

# Health Information Protection Policy

Policy No. 305

## Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that children, families, volunteers and staff persons living with a chronic communicable disease (HIV/AIDS, hepatitis B or C, or any other disease which has special protection under law), enrolled in Early Head Start, Head Start or ECEAP, are treated in a non-discriminatory manner.

## Enrollment Process

Children with a chronic communicable disease as defined above will be enrolled without restrictions in Early Head Start, Head Start and ECEAP.

## Privacy and Confidentiality

1. A person's health status is confidential.
  - a. A staff person, family member, volunteer or parent/guardian of a child is not obligated to inform Early Head Start, Head Start or ECEAP of their chronic communicable disease as defined above.
2. An individual's decision to disclose their health status or the status of their child shall be done only with their written consent.
  - a. A custodial parent/guardian who discloses their child's chronic communicable disease status will be asked to sign a written release of information form indicating the person to whom the information has been released and designating any other persons to whom it may be shared.
  - b. Disclosure to staff will be limited to the minimum needed to ensure proper care of the child.
  - c. All consent forms used must be HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) compliant.

## Documentation

1. Records documenting specially protected health information will be placed in a separate locked file that will ensure the privacy of the persons involved. No reference will be placed in Family Files.
2. Protected health information **will not** be released to any outside agency unless a signed written release of information specific to the condition is obtained from the parent/guardian for each request. A general authorization for release of medical or other information is **not** sufficient for this purpose.
3. Confidentiality Policies regarding storage and maintenance of all health documentation must be followed.

## Participation

1. Staff persons, families, volunteers and children with a chronic communicable disease shall be allowed to participate in all Early Head Start, Head Start and ECEAP activities to the extent that their health permits.
2. Children with symptomatic disease will be provided the most appropriate child care/learning environment as directed by the child's health care provider, health care team and family.

## Staff Training

As the health status of any staff person, family member or child may be unknown; all staff persons in Early Head Start, Head Start and ECEAP who may have contact with body fluids shall be educated about Universal Precautions.

Approved by Policy Council: July 19, 2016

Approved by Board of Directors: August 13, 2016