Director within five working days.
6. If the employee is dissatisfied with the Head Start Director's decision he/she may file an appeal to the Chairperson of the Grievance Committee within five working days.
7. The Grievance Committee will meet within five working days or give written notice as to the date of the meeting, review documents, interview staff and the aggrieved employee and render a decision on the matter.
8. The Policy Council will meet to hear the decision of the Grievance Committee and to approve or disapprove the committee's decision. This meeting will occur in a timely manner and within thirty working days.
9. The decision of Policy Council (Board approved) will be final and immediately placed into effect.

A grievance against a Head Start employee will be filed through a chain of command and every effort will be made to resolve the complaint at this level. If the problem cannot be satisfactorily concluded through this method, the Head Start Director will refer the matter to the Grievance Committee that will follow the steps as outlined in the employee grievance procedure.

Program Grievance: To be heard, a complaint must be written and filed with the Head Start Director. If the issue cannot be resolved at this level, the Director will forward the complaint to the Policy Council Chairperson. The Policy Council Chairperson will, within ten working days, call a meeting of the Grievance Committee. This committee will meet, hear the complaint, and make a decision on how to resolve the issue.

Within five days after the Grievance Committee has met, the Policy Council Chairperson will respond in writing to the employee, person or group making the complaint. The written response will include the decision and recommendations of the committee, the right to appeal the decision before the Policy Council and the date, place and time of the next meeting of the Council.

The decision and recommendations of the Grievance Committee will be presented at the next regular meeting of the Policy Council for the Council's consideration, and approval. The Policy Council's final decision (with board approval) will be enforced.

Appeal: Actions and decisions of the Policy Council's standing committee, i.e. Personnel, Executive and Grievance, can be appealed to the entire Council. The Board of Directors and Policy Council are the Program's decision making body. Therefore, the final approval or rejection of any action lies with the Policy Council and Board of Directors.

The functions and responsibilities of the Council's standing committees are outlined in the Five County Child Development Program Head Start Policy Council's By Laws.

Recommendations and decisions of these committees which can be appealed to the council and/or governing board, include adverse personnel action, program grievances and grievance against an employee.

The appeal procedure involves five basic steps:

1. The person or persons affected by the decision or recommendation of the committee can file an appeal with the Chairperson of the Policy Council.
2. The Chairperson of the Council will, within five working days of receiving an appeal, notify the person or persons in writing of the date, time and place of the Council's next regular meeting.
3. The Policy Council hears the appeal.
4. The Council members vote to approve or reject the decision of the committee.
5. The person or persons filing the appeal is (are) notified in writing by the Policy Council Chairperson of the decision made by the Council. This notification is within five working days of the meeting.
6. The final Policy Council vote is placed into effect.

Civil Rights Complaints: It is the policy of Five County to not discriminate in admissions, provision of services, hiring and employment practices on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age or disability. The agency will provide prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any action prohibited by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. These regulations states, in part, that no person will, solely by reason of his or her race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age or disability be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving state or federal financial assistance.

An employee, person or group may initiate a civil rights complaint to address or contest an action or situation in which discrimination based on race, color, sex, age, national origin, religion or disability has occurred or has appeared to have occurred by taking the following steps: The agency's Head Start Director and/or Human Resource Manager are available to hear civil rights complaints brought against the program by an employee and assure that they receives due process in accordance with local, state and federal laws.

1. Any person who believes he or she has been subject to discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age or disability may file a grievance under this procedure. It is unlawful for Five County to retaliate against anyone who files a grievance or cooperates in the investigation of a grievance.
2. Grievance must be submitted to the Head Start Director/Human Resource Department within 30 days of the date the person filing the grievance becomes aware of the alleged discriminatory action.
3. A complaint must be in writing, containing the name and address of the person filing it. The complaint must state the problem or action alleged to be discriminatory and the remedy or relief sought.
4. The Head Start Director (or designee) will conduct an investigation of the complaint to determine its validity. This informal investigation will be thorough, affording all interested persons an opportunity to submit evidence relevant to the complaint. The Director will maintain the files and records relating to the grievance.
5. The Head Start Director will issue a written decision on the grievance no later than 30 days after its filing.
6. The grievant may appeal the decision of the Head Start Director by filing an appeal in writing to the Board of Directors within 15 days of receiving the Director's decision.
7. The Board of Directors will issue a written decision in response to the appeal no later than 30 days after its filing.

REDUCTION IN FORCE

A Reduction in Force Policy has been developed in the event of a reduction in funds, a change in program options, or a reorganization that results in a reduction of staff. A reduction in force may require the separation, involuntary demotion, reassignment, or reduction in work hours of covered employees. Non-covered employees are probationary employees, substitute employees and temporary employees. A Reduction in Force constitutes a major work program change and must have prior approval of the Policy Council, Board of Directors and the Regional Office. The program will identify the type and grouping of positions to receive a reduction or reorganization. The approved policy uses the following steps:

1. The Executive Committee and the Head Start Director identify the competitive area(s) which will be affected. The competitive area is defined as the area impacted by the reduction in force.
2. All employees in the affected competitive area(s) will be rated according to job evaluations and tenure.
3. Retention points will be assigned to each employee to determine who will first be affected by a Reduction in Force. (The formula for determining retention points is outlined at the conclusion of this policy).
4. A list of affected employees is presented to the Policy Council and Board for approval.
5. The employees who are to be released/reassigned are given written notice 30 days prior to the effective date of the reduction/reassignment.
6. A retention register and employment priority listed are compiled and retained for twelve months.
7. Regular positions are made available to competing employees on the re-employment priority list if they meet the qualifications.
8. The organization chart is revised to reflect the Reduction in Force action

An employee's name can be removed from the re-employment priority list upon written request or if the employee refuses to accept a regular position at the same or greater pay rate as his/her former position. Any regular position available, regardless of location, will be offered to a competing employee. If a qualified person is available on the re-employment priority list, any regular position must be filled from this list.

An employee who has been adversely affected by the RIF's policy may file an appeal from this action within five working days upon receiving notification of the decision. The Grievance Committee of the Policy Council will meet and render a decision within twenty working days of filing date and will hear the appeal.

The appeal will be in writing and signed by the employee. It must contain the following information:

- Name, address, telephone number and position
- The date and a copy of the action
- The date and a copy of the notice mailed to the employee
- The employee's reason for considering the action to be adverse

The decision of the Grievance Committee may be appealed to the Policy Council within three days. The Policy Council will set a date for the hearing. The appellant must be present for the hearing and may be represented by counsel retained at his/her own expense.

Retention points shall be calculated for covered employees to be used in determining which covered employees are to be involuntarily demoted, reassigned, have reduced hours or separated. Retention points will be based on the total scores of the two most recent annual performance appraisals, the length of service and necessary qualifications. Covered employees will receive one retention point for each year of continuous service. Points are determined by evaluations, i.e;

- Unsatisfactory 0 value points
- Satisfactory 1 value point
- Highly' Satisfactory 2 value points
- Outstanding 3 value points

The retention for service is determined by the sum of value points and quality points. The employee with the least number of retention points will be first to be affected by the RIP action.

PERSONNEL RECORD

It is necessary for the orderly operation of the agency to maintain a personal information system for the retention of appropriate papers bearing upon an employee’s duties and responsibilities to the agency and the agency’s responsibilities to the employee. Thus, comprehensive records shall be kept on all personnel actions including interviews, hiring, promotions, dismissals and resignations of both full-time and part-time employees.

The Head Start Director, Human Resource Manager, auditors and Regional Personnel have access to the personnel files of this agency, unless otherwise designated by the Director. Employees who wish to view their personnel files will contact the Human Resource Manager to schedule an appointment to review his or her file, except information deemed confidential. The file will not be removed from Human Resources; will be reviewed in the presence of the administrator designated and no alterations or additions can be made to the record or removal of any materials therefrom.

Information concerning a Head Start employee will not be released unless the employee signs a release of information form, except to verify employment or to satisfy legitimate investigatory or legal requirements. Any employee who disseminates personnel information in an unauthorized manner is subject to disciplinary action including dismissal.

Personnel records should include specifically; official documents for each staff related to qualifications for appointment, or promotion, periodic pay increase (Fiscal Dept.), records of continued training or education, official recognition, performance evaluations, adverse personnel action, statements of insurance (Fiscal Dept.), release of information form, oath of confidentiality, physical form (Health Services Dept.), etc., as deemed necessary by the agency. Time and attendance records shall be kept for all full-time and part time employees and paid substitutes -in the fiscal department.

TIME REPORT

Five County shall maintain a Time Report Policy that describes how all worked time will be tracked and recorded to ensure all employees are correctly compensated in terms of regular, overtime or other pay. Non-exempt employees must clock in and out each day. It is each employee’s responsibility to clock. If an employee fails to clock, it is the responsibility of the employee to submit the Exception Form to his/her supervisor no later than one day after it occurred. The Exception Form is to be submitted to the Human Resource Assistant by the supervisor the same day with all necessary signatures. If the employee and or supervisor fails to submit the appropriate signed documentation by the time entry payroll deadline, missed pay may not be paid until the following payday. .

It is the employee’s responsibility to clock in and out as determined by the manager/designee. Employees who consistently miss documenting their time in the Time Clock system may be subject to the disciplinary process up to and including termination. Disciplinary action will be taken as follows:

<u># Missed Punches</u>	<u>Per Payperiod</u>	<u>Action</u>
2		verbal warning
4		written warning
5		suspension without pay
6		termination

Missed clocks are reviewed each pay period. Errors that occur in the Time Clock system that result in clocks not being transferred to the payroll system will not be counted as missed clocks.

In the event of a power and/or telephone outage, and/or other disaster, time will be recorded using the paper time forms kept on hand in each center/department for emergency use. Time will be submitted to Human Resource Assistant once normal business operations return.

There must be a properly completed Exception Form on file for all clocking transactions that are not completed by the employee. More than one Exception form for time adjustment per pay period is considered excessive. Exception Forms completed because of Time Clock breakdowns are not included for the disciplinary process. Exception Forms completed because of the need to skip a meal are not included for the disciplinary process. Disciplinary action will be taken as follows:

- 3 adjustment per pay period—verbal warning
- 5 adjustment per pay period—written warning
- 7 adjustment per pay period—suspension without pay
- 9 adjustment per pay period—termination

If an employee fails to complete and submit the required time information by the deadline given, he or she may be required to wait until the next pay period to be compensated for the leave time or the time worked. In situations where an employee has time and attendance problems and/or abuses of leave time, the manager/supervisor may institute a more structured reporting requirement for the employee until the problem is corrected. Examples may include but are not limited to:

- Report to manager/supervisor upon arrival and departure.
- Report time spent on each task or assignment.
- Complete a sign in/out sheet for each period of time away from work area.

Progressive disciplinary actions will be taken when an employee's attendance record falls below the department's acceptable standards.

A one hour meal break is automatically deducted from office employees by the timekeeping system. During the one hour meal break, employees must be relieved of ALL work related duties. A department manager may require employees to clock out for lunch. If an employee works through their meal break, the employee must be compensated for this time. The timekeeper must adjust (add) the one hour back to the employee's time.

Supervisors are responsible for maintaining attendance records for assigned areas. The consistent application of attendance standards is essential to promoting fair employment practices. Knowingly falsifying time records for yourself or another person will result in immediate disciplinary action up to and including termination for all employees involved.

At the end of each scheduled work week the Human Resource Assistant will forward a copy of each center/department time clock report to the center Director/timekeeper, employees are responsible for checking their time clock report with their supervisor/timekeeper to assure accuracy in their time. Signing off informs the Payroll staff that your department has completed the time. Once the time clock report is checked and approved by the supervisor it will be submitted to the Human Resource Assistant on Mondays before 2:00 p.m., with all required signatures.

If an employee worked and failed to clock in and out, they must immediately seek approval from their supervisor and submit an Exception Form to the Human Resource Assistant. Any missing punches on the electronic time card system must be brought to your supervisor's attention immediately. An employee will not be paid for time not recorded. All exceptions must have the employee's and their supervisor's signature prior to being submitted to the Human Resource Assistant for processing.

PAYROLL

It is the policy of the Agency to issue payroll to employee using electronic payroll processing. All employees are paid biweekly. (Please reference agency's Fiscal Manual for additional payroll policy information)

Standard payroll deductions will include the withholding of income taxes, the withholding of social security taxes, withholding for unemployment insurance and the withholding of hospitalization and other insurance(s), if the employee desire.

SECURITY

The Agency has a strong commitment to its employees to provide a safe, healthy and secure work environment. The Agency also expects its employees to maintain a high level of productivity and efficiency. The presence of weapons and the occurrence of violence in the workplace during working hours or otherwise are inconsistent with these objectives. While the Company has no intention of intruding into the private lives of its present or potential employees, it expects all employees to report on the work site without possessing weapons and to perform their job without violence toward any other individual.

The agency will attempt to provide security for its employees and enrollees. Should any situation arise which need the attention that maybe a breach of security the employee should promptly notify their supervisor immediately and the supervisor will contact the main office. Employees are responsible for their personal belongings and should take precautions to ensure that they are properly protected. Effective security is dependent upon the cooperation of all employees. No employee should be subject to unsolicited and physical violence, threats or intimidation. Such behavior may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

SUGGESTIONS, QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS RESOLUTION

The agency values your opinion and encourages you to bring your suggestions, questions and concerns to our attention. We will give careful consideration to each of these in our continuing effort to create a good work environment and build a strong relationship with our employees. Difference of opinion may occur when many people work together as situations are bound to be viewed differently. While we cannot guarantee that we will always give you the answer that you want, we will consider any questions, suggestion or concern that may arise.

If you have a suggestion, question or concern, you should discuss the situation with your supervisor. Employees and their supervisors work closely together daily and experience has shown that most situations can be settled at this level. We encourage you to speak honestly and openly with your supervisor.

If an employee still feels that his/her situation has not been resolved by the supervisor, or if the subject matter of the situation prevents an employee from discussing the matter with his or her supervisor, the employee may pursue it through the next levels of management and continue to the Head Start Director.

We want to provide employees every opportunity to discuss questions, suggestions and concerns freely and to feel that they have been treated fairly.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS SECTION

ANNUAL LEAVE

Full time employees, working 46 - 52 weeks per year, shall accrue one day per month for the first four years of regular employment. Beginning with the fifth year, the employee shall accrue one and one-half days per month. Beginning with ten years of employment, an employee shall accrue one and two-third days per month. Beginning with twenty years of employment and thereafter, an employee shall accrue two days per month. Individuals who terminate employment will be paid for accumulated Annual Leave time. An employee may not carry forward Annual Leave beyond the fiscal year end (September 30th). Any accrued Annual Leave not used within the fiscal year (October 1st – September 30th) will be lost.

The Annual leave provisions of this plan are not applicable to full-time employees working less than 40 weeks per year, part-time or temporary employees. The guidelines set up by the agency will be followed regarding Annual Leave. Leave may not be accrued while on leave without pay.

SICK LEAVE

Full time employees working 46 - 52 weeks per year will earn one day for each month worked for the beginning of the fiscal year with Head Start. Sick leave accumulation at another agency will not be accepted with Head Start. Unused sick leave can be accumulated from year to year. Sick leave will have no cash redemption value on termination of employment. Leave will not be accrued while on leave without pay. An employee may be absent from work on sick leave for a maximum of two (2) working days without a doctor's statement. A supervisor may require a doctor's statement from the employee for repeated absentees.

PERSONAL LEAVE

Full-time regular employees working less than 40 weeks per year and regular part-time employees will earn up to nine days of personal leave per year, accrued on a monthly basis. These days must be requested at least three days in advance except in the case of illness, and will be granted at the discretion of the area director in order to maintain proper program compliance. Illness should be reported to employee's immediate supervisor. Personal Leave days cannot be accumulated from year to year. Leave may not be accrued while on leave without pay. Individual who terminate employment will be paid for accumulated Personal Leave time. An employee may not carry forward Personal Leave beyond the fiscal year end (September 30th). Any accrued Personal Leave not used within the fiscal year (October 1st – September 30th) will be lost.

EMERGENCY LEAVE

Upon the approval of an employee's immediate supervisor and the subsequent approval of the Head Start Director, orally or in writing, an employee may be granted emergency leave for attending to emergency personal needs or such other emergencies as judged necessary by the person approving such leave. Emergency leave will be charged to an accounted for on the employee's earned annual leave record. If the employee does not earn annual leave emergency leave will be charged to employee's personal leave. If employee has used his/her personal leave days, then his/her emergency leave will be without pay.

MATERNITY LEAVE

This agency will grant ten (10) weeks, without pay, for Maternity Leave. If the employee so desires, she may utilize any accumulated annual and/or sick leave, in that order. If accumulated annual and/or sick leave is used it must be utilized within the ten week period as granted by this agency. At the end of ten weeks, or prior thereof, such employee will be given the opportunity to return to work if she so desires and has doctor's permission.

MILITARY LEAVE

If an employee is a member of the Armed Forces, the Military Reserves, the National Guard or the Coast Guard they will be eligible for leave to meet military obligations and will have such rights as may be applicable under federal and state statutes. You must notify your supervisor and the Head Start Director as soon as possible when you are called for training or active duty. The employee will be allowed to use accrued Annual Leave during their absence.

FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE

It is the policy of Five County Child Development Program, Inc. that employees who qualify and make a request be granted Family and Medical Leave in accordance with the Family Medical Leave Act of 1993. Final regulation interpreting FMLA became effective April 1995. Under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act, eligible employees may take up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave during a year for specified family and medical reasons with continuation of group health insurance coverage under the same terms and conditions as of the employee had not taken leave. Reasons eligible employees can take leave include (1) the birth of a child and to care for the newborn child within one year of birth, (2) or placement with the employee of a child for adoption or foster care and to care for the newly placed child within one year of placement; (3) to care for the employee's spouse, son or daughter, or parent, who has a serious health condition; (4) for a serious condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee's job; or any qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent is a covered military member on "covered active duty;". The Family Medical Leave Act has been revived to include twenty-six workweeks of leave during a single 12-month period to care for a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness if the eligible employee is the servicemember's spouse, son, daughter, parent or next of kin (military caregiver leave).

Employees will be eligible for FMLA leave if they have worked for the Agency for at least one year and have worked at least 1,250 hours during the 12 months prior to the leave.

Employees should provide 30 days advance notice of a need for FMLA leave if possible. If the need for leave is not foreseeable, you must give notice to the agency as soon as practicable after you become aware of the need for the FMLA leave.

Five County require that employees provide medical certification to support their request for FMLA leave because of a serious health condition. Employees are required to provide a medical fitness for duty statement to return to work following a leave for personal medical leave.

Employees may use any accrued sick leave and annual leave/personal leave days prior to or in conjunction with utilizing FMLA leave for personal illness. Employees may use accrued annual/personal leave prior to or in conjunction with FMLA leave other than for personal illness. The FMLA leave is limited to a maximum of 12 weeks per year, in addition to any paid sick leave and annual/personal leave used during the leave, except for military members. For purposes of determining the year during which an employee is entitled to FMLA leave, the agency will measure backward from the date employee request FMLA leave to determine the 12-month period.

While on FMLA leave, employees may continue to participate in the Insurance Benefit Plan as long as they continue to make their monthly contribution. A failure to pay their portion of the premium could result in the cancellation of their benefits, including medical insurance. Employees will not accrue sick leave or vacation during the period of their FMLA leave.

With the approval of the Head Start Director, an employee may be permitted to extend the family and personal medical leave beyond 12 work weeks. If the leave is extended beyond 12 workweeks, their job may not be available when they are able to return to work. The employee may continue participation in the Benefits plan during the leave extension as long as they continue to make their contribution.

If an employee is unable to return to work at the end of the leave, their employment may be terminated and the employee may be eligible for continuation of health benefits as provided by law (COBRA).

JURY DUTY

Employees are to notify their supervisor promptly upon receipt of a jury summons and subsequent notice of selection to serve as a juror. Employees who are required to provide this community service will receive their regular rate of pay for normal hours worked, provided the employee submit evidence of summons and any compensation paid by the respective court jurisdiction. Paid absence for Jury Duty must be so noted on the employee's time sheet by the supervisor for each pay period in which this form of absence occurs.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Regular employees may request, subject to the sole discretionary approval of the agency, a leave of absence without pay. Requests for a leave of absence should be submitted, in writing, to the supervisor as far in advance of the anticipated leave date as possible. The leave request must be dated, signed by the employee, and state the reasons, circumstances, and duration of the leave. The supervisor will submit his/her recommendation to the Head Start Director, who will approve or disapprove the leave, and so notify the employee through the supervisor. Extension of an initial leave of absence must be requested in the same manner, but will additionally require the approval of the Head Start Director. During a leave of absence, employees will be responsible for either maintaining or discontinuing any employment-related insurance benefits.

Upon expiration of a leave of absence, the employee maybe reinstated in the position held, or an equivalent one, at the time leave was granted, if such a position is available. An employee who fails to report promptly for work at the expiration of a leave of absence, or who applies for and receives unemployment insurance while on leave, will be considered to have voluntarily resigned.

TEMPORARY PLACEMENT

Any employee who is asked to act in a higher position other than that for which he/she is hired will receive entry level wages for the position for which he/she is acting. The increase will begin after a period of ten working days or immediately if the employee is acting in place of another employee who is on leave without pay or who has exhausted his/her leave benefits.

EXCUSED ABSENCE

An employee who is absent from work because of illness or an accident for a period of more than three working days may be required to submit a statement from a doctor upon returning to work. The statement must give the nature of the illness, release the employee to return to work and list all, of any, limitations placed on the employee. At this time, the Director who supervises the employee will allow him/her to return to work. Certain limitations will prevent an employee from satisfactorily performing the duties as outlined in his/her job description. This being the case, the employee cannot return to work until a doctor has removed the limitation(s). Conditions or limitations placed on an employee's physical ability to perform tasks essential to his/her job can result in involuntary termination.

BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

Three days of bereavement leave will be granted in the event of the death of the following family members: parents, children, spouse, brothers, sisters, father-in-law, mother-in-law, grandparents, grandchildren, plus other relatives by blood or marriage, if living with employee. If necessary to be away from work more than three days, sick leave may be used.

Bereavement leave will be for three consecutive days. These days will include the day before the funeral, the day of the funeral, and the day following the funeral. In the event any of these days fall on a weekend and/or holiday, bereavement leave for these days can be reassigned or granted for other dates. Approval must be obtained from the Head Start Director to reassign bereavement leave for other dates.

OTHER EXCUSED ABSENCES

The Head Start Director may excuse employees for the following reasons:

1. Time to vote
2. To permit safe travel because of hazardous road conditions
3. For the purpose of donation of blood

These types of absences should not exceed 2 - 4 hours in length and will not be charged to sick, annual or personal leave.

VOTING

Employees will be given time off for voting in elections, if it becomes necessary. The amount of time will be determined by the Head Start Director, and will be announced to the staff.

OVERTIME

Overtime is any time worked over and above the regular 40-hour workweek. According to the Fair Labor Standards Act, all non-exempt employees are subject to the overtime pay provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act and must be compensated for all hours worked, including all hours worked on and off work premises. Employees are not permitted to work in excess of their regularly scheduled work hours without prior supervisory and Head Start Director's approval. Non-exempt employees who work in excess of 40 hours in a workweek are not eligible to receive compensatory time. They must receive their regular hourly rate for time worked up to 40 hours in the workweek and then the overtime rate for all time worked in excess of 40 hours in the workweek.

Employees will not be asked to work more than 40 hours per workweek unless there is an emergency situation. Overtime will be paid at the rate of 1.5 times the employee's hourly rate for any hours worked over 40 hours per week. Each workweek is considered separately in computing overtime and all other pay. Overtime must be approved in advance by the employee supervisor and Head Start Director.

It is not considered overtime if an employee should work over 8 hours in one day until the employee has worked over 40 hours in that workweek. If this should happen, the employee should work less hours at some other point within the same workweek so that the total hours worked do not exceed 40 hours for that week. This arrangement requires approval of the Head Start Director in advance. The employee must take the equivalent time off in the same workweek in which it was earned. If this is impossible or impractical, the employee will be paid overtime.

Non-working time will not be counted as hours worked for overtime calculations. Non-working time might include holidays, sick/personal days, vacation leave, bereavement leave, etc. or any time when employees are paid for time not worked.

Part-time employees will also be subject to this policy when asked to work in excess of forty hours per workweek.

A work week starts at 12:01 AM on Saturday and ends at Midnight the next Friday.

Employees are responsible for obtaining supervisory authorization before working any overtime. It is the responsibility of supervisors to plan and schedule work of employees covered by FLSA provisions so that it can be performed within the regularly scheduled hours and that overtime will occur only when absolutely necessary.

All overtime must be authorized in advance by the Head Start Director (this includes skipped lunches). Non-exempt employees who work overtime without authorization must be paid for the time worked but will have disciplinary action taken up to and including termination. Managers, supervisors, and employees who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

FRINGE BENEFITS

Group Hospitalization Plan: Employees may take advantage of the group hospitalization plan offered by the agency. The Head Start program will pay a percentage of premiums for individual employees. Employees may purchase dependent coverage at their own expenses.

Social Security: Head Start will pay the matching rate as prescribed by law toward social security benefits.

Workmen's Compensation: Head Start will pay all premiums for workmen's compensation. Any employee who is absent from work because of an occupational disability arising during the course of employment, unless purposely self-inflicted, or due to willful misconduct or violation of safety rules, or refusal to use safety precautions, will be excused from work. All accidents must be reported immediately to supervisor. Failure to do so may cause loss of benefits.

Unemployment Taxes: Head Start will pay all unemployment taxes, as prescribed by law, for the benefit of employee.

Mileage Reimbursement: Employees who use privately owned vehicles to carry out their job duties in the Head Start program will be reimbursed at the rate per mile designated by the agency. Employees will be responsible for keeping accurate mileage forms and submitting them at the end of each month.

HOLIDAYS

Five County recognizes the following thirteen (13) days as paid Holidays for regular employees who are normally scheduled to work that day. The regular employee must be on payroll when these Holidays occur. These holidays shall include:

New Year's Day	Labor Day
Martin Luther King's Birthday	Columbus Day
President's Day	Veterans Day
Good Friday	Thanksgiving Day
Memorial Day	Christmas Eve
Independence Day	Christmas Day
Flexible Day (This day can be used preceding or following one of the above listed Holidays, as determined by Head Start Director)	

If any of the above Holidays fall on Sunday, then Monday shall be observed as the Holiday; if any of the above days fall on Saturday, then Friday shall be observed as the Holiday.

Hours paid for Holidays throughout the year will not be included in total number of hours worked for overtime calculations.

EMPLOYEE CONDUCT

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Five County provides its services to the children and families with a great deal of pride. Employees are expected to conduct themselves in a courteous and professional manner at all times. Due to the services we provide, employees will become aware of confidential information that is entrusted to us. It is the employee's responsibility to maintain that confidentiality by not discussing information with anyone other than those individuals within the Agency who are authorized to receive the information.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY

For your safety and wellbeing, Five County has an alcohol and drug policy. The agency will conduct pre-employment and random alcohol and drug testing. Use, possession, sale or transfer of alcohol or the illegal use, possession, sale or transfer of drugs on Agency property or in Agency owned or controlled vehicles, or reporting to work or performing agency business while under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drug, or reporting to work or performing agency business while under the influence of any drug causing impairment is strictly prohibited. Violation of the agency's policy will result in termination.

When there is reasonable cause to believe that an employee's physical or mental abilities may be impaired during working time as the result of alcohol or drug use, the agency may require the employee to have a drug and/or alcohol test. A refusal by an employee to attend such testing within the time requested by the employee's supervisor or a refusal to cooperate in anyway with the testing will result in immediate termination.

In addition, if an employee is involved in an accident or injury during working time, the agency may require the employee to have a drug and alcohol test. A refusal by an employee to attend such a testing within the time requested by the employee's supervisor or the Head Start Director or refusal to cooperate in any way with the testing will result in termination of employment. Confirmation of the presence of alcohol or drugs in the results of the post-accident drug and alcohol test will result in termination of employment.

ELECTRONIC SERVICES POLICY

Computer technology and the Internet have become an important part of the agency's mean of conducting business. Likewise, e-mail is an essential business tool. Computers, Internet access, and e-mail are provided to employees for agency business only and are not for personal use. Computers, like all other office equipment that is provided by the agency are the property of the Five County. E-mail and Internet "surfing" should not be considered private or confidential and may be monitored or inspected at any time by management.

All agency policies apply to the use of computers, the Internet and e-mail by employees, including the agency's policies on Discrimination, Harassment, Solicitation, and Confidential Information, Alcohol and Drug Use, and the Employee Code of Conduct Policy. Downloading, transmitting, viewing, or possessing electronic information or materials that are not work-related is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to items that may be considered pornography, sexually explicit or offensive.

Each employee is responsible for keeping their computer password secure. Passwords should be a non-obvious combination of letters or symbols and should be changed frequently. All employees are required to log off the computer when they leave their desk.

Violation of this policy may lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

EMPLOYEE CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

The agency maintains certain policies to guide its employees with respect to standards of conduct expected in areas where improper activities could damage the agency's reputation and otherwise result in serious adverse consequences to the agency and to employees involved. The purpose of this policy is to affirm, in a comprehensive statement, required standards of conduct and practices with respect to certain types of payments and political contributions. These rules of behavior must be observed to ensure a safe, productive operation.

An employee's actions under this policy are significant indications of the individual's judgment and competence. Accordingly, those actions constitute an important element in the evaluation of the employee for position assignment and promotion. Correspondingly, insensitivity to or disregard of the principles of this policy will be grounds for appropriate management disciplinary action, up to and including termination, depending on the facts of the case.

- 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.
- No child will be left alone or unsupervised while under your care.
- Follow program confidentiality policies concerning information about children, families and other staff members.
- Use positive methods of child guidance and do not engage in corporal punishment, emotional or physical abuse or humiliation. Do not employ methods of discipline that involve isolation, the use of food as punishment or reward or the denial of basic needs.
- Although not intended to be all inclusive, other types of conduct that are unacceptable at Five County are listed in "DISCIPLINARY ACTION".

Outside Employment: Outside employment is any paid employment performed by an employee in addition to his/her job with Head Start. Provisions of outside employment are as follows:

1. Such employment shall not interfere with the efficient performance of the employee's duties in the Head Start Program.
2. Such employment will not involve a conflict of interest or conflict with the employee's duties in the Head Start Program.
3. Such employment shall not occur during the employee's regular or assigned work hours in the Head Start Program.
4. If an employee is in private business any object of the business to sell or re-sell should not be brought and/or delivered to Head Start premises (office or Centers).

If an employee should violate the provisions concerning outside employment as stated above, the Head Start Director has the authority to put such employee on probation for six months. If there should be a second violation of such provision by any employee, the Head Start Director will immediately recommend dismissal of the employee to the Executive Committee. The decision of the Executive Committee will be presented to the Policy Council and Board of Directors for approval.

Prohibited Political Activities: Employees are prohibited from taking an active part in partisan political campaigns. Such employees may not engage in partisan political activities including but not limited to the following:

1. Becoming a candidate for nomination or election to the political office or to a party office.

2. Serving on or for any political committee, party, or other similar organization, or serving as a delegate or alternate to a political caucus or convention.
3. Soliciting the sale of or selling political contributions.
4. Soliciting the sale of or selling political fund raising tickets.
5. Serving as an officer of a political club, as a member or an officer of any of its committees, or being active in organizing it.
6. Assisting in preparation for organizing, or conducting a political meeting or rally. Attendance at a political rally or meeting is permissible.
7. Engaging in activity at the polls at primary, regular, or special elections such as soliciting votes or passing out literature.
8. Acting as recorder, checker, watcher, or challenger for any party or candidate in an election.
9. Writing for publication or publishing any letter or article soliciting votes in favor for or against any candidate or party.
10. Distributing political campaign literature or material.
11. Initiating or circulating political petitions, including nominating petitions.

Permitted political activities: There are some political activities that employees may participate:

1. Register and vote as he/she chooses.
2. Express his/her opinion on political subjects and candidates.
3. Be a member of a party or political club, although he/she may not hold office or otherwise be active in party affairs.
4. Make voluntary contributions of money to political campaign or party.
5. Participate in educational efforts related to issues and to the political process so long as this is done in a politically neutral manner.
6. Attend political meetings and rallies.
7. Wear a political badge or button.
8. Display a political sticker on his/her private automobile.
9. Engage in non-partisan political activity. There is no prohibition on political management or political campaigning in connection with (1) non-partisan election which are defined as those in which none of the candidates represent Democratic or Republican Party or any other party which ran a candidate for President in the preceding presidential election, or (2) questions not specifically identified with a national or state political party, such as constitutional amendments, referenda, approval or municipal ordinances, and similar matters.

Direct Action: A group activity designed to communicate collective grievances and to request decision or remedial action, i.e., picketing, parades or marches, sit-ins, rallies or assemblies.

No individual employed or assigned by any Community Action Agency or other agency, assisted under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, as amended, shall pursuant to or during the performance of services rendered in connection with

any program or activity conducted or assisted under this Act by Head Start, plan initiate, participate in, or otherwise aid or assist in the conduct of any unlawful demonstration, rioting, or civil disturbance.

Gifts and Gratuities: Employees of Head Start are prohibited from accepting gifts, money, and gratuities from persons receiving benefits or services under the Head Start program or performing services under contract or otherwise in a position to benefit from an employee action.

Restrictions or Lobbying with Project Funds: Program funds may not be used to support any of the following:

1. Any activity which is planned and carried out in such a manner as to disrupt the orderly conduct of business by Congress or any other legislative body. This includes, but is not limited to, any disruptive action carried on in the chamber of Congress or any other legislative body or in any capitol or legislative office building.
2. Any demonstration, rally, picketing, or other form of direct action claimed at the family or home of a member of a legislative body for the purpose of influencing his actions as a member of that body.
3. Any campaign of advertising carried on through commercial media for the purpose of influencing the passage or defeat of legislation.
4. Any campaign of letter writing, of other mass Communications, or of mass visits to individual members of Congress or state legislature for the purpose of influencing the passage or defeat of legislation. This restriction does not prohibit purely informational and educational activities involving target areas and groups.

Assignment of Staff: All employees, with the exception of area manager and office personnel, will be assigned to a specific center and/or county in the area in which they live, whenever possible. The inability to work effectively and harmoniously in the location to which they are assigned will be grounds for termination.

Procurement procedures: All employees who request and/or recommend the authorization of payment for goods and services fall under this category. No employee in this category shall:

1. Accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from contractors, vendors, or potential contractors or vendors.
2. Participate in the selection, awarding or purchasing of goods and services, where to the best of his/her knowledge, any of the following have a vested financial interest; employee, any member of his/her immediate family, his/her partner, and organization in which any of the above is an officer, director, or employee, a person or organization with whom any of the above individuals is negotiating or has any arrangement concerning prospective employment.
3. Provide an environment that excludes open and free competition of procurement transactions.
4. Purchase personal items from vendors used by the agency on Five County's premises.

DRESS CODE

The agency's Dress Code standards are set in consideration of each employee's job description and the specific tasks schedules, thus, each employee is expected to dress, groom and maintain personal hygiene in a professional manner appropriate for their job title. The goal of the agency is to provide a safe, productive and comfortable workplace for all staff.

Staff should always wear neat and comfortable clothing while working, as well as practice good personal hygiene at all times. It should be remembered that staff are representatives of the Head Start program, and are expected to dress and act accordingly while on duty. Therefore, the following are guidelines for all employees:

All Employees

1. Maintain daily personal hygiene.
2. All clothing must be clean.
3. On Friday's dress down; wearing casual slacks, skirts or dressy jeans with agency/center shirts.
4. Jewelry must be such that the length, shape and texture would not cause safety concerns for employees, volunteers, or children in the day-to-day operation of work duties.

Office and Classroom Staff

1. Dresses or skirts must be worn at knee length.
2. Blouses or tops must be below the waistline, worn inside, or where designed.
3. No sneakers or socks worn with dresses or skirts.
4. No overalls/coveralls; jeans must be good condition; no cut out or ripped-up jeans.
5. No jogging suits (pants or tops)
6. No total black attire worn with children
7. Knee length pants on field trips ONLY.
8. Classroom staff cannot wear shoes with heels higher than 2 inches.
9. Only agency or center tee shirts may be worn.
10. Classroom staff cannot wear flip flops, thongs or slides.

Cooks

1. Must wear white uniforms (dresses or pant suits) or white or blue scrubs.
2. Must wear hairnets and apron at all times.
3. Must wear enclosed shoes.

Custodian

1. Must dress neat and clean daily
2. Must wear enclosed shoes
3. Jeans must be in good condition, no cut out or ripped up jeans.
4. Knee length pants on field trip ONLY

Employees that do not meet the standards of this policy will be required to take corrective actions, which may include leaving the premises to go home and change to approved attire. Employees will not be compensated for any work time missed because of failure to comply with this policy. Violation of this policy can also result in additional disciplinary actions, in accordance with the agency's progressive disciplinary action policies.

USE OF AGENCY PROPERTY

To avoid potential misunderstandings and problems, the agency has established the following policy concerning the use of agency property and services.

Care of Agency Property: All employees are expected to exercise due care when using Agency property and to utilize the property only for authorized purposes. Negligence in the care and use of Agency property maybe cause for disciplinary action including termination. Additionally, unauthorized removal of Agency property from the premises, or its conversion to personal use, will be cause for termination.

Return of Agency Property: Agency property issued to an employee must be returned to the agency at the time the employee separates employment or when its return is requested. It is the employee's responsibility to reimburse the agency for the value of any such property issued to the employee that is not returned upon request.

Personal Property on Business Premises: The agency assumes no responsibility for the loss or damage to personal property of any employee that is brought onto agency premises. Also, it is prohibited for employee to carry personal property in agency vehicles without the expressed permission of the employee's supervisor. Management will

additionally have the right to request any employee to open for inspection any packages or other containers brought onto or taken from agency premises.

Use of Business Vehicles: (Revised December 2005) -The use of agency vehicles for personal use by an employee is prohibited. If an employee who normally operates an agency vehicle has a situation that must be taken care of during work time, prior approval from the employee's supervisor must be obtained, but approval will be restricted to unusual circumstances.

Because of the unusual demand for transportation on behalf of the agency by the Head Start Director and Transportation Director, an agency provided vehicle maybe assigned for their use on an ongoing basis. The Agency will set a fringe benefit value for the ongoing use of the agency provided vehicles and issue a Form W -2 annually for the value of the benefits. The value of the fringe benefit shall be assessed on a monthly rate based on the period in use.

The agency may, from time to time, as need is established and vehicles are available, assign an agency owned vehicle to employees to facilitate the needs and services of the agency and the employee may agree to keep the agency owned vehicle at home for safe keeping. The assigned vehicle is not to be used for personal use. The agency does not assess this use as a fringe benefit.

SAFETY POLICY

Providing a safe place to work, the proper protective equipment, and a work environment conducive to safe practices and policies is a concern to management. The agency expects all employees to be responsible for working safely and carefully, and for maintaining a work area free of safety hazards. We believe that performance geared to safety is always more efficient, and that inherent in every operation there must be a need and desire to performance that job task safely. The aim of the safety policy is to avoid all injuries and illness. Therefore, infractions such as the ones listed below will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination, depending on the facts of the case.

It would be impossible to write rules to cover every situation; the following listed is not intended to be all inclusive. It illustrates some violations that are unacceptable at the agency.

1. Failing to wear seat belts at all times either as a driver or a passenger during working time or any other time while in agency vehicles.
2. Reckless driving or exceeding the speed limit while operating any agency vehicle or while operating 'an employee's vehicle on behalf of the agency.
3. Squealing or spinning the tires on an agency vehicle.
4. Willfully or negligently endangering the safety of self, children or fellow employees. Improper use of facilities, vehicles, materials or equipment.
5. Willfully wasting material or dripping materials or waste on the floor, machinery or equipment or otherwise creating or contributing to poor housekeeping and/or unsanitary conditions.
6. Failing to immediately report to your supervisor an injury, regardless of how slight, or refusing to follow first aide requirements.
7. Failing to report an accident, either personal or automobile, of any kind while on duty.
8. Failing to observe the general safety or environmental rules of the location and specific rules of the department.
9. Fighting, threatening, and indulging on practical jokes, horseplay or other acts which may endanger the physical wellbeing of others.

OTHER AGENCY POLICIES

Anti-Sexual Harassment Rules and Procedures

In 1980, the Equal Opportunity Commission amended its guidelines on sex discrimination to include "Sexual Harassment" within its coverage. The EEOC defines sexual harassment as any unwelcome sexual advancements, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a condition of employment;
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for an employment decision affecting such employee; or
3. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual has the effect of unreasonable interfering with an employee's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive workplace.

The Program will not tolerate sexual harassment in any form, whether by an employee or management personnel, nor retaliation for reporting an act of sexual harassment. Specifically, such harassment includes, but is not limited to, unsolicited remarks, gestures or physical contact, display or circulation of written materials or pictures derogatory to either gender or basing personnel decisions on any employee's response to sexually-oriented requests. Such conduct may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Any person who had a complaint of this nature should contact his/her supervisor, Human Resources or Head Start Director. The program will investigate thoroughly any such complaint, or take other appropriate action. If so requested, all such complaints will be kept as confidential as possible under the circumstance.

Drug Free Workplace Act

In accordance with the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, 45 CFR., part 76, Subpart F, it will be the policy of this agency to provide services to children and their families in a completely drug-free environment. Upon accepting a position with Five County Child Development Program, Inc., each employee will be given a statement of the Federal Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988, Public Law 100-690, 102 Stat 4181 and asked to sign a statement of receipt of said policy, which will be placed in the employee's personnel file. Annual training will be provided on Drug Free workplace and Testing Policies and Procedures.

In an effort to comply with Section 7 © of the Act, it shall be the policy of Five County Child Development Program, Inc. that all employees and applicants are to be tested for drugs and/or alcohol upon hiring (all offers of employment are conditional on passing a drug and alcohol test) and to conduct mandatory random drug/alcohol screens as deemed in order by the Head Start Director. The drug/alcohol screen will be coordinated by a laboratory, using accepted practices to assure accuracy and legality of testing procedures. The Head Start Director will be responsible for the implementation of the testing.

If a controlled substance is detected in the screen, the employee will be notified verbally immediately, to be followed by written notification, and may be placed on immediate suspension pending a determination. If proof of a non-abuse, i.e. doctor's prescription and pharmacist record, cannot be documented, the employee will be terminated with no further action necessary. Refusal to comply with the mandatory drug/alcohol screen will be grounds for dismissal.

Drug Testing Policy

Whereas, it is the intent and purpose of Five County Child Development Program, Inc., an equal opportunity employer, (hereinafter referred to as Five County) to lift the spirit and to increase the self worth of disadvantaged children; and

Whereas, the problem of drug and alcohol use and abuse is antithetical to said intent and purpose and has reached epidemic proportions in the service area of Five County; and

Whereas, it is in the best interest and for the safety, well-being, and education of the children for whom Five County is responsible that they not be exposed to alcohol or illegal drugs or the consequences thereof while under the direction of Five County; and

Whereas, to show its support for the implementation of a drug policy by Five County as hereafter set forth, the Board of Directors of Five County does hereby voluntarily make itself subject to the policies and procedures of this Drug Testing Policy;

Be it hereby resolved and ordered by the Board of Directors of Five County Child Development Program, Inc., and equal opportunity employer, that the following Program, Inc., and equal opportunity employer, that the following drug abuse and drug testing policy hereby adopted and shall be in effect from and after January 7, 1991, to-wit:

Employees affected: An employee who is in daily contact with the students of Five County Child Development Program, Inc., and who, uses, possesses, or is under the influence, of any type of alcohol or illegal, drugs on or upon, the property, of Five County who uses a legal drug in an illegal manner thereon will be terminated with no further action necessary. (Employees deemed to be in daily direct contact with students shall include, but not be limited to, those occupying the following positions; teachers, assistant teachers, cooks, custodians, bus drivers, public transit drivers, aides, disability aides and bus aides).

Illegal Drugs Defined: Illegal drugs shall be defined as those drugs which are declared to be illegal by any provision or statute of the 1972 Mississippi Code Annotated, as amended, or the United States Code, as amended, and include, but are not limited to marijuana, cocaine, and their derivatives.

Random Drug Testing: Effective January 7, 1991, all employees who occupy the position as identified in Paragraph 1 hereinabove and who are in daily direct contact with students of Five County shall be subject to random drug/alcohol testing as a condition and requirement of their employment. Said drug/alcohol testing shall be provided through an independent state certified drug testing facility and shall include tests for drug and alcohol usage. All costs of such testing shall be borne by Five County.

The method of determining subjects for drug/alcohol testing shall be by a blind system using mathematical random chance whereby all employees subject to drug/alcohol testing will have the same possibility of being randomly chosen as a test subject. Said method shall not be skewed or otherwise manipulated in any manner or for any reason so as to defeat the randomness requirement herein.

Penalty: Any employee of Five County who tests positive for use of illegal drugs or alcohol shall have his/her employment immediately terminated with no further action necessary.

Any employee of Five County who refuses to submit to drug/alcohol testing as set forth hereinabove shall have his employment immediately terminated with no further action necessary.

So ordered on this, the 3rd day of December 1990.

Aids Policy For Employees and/or Applicants for Employment

The best medical evidence available shows that the acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) may not be transmitted through casual contact. According to the Surgeon General of the United States:

- You cannot get AIDS from casual social contact; casual social contact such as shaking hands, hugging, social kissing, crying, coughing or sneezing will not transmit the AIDS virus. Nor has AIDS been contracted from swimming in pools or bathing in hot tubs or from eating in restaurants (even if a restaurant worker has AIDS or carries the AIDS virus). AIDS is not contracted from sharing bed linens, towels, and cups, straws, dishes or any other eating utensils. You cannot get AIDS from toilets, doorknobs, telephones, office machinery or household furniture.

It therefore continues to the policy of the program to provide equal employment opportunities to those individuals who have or have been exposed to AIDS or the HIV virus. In keeping with this policy, the program is committed to the health and safety of all its employees.

It is the program's sincere desire that all employees who have or have been exposed to AIDS will be able to continue to work. The program will make reasonable accommodations to help those individuals with AIDS and those who are HIV positive to continue in employment.

The program will treat those employees who have or have been exposed to AIDS in the same manner as employees with other life-threatening illnesses in regard to program-provided benefits. If anyone should have questions about this policy or the program provided benefits, he/she should contact the Head Start Director.

Any information concerning an individual's diagnosis of or exposure to AIDS will be strictly confidential.

In addition, it is the policy of the program that all employees are allowed to work in a dignified, professional and peaceful work environment. Therefore, no employee shall engage in the harassment of any other employee on the basis of AIDS or the exposure to AIDS. Any employee violating this rule may be subject to corrective action, up to and including discharge.

For more information about AIDS or the HIV virus, please contact the local chapter of the Red Cross.

Smoke Free Workplace Policy and Procedure

Program Instruction: As per the Program Instruction #ACYF-PI-HS-95-04 ("Establishing a Smoke-Free Environment in Head Start Programs"), all Head Start grantees and delegate agencies are required to create smoke-free environments and to eliminate exposure to tobacco smoke by children, staff and parents in the Head Start Program.

Policy: Due to the acknowledged hazards, both to adult nonsmokers and especially to young children arising from exposure to environmental tobacco smoke, it shall be the policy of the Five County Child Development Program, Inc. to provide a smoke-free environment for staff, children and participants. This policy covers the smoking of any tobacco product, the use of smokeless tobacco and applies to both employees and non-employee participants of the Five County Child Development Program, Inc.

Five County Child Development Program, Inc. will serve as an example to other child care and community agencies. Five County Child Development Program, Inc. staff and volunteers will serve as role models by not smoking or using smokeless tobacco in the presence of children, parents, and participants. Therefore;

1. There will be no smoking or use of smokeless tobacco on the premises utilized by the Five County Child Development Program, Inc., inside or outside, at any time.
2. There will be no smoking or use of smokeless tobacco in any of the Five County Child Development Program, Inc.'s vehicles at any time. There will be no tobacco use in personal vehicles when transporting persons on Five County authorized business.
3. There will be no smoking or use of smokeless tobacco by staff or volunteers when children are present. This includes both indoor and outdoor activities. Field trips, walks, and other off-site activities will be smoke-free to the fullest extent possible. There will be no smoking or use of smokeless tobacco by staff or volunteers during off-site activities. Because of the need to maintain a high staff/child ration during field trips, staff or volunteers will not leave the children for the purpose of a smoking break.
4. Staff, parents and participants will not smoke or use smokeless tobacco during on-site conferences. Staff will not smoke or use smokeless tobacco and will request that parents not smoke during home visits. Parents will be informed of the smoke free request prior to the home visits.
5. The Five County Child Development Program, Inc.'s Smoke-Free Policy shall apply to all off-site activities and functions.

Procedures: The following procedures will be utilized to implement the Smoke Free Policy:

1. Staff will be informed of this policy through signs posted in Five County's facilities and vehicles, the Personnel Policies and Procedures and orientation and training provided by Administration and their supervisors.
2. Volunteers and parents, and participants will be informed through the following methods;
 - The policy will be stated in the Parent Handbook
 - Signs will be posted in Agency facilities and vehicles
 - Signs will be posted on Parent Bulletin Boards at times throughout the year.
 - Announcements will be made during parent orientation, center committee meetings, and Policy Council training.
 - Explanations of the policy will be attached to field trip and home visit notifications
 - Other communication mechanisms deemed appropriate by the Head Start Director.
3. The Five County Child Development Program, Inc. will assist staffs who wish to quit smoking by facilitating access to recommended smoking cessation programs and materials.

Any violation of this policy will result in one (1) month suspension, without pay, for the first violation, two (2) months' suspension without pay, for the second violation and immediate termination for the third violation of this policy.

Transportation Policies

1. Anyone driving a bus/van while transporting children must meet requirements as set forth by the State of Mississippi Department of safety, Motor Vehicles Division and agency policies.
2. The driver of a van/bus, while transporting children, must be accompanied by another adult whose duty it shall be to help children on and off the vehicle, escort them across the street or road and maintain 'order and assure all safety procedures are followed on the vehicle.
3. The number of persons on a van/bus should not exceed the maximum of which it is designed.
4. Drivers are cautioned to follow safety rules and regulations at all times and to obey all traffic laws.
5. Drivers are to avoid backing on to a public road if at all possible.
6. The Head Teacher/Center Director in each center is responsible for assuring that vehicles are properly services and cleaned and must submit all monthly bills for the cost of maintenance and operation.
7. Vans/buses may be used to transport Head Start staff, parents and volunteers to meetings.
8. State law governing school buses will apply to vans/buses operated by Head Start.
9. Drivers must report' all accidents immediately to the Head Teacher/Center Director regardless of the damage or bodily injury.
10. It is mandatory that all bus drivers, teachers and assistant teachers in counties where bus transportation is provided have a Mississippi CDL.

11. Request for the use of van/buses by staff of the centers must be processed by the Transportation Director.
12. Unauthorized use of the vans/buses is prohibited and any use other than for Head Start Program purposes is prohibited.
13. A vehicle control sheet must be submitted to the central office each month.
14. Vehicle maintenance schedules and bus attendance logs must be kept on the bus. Center bus/van drivers, on a monthly basis, submit bus attendance logs.
15. Smoking is prohibited on buses/vans at all times.
16. Head Teachers/Center Directors are responsible for bus/van drivers and monitors schedules, with a copy sent to the Transportation Director.
17. Before operating a vehicle, bus/van drivers must submit a copy of their commercial drivers' license to the Central Office.
18. Bus/van Drivers are required to attend CDL training and all other Head Start transportation trainings/workshops.

An employee who knowingly violates the above stated provisions shall immediately be placed on probation for a specific period of time by the Head Start Director. If there should be a second infraction of this type, the supervisor will immediately recommend dismissal of the employee to the Director.

At no time will a bus driver transport a child without a monitor. If a monitor is not available, the driver will immediately report this to the center supervisor, record this fact on the bus/van attendance log, and the supervisor or office staff will inform parents that the bus will be late or that children will not be transported on that day because there is no bus/van monitor.

If at all possible, regularly assigned drivers and/or monitors should notify the center supervisor a day in advance of when they will be absent. In case of an emergency, these employees are responsible for calling the Center Director/Head Teacher as early in the workday as possible. Staff who are unavailable to drive or ride as monitors and do not notify the Center Director/Head Teacher will be considered to be derelict in their duties and will be disciplined accordingly to the agency's policies and procedures handbook.

Center Based Option

The Head Start Program serves families with the Center-Based Option. The Center Based Option serves approximately twenty children in each classroom five days a week.

1. Hours of Operation

All centers should be open for operation by 7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m., unless otherwise designated by the Head Start Director. Some children may remain in the center until 3:30 p.m. These children arriving early and staying late must be picked up and delivered, agency transportation will not be provided. Children enrolled in Head Start during the regular hours of 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. will be provided transportation to and from the facilities. Assigned staff should arrive at center at least 10 minutes before the first child is scheduled to arrive. Assigned staff must remain in the center until the last child is picked up.

2. Closing of center

A center that plans to close due to special events, home visits, etc. must receive prior approval from their supervisor. Parents should be notified of any center closing at least two days and preferably one week prior to the closing, except for closing due to bad weather and/or emergencies.

3. Staff Regulations

- Smoking is prohibited in the centers at all times.
- Use of physical punishment and/or total isolation is not consistent with the Head Start Performance Standards and will not be tolerated. Such action is grounds for dismissal of an employee.
- Tardiness -consistent attendance and punctuality are considered imperative ingredients in the agency's business operation, and therefore an integral part of each employee's performance standards based on objective measurements. Poor, uncertain or irregular attendance produces disruptive results for the agency's operations, lowers overall productivity and continuity of work, and often is burdensome to other employees.

Employees are expected to and required to report to their designated work location at the prescribed time and manner in which work activity' is to commence. Tardiness, unexcused absence, or failure to report as required may result in disciplinary action. In the event an employee cannot report to work as scheduled, the employee must so notify supervisory personnel at least one hour prior to scheduled reporting time or be prepared to provide evidence of extenuating circumstances. In all cases of an employee's absence or tardiness, the employee shall provide supervisory personnel with a truthful reason for the absence and, if applicable, the probable duration of absence. If circumstance render the absence duration speculative or unknown, the absent employee will be required to call supervisory personnel daily to report the status of the absence.

Excessive absenteeism, regardless of reason(s), that render an employee insufficiently available for work will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to determine the merits of correctional retention or termination.

- Reporting Attendance: The Head Teacher or Center Director will be responsible for reporting the attendance of the staff to the Education/Early Childhood Development Director and seeing that all center personnel clock in accurate time and attendance reports. Each teacher is responsible for keeping a monthly attendance log on enrolled children.
- Dress Code: Staff should always wear neat and comfortable clothing while working. Staff must practice good personal hygiene at all times. It should be remembered that staff are representatives of the Head Start program, and are expected to dress and act accordingly at all times (see agency dress code).

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT POLICY

Five County provides child development services to preschool children from low-income families. The agency recognizes its responsibilities to the Head Start children and families served by the agency. The agency is required to cooperate with child protective agencies to identify and report known and suspected abuse and neglect in accordance with state laws, to designate a staff person to handle duties related to abuse and neglect and to provide orientation and training to parents and staff on identification and reporting of abuse and neglect. To assure that these requirements are met Five County has established the following policies and procedures related to Child Abuse and Neglect.

USE OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT AND ISOLATION

In accordance ACYF issuance HS 4.02, the utilization of corporal punishment and total isolation of the child is not consistent with Head Start objectives and cannot be tolerated in Five County Child Development Program. Corporal punishment is defined as the use of physical force as discipline measures. This includes, but is not limited to spanking, slapping, pulling of hair, withholding of food, basic needs or participation in special events, name-calling, ridicule, or any form of demeaning, harsh or frightening treatment is strictly forbidden. Isolation in which the child is left totally unattended is unacceptable. Isolation includes, but is not restricted to confining the child to a small area, retaining the child in the classroom when other children go out to play or restricting the child from lunch with his/her classmates. If it is necessary to isolate a child from a group, adult supervision will be maintained and the isolation period will be minimal. Performance standards prohibit the use of meals as punishment, thus isolation at mealtime is forbidden. A more detailed explanation of the agency's procedures is included in the agency's Child Abuse Plan.

Any staff member utilizing corporal punishment and/or total isolation of children will result in immediate termination of employment.

ALLEGATION/SUSPECT OF CHILD ABUSE AND/OR NEGLECT BY EMPLOYEES

It is imperative that the agency adhere to all "Child Safety" measures and guidelines to assure that each child receives the best care and educational support possible in a safe and quality learning environment. Thus, the agency cannot tolerate abuse or maltreatment of children at any level of care. Our Child Abuse Plan gives a partial listing of child abuse and neglect categories that must be reported, in accordance with federal and state laws. All Head Start employees are required to report child abuse and/or neglect, no matter whether the abuse occurred on or away from the Head Start premises, to the 1-800-222-8000 hot line, in accordance with the agency's Child Abuse Plan.

To assure child safety while in our care it is a requirement of the agency that two staff persons must be together with the children at all times, this is particularly inclusive of bathroom breaks. There must never be a situation where there is only one teacher or other staff person alone with a child at anytime. If the classroom teacher or assistant must be out of the classroom for any reason arrangements must be made for staff support of another person.

Violation of this policy will result in personnel actions being taken. For the first offense written reprimand will be given; second offense the employee(s) will be suspended for two (2) weeks; third offense the employee(s) will be terminated from employment with the agency. All staff must be involved in securing the safety of all children served by the agency.

Any staff suspected of child abuse and/or neglect, including corporal punishment and isolation, in any form will be immediately removed from agency premises until such time as an investigation has been completed. The Head Start Director will place the staff member on administrative leave, with pay, pending the investigation. If the employee is found guilty their employment with the agency will be terminated. If the employee is found not guilty he/she will be allowed to return to their position. All allegations/ suspects of child abuse and neglect will be placed in the employee's personnel file.

Accusations of child abuse or neglect, including corporal punishment and isolation, against a Head Start employee by a parent, staff, volunteer, etc. should be immediately reported to the Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-222-8000 and then to the Family/Community Partnership Director or Head Start Director. No investigation of the allegation should be initiated unless approved by the Head Start Director. The agency must report each allegation to the Child Abuse Hotline, Licensure Agency and the Regional Office. One or more of these agencies may handle or become involved in the investigation if warranted and may also pursue legal actions against the employee(s) involved in the allegation.

Agency Procedures for Reporting Suspected Child Abuse must be followed in accordance with the agency's Child Abuse Plan. Any employee of the agency that fails to follow these reporting guidelines will be terminated from employment with the agency immediately.

CELL PHONE POLICY

PURPOSE

The use of personal cell phones while at work may present a hazard or distraction to the user, children, other staff, and families. This policy is meant to ensure that cell phone use while at work is both safe and does not disrupt center/agency operations. Unless otherwise authorized, employees may only use personal cell phones for an emergency

CENTER LEVEL

Five County Child Development Program, Inc.'s classrooms and activity areas are designated Cell Phone Free Areas. It is important that children receive the full attention of teachers, parents and other staff while attending the Head Start centers to assure that they receive quality services, proper supervision and are in a safe environment. Staff will keep personal cell phones turned off or sounds off and put in separate areas (purse, backpacks, etc., not on your person) while in the classrooms or on the playground with children. Personal text messaging or listening to phone messages or phone calls is not permitted (even during nap time) while on duty with the children. Teacher may bring cell phone for emergency and safety use only while on field trips, nature walks, bus routes and evacuation drills. Center Supervisors and Head Teachers may carry their cell phone in the classroom with the sound off at their professional discretion; however, the use of cell phones may not interfere with the day-to-day supervision and interaction with children and families. Classroom staff must either wait until their break or make sure the classroom is covered before stepping out of the classroom to answer a call or text message. Exceptions will be made in cases of personal emergencies only as permitted by the Center Director, Education Director or Head Start Director.

DRIVING

Employees must adhere to all federal, state and local rules and regulations regarding the use of cell phones while driving. Accordingly, employees must not use cell phones if such conduct is prohibited by law, regulations or other ordinance. If you are not sure whether the use of a cell phone while driving is prohibited in a particular area, please check with the Transportation Director.

Employees should not use hand held cell phones for business purposes while driving. Should an employee need to make a business call while driving, he should locate a lawfully designated area to park and make the call or use a hand-free speaker device such as speaker phone or earpiece.

USE OF PERSONAL CELL PHONE FOR AGENCY BUSINESS

An employee must obtain prior approval from the Head Start Director to be reimbursed for the use of their personal cell phone for necessary agency business calls. If approval is received from the Head Start Director, reimbursement may be requested, excluding call plan charges, equipment charges, taxes, surcharges and regulatory fees. Employee must identify the approved business expenses on the detailed cell phone bill and submit the original bill with the request for reimbursement. The employee will be reimbursed for approved costs related to each business call either by applying a "per minute cost" if the call is within plan minutes or by actual charges if the call occurs in excess of the plan minutes. The "Per minute cost" will be calculated by dividing the monthly calling plan charges by the minutes allowed. Multiplying the cost-per-minute times the business minutes used on the personal cell phone determined the total owed the employee. Employees who were offered and refused agency cell phones will not be reimbursed for any calls made on their personal cell phones.

AGENCY ISSUED CELL PHONES

Employees issued agency cell phones must be approved by the Head Start Director. Agency cell phones are provided for necessary, official agency business purposes only. Only one cell phone will be approved for each qualified employee. The Finance Department will coordinate repair, purchase of accessories/new equipment and plan changes with the Head Start Director and Transportation Director. Employees will be responsible for the safekeeping, care and custody of the cell phone assigned to them. Cell phones are Five County property and are to

be returned to the Finance Director when employee separates from the agency or no longer require use of the cell phone. Five County cell phones cannot be transferred to private ownership. Cell phone numbers are owned by the Agency and cannot be transferred to private ownership. The Finance Department is responsible for reviewing employee call detail reports and for collecting reimbursement for occasional incidental or emergency use of Five County cell phones.

Employee reimbursement is to occur within 30 calendar days of the statement date. The employee will reimburse for costs relat