

# POLICY COUNCIL HANDBOOK

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[\(2018-19\)](#)

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## **Welcome to Policy Council**

We are very happy that you are willing to make the commitment to be a Policy Council Representative.

You are a very important part of the PACT program and we congratulate you.

Parents are very special to the PACT Head Start program. It takes everyone working together to help your child get the most out of our program services.

Some ways that parents can participate are:



**Policy Council Representatives**

**Family Events**

**Parent Committee Members**

**Decision Makers**

**Inkind Donations**

**Planners**

**Classroom Volunteers**

**Field Trip Volunteers**

## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Parent and Child Together (PACT) for West Central Illinois is a local, not-for-profit, tax exempt corporation providing health and human services to young children and their families. PACT has been in existence since October of 1978. PACT is the Grantee for Head Start and Early Head Start programs in Brown, Pike, Hancock, Schuyler, Cass, Scott, McDonough and rural Adams counties. The agency receives funds from the United States Department of Health and Human Services to cover the costs of 80% of its Head Start and Early Head Start programs. The other 20% of program costs are obtained locally through donated funds, space, materials, and services. PACT receives state funds from the Illinois Department of Human Services to provide subsidized child care for eligible families. PACT also receives local United Way funds to assist the agency in providing family focused services.

PACT's Head Start, Early Head Start and Child Care programs provide educational, health, and social services to young children and their families. PACT services also include parent education and family and community involvement activities. PACT provides services to approximately 326 pregnant women and families with children age birth through five years.

Head Start services are provided through Center Based programs. The Head Start Center Based approach is classroom focused, with children attending classes four or five days per week. 5 hour, 5 day per week classes are provided at Camp Point. Macomb offers both full day/year round, 5 day per week classrooms and morning and afternoon, 9 month, 3.5 hour, 4 day per week classrooms. Pittsfield offers both full day/9-month, 5 day per week classrooms and morning and afternoon, 9 month, 3.5 hour, 4 day per week classrooms. The Beardstown center offers morning and afternoon 9 month, 3.5 hour sessions, 4 days per week. Center Based services include teacher/parent meetings at least four times a year. The Center Based approach also uses Family Advocates to provide ongoing social service support and parenting activities.

Early Head Start services are provided through Home Based and Center Based programs. In the Early Head Start Home Based approach, offered in all eight counties, teachers visit assigned families once a week, for one and a half hours. The focus is to provide appropriate developmental services to infants and toddlers, with active parent participation. Home Based services are supplemented by parent/child activities held twice a month. The Early Head Start Center Based approach is classroom focused, with children attending the center on a daily basis, five days per week, for full day services. Center Based programming for Early Head Start is available at the Pittsfield, Carthage, Camp Point and Macomb centers. Services are provided for pregnant women in Early Head Start in the home based option. Women may choose between regular and intensive services during their pregnancy. When the child is born, they then receive Early Head Services. All Early Head Start services are provided on a year round basis.

The Child Care program currently provides services for families in McDonough County. The Child Care program is provided through a collaborative partnership with Western Illinois University in Macomb. The Child Care program on the WIU Campus is open to WIU students' children, Head Start families, and to the general public if there are sufficient openings.

Family events for Head Start and Child Care programs are held on a regular basis, throughout PACT's service area. The meetings provide parents with opportunities to be involved in program development, listen to presentations regarding child, family, and self- development, participate in parent/child activities, and promote parent socialization and community awareness/involvement.

PACT currently employs 93 full and part-time Head Start and Child Care staff who work throughout the eight county service area. The PACT Central Office is located in Mt. Sterling, Illinois. Program satellite offices are located throughout the service area.

Means of ensuring program quality include annual self-assessment, independent financial audits, and monitoring visits from funding sources, strong ongoing staff training and technical assistance, and provisions for parents to participate in the administration of PACT programs.

For more information about PACT, call or write:

Parent and Child Together (PACT) for  
West Central Illinois  
300 S. Capitol, P.O. Box 231  
Mt. Sterling, Illinois 62353  
(217) 773-3903

Visit our web page at [www.pactheadstart.com](http://www.pactheadstart.com)

Like us on Face Book at Parent and Child Together-PACT for West Central Illinois

## **Our program philosophy.....PACT BELIEVES....**

Parents are their children's first and most important teacher.

Parents care about their children and will put forth strong efforts to improve their child's well-being.

Parents can and do learn new and better ways of interacting with their children given sufficient information and encouragement.

School readiness begins with an individualized approach to children's health and safety.

Resources for health and human services in West Central Illinois are limited and must be delivered without duplication to produce the most effective results.

Involvement of parents and the community in decision-making increases the commitment to the program while enhancing the quality of decision-making.

School readiness begins with and individualized approach to children's health and safety.

### **Our Mission.....**

**The mission of Parent and Child Together (PACT) for West Central Illinois is to provide a comprehensive program of education, health, and social services to children and their families, developing life-long learners.**

We believe that by working together we can further the vision and the intent of the agency's missions by:

Affirming program parents in their parenting role, and working with them to improve their parenting skills.

Providing program parents with information and encouragement to increase their knowledge of their rights and responsibilities as parents.

Providing a program that will allow enrolled children and families to maximize their potential.

Providing opportunities for parents to become involved in the program decision-making process.

Providing opportunities for socialization for all enrolled children and their families.

Providing opportunities for children with disabilities to be enrolled in the program and to participate in all aspects of the program in order to meet their individual needs.

Providing a means of coordinating existing services for enrolled families to meet their individual needs.

Providing screening assessments designed to enhance early identification and treatment of potential problem areas for enrolled children.

Providing a cost-effective program that benefits all families involved.

Providing employment opportunities to enrolled families.

DATE	EVENT	AREAS SERVED	# SERVED
10/78	Head Start Program funded to serve three unserved areas	Counties of Adams, Hancock, Pike	81
1/79	Program fully operational, full enrollment		
8/79	Head Start Program funded to serve two additional areas	Counties of Brown and Schuyler	98
10/80	PACT Board established as a non-profit corporation		
7/81	PACT becomes funded grantee for Head Start Program		
8/81	PACT selected as Model Home Base Training Site		
7/82	PACT Head Start Program funded to replace summer-only program	County of Cass (Beardstown)	106
7/83	PACT Head Start Program funded to serve additional Cass unserved area	outside Beardstown	121
7/84	PACT Head Start Program funded to serve two additional unserved areas	Counties of Scott & rural McDonough	145
1985/ 86	PACT selected as interim and permanent grantee for 2 counties	Counties of Sangamon and Morgan	357
12/85	PACT selected to contract with public school district to provide Pre-Kindergarten services	Central School District	377
5/90	PACT relinquishes 2 counties, Sangamon & Morgan, and returns to all Home Base Program		217
9/90	PACT expands the Head Start Program & contracts with 2 more school districts to provide Pre-K services	Brown Co. and Griggsville Schools	241
9/91	PACT expands the Head Start Program & contracts with an additional school dist. to provide Pre-K services	Southeastern School District	265
10/92	PACT receives Center Base expansion dollars	Pike County	283
1/93	PACT expands Pre-K services	Mendon School District	298
7/93	PACT expands Head Start Program	Pike County	316
9/93	PACT expands Pre-K services in districts in joint application		346
8/94	PACT receives Head Start conversion funds	Beardstown	346
8/95	PACT expands Pre-K services	Griggsville/Perry School Dist.	349
8/96	PACT expands Pre-K services	Pikeland, W. Pike, Pl. Hill, Barry	439
9/97	PACT expands Pre-K services	Brown County School District	445
10/97	PACT converts Home Base areas to Combination-Option Programs	Bushnell and Camp Point/Golden	450
7/98	PACT opens first Child Care Center	Cass County	470
9/98	PACT enters into a Community Partnership with WIU to open its 2 <sup>nd</sup> Child Care Center	McDonough County	577
10/98	PACT expands Pre-K services (additional classroom)	Griggsville/Perry School District	589
5/99	PACT opens 3 <sup>rd</sup> Child Care Center	Pike County	609

7/99	PACT expands Pre-K services	All Existing Pre-K School Districts	701
7/99	PACT is selected to contract with School Districts to provide Birth to Three Parental Training Program	All Pre-K School Districts (except SE)	1136
5/00	PACT closes child care rooms in Beardstown and Pittsfield centers		1096
6/00	Illinois State Board of Education mandates state funded programs (Pre-K, P.T.) return to individual School Districts		347
7/00	PACT converts two home based areas into agency's first full day Head Start classroom, located in the Pittsfield center	Pike County	347
8/00	PACT expands current classroom services to include agency's first full day, year round classrooms, located in the Macomb and Beardstown centers.	McDonough & Cass Counties	347
7/01	PACT is funded for Early Head Start to serve 52 pregnant women and children aged birth to three in Hancock, McDonough, & Pike Counties.	McDonough, Hancock, & Pike Counties	399
10/03	PACT Celebrates the 25 <sup>th</sup> year of operation.		
9/06	PACT participates in grant with Regional Office of Education to place certified Teachers in some Head Start classrooms, funded by Illinois Preschool for all.	Hancock and McDonough Counties	
8/09	PACT in partnership with the Hancock and McDonough County Regional Office of Education, is funded to provide Even Start services to 25 families.	Hancock and McDonough Counties	424
12/09	PACT is funded for an EHS Expansion grant to provide services to an additional 84 children in previously unserved counties.	Rural Adams, Brown, Cass, Schuyler, and Scott Counties	508
7/13	Head Start nationwide received 5.27% budget reduction, forcing PACT to reduce enrollment in Head Start by 38 children, with center based services no longer offered in Carthage and reducing Home Based services by 20 enrollment slots		470
7/14	Congress restores the sequestration reductions. PACT applies for an Early Head Start conversion, resulting in 267 Head Start enrollment slots and 154 Early Head Start slots. An additional EHS infant/toddler classroom is opened in the Pittsfield Center. PACT implements dual service EHS/HS home based teachers.	Entire 8 county service area	421
7/15	PACT is required to come into compliance with the Affordable Care Act, resulting in a reduction in enrollment of 40 children (20 home based & 20 from Beardstown Center) in the Head Start program.		381



# **SECTION II**

## **1301-HS Standards for Program Governance**

**Part 1301.3 Policy Council and Policy Committee**

Head Start Performance Standard Number	Who is Responsible	Who Implements	Timelines or Ongoing	Form Name
1301.3	HB Education Coor.	HB Education Coor, FA's, HB Teachers		

**(a) Establishing policy councils and policy committees. Each agency must establish and maintain a policy council responsible for the direction of the Head Start program at the agency level, and a policy committee at the delegate level. If an agency delegate’s operational responsibility for the entire Head Start or Early Head Start program to one delegate agency, the policy council and policy committee may be the same body.**

**(b) Composition.**

**(1) A program must establish a policy council in accordance with section 642(c)(2)(B) of the Act, or a policy committee at the delegate level in accordance with section 642(c)(3) of the Act, as early in the program year as possible. Parents of children currently enrolled in each program option must be proportionately represented on the policy council and on the policy committee at the delegate level.**

Policy Council members are elected at Family Event Orientations and will have an orientation meeting soon after elections are completed. Both the Parent Committee and Policy Council members serve terms until the new Parent Committee and Policy Council members are elected (approximately 1 year). New Policy Council members are seated and new officers are elected the first meeting after Policy Council Orientation. Community Representatives to Policy Council are elected in September or as openings occur throughout the year.

**PACT POLICY COUNCIL COMPOSITION**

Composition as approved by the Board and Policy Council is as follows:

# PACT Policy Council

## Representatives

HS = Head Start

EHS= Early Head Start

<b>Macomb</b>  <b>4 HS CB</b> <b>1 EHS CB</b>	<b>Beardstown</b>  <b>3 HS CB</b>	<b>Pittsfield</b>  <b>3 HS CB</b> <b>1 EHS CB</b>
<b>Carthage</b>  <b>1 EHS CB</b>	<b>Camp Point</b>  <b>3 HS CB</b> <b>1 EHS CB</b>	<b>Home Based</b> <b>Area 1</b> <b>1</b> <b>Area 2</b> <b>1</b> <b>Area 3</b> <b>1</b> <b>Area 4</b> <b>1</b> <b>Area 5</b> <b>1</b> <b>Area 6</b> <b>1</b> <b>Area 7</b> <b>1</b> <b>Area 8</b> <b>1</b> <b>Area 9</b> <b>1</b>

<b>TOTAL=31</b> <b>13 HS Reps</b> <b>13 EHS reps</b> <b>5 Com. Reps</b>	<b>Community Representatives</b> <b>1-PACT Board Member</b> <b>1 Past EHS/HS Parent</b> <b>1-PACT Child Care Parent</b> <b>2-Community at Large</b> <b>(May be past Parents)</b>
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### Center Based Representatives:

New Center Based Policy Council Representatives are elected at each center during the Family Events Orientation held in the fall. Once Representatives are elected the Family Advocates will contact the HB Education Coordinator with contact information of the Representatives. Documentation of contact information is made at the meeting to reflect the election results by the Family Advocate(s) who will forward them to the HB Education Coordinator.

During the year, individuals interested in becoming Policy Council Representatives or Representatives that needed re-elected, (due to missed Policy Council meetings) will go to the Committee meeting for Family Events that are held at least once quarterly at the centers to get elected to the Policy Council. Individuals interested in becoming Policy Council Representatives must notify the Family Advocate(s) at the center closest to them that they are interested. The interested individual will attend the Committee meeting to ask to be elected. Once the individual is elected, it is noted in the Committee minutes. The Family Advocate will then contact the HB Education Coordinator with contact information and name of the new Representative. The Family Advocate will let the new Representative know the date and time of the next Policy Council meeting. A packet will be sent to the new representative from the central office with the information for the next meeting. The Representative will then attend the next Policy Council meeting that is held monthly at Mt. Sterling.

### Home Based Representatives

There are nine Home Based Areas. Each Home Based Area will elect one Representative from their area to represent them on Policy Council. Home Based Areas will attend a Center Family Event Orientation that is held in the fall of each year. Home Based areas who are not normally within a center, will attend the Family Event Orientation closest to them. When Home Based Representatives are elected at the Family Event Orientation, the Family Advocates will notify the HB Education Coordinator with the contact information of the new Representative. Documentation of the election should be noted on the Parent Committee minutes.

During the year, when representatives need to be elected, the HB Teacher will make a ballot sheet marked yes/no, and have the parent write something about why they want to represent that area and sign it plus date it. The Teacher will take the ballot to all the home visits and explain what it is to the parents. If there are 2 parents in the home, then allow both of them to vote.

The Teacher will place the ballots in an envelope marked confidential and send to the HB Education Coordinator at the central office. The Teacher is responsible for making sure all contact information is forwarded to the HB Education Coordinator. The ballots will be kept on file at the central office.

Once ballots are counted, the HB Education Coordinator will send the information to the Teacher, who will let the parent know they have been elected. A packet will be sent to the new representative from the central office with the information for the next meeting.

### Board Representative

The Governing Board elects a representative to the Policy Council and the Policy Council elects a representative to the Board. Ongoing communication flows between the Policy Council and the governing Board in this way. Minutes from Policy Council meetings are mailed to Board Members in meeting Packets.

### Policy Council By-Laws

The Policy Council has a set of established By-Laws. The By-Laws ensure the Council is aware of their roles and responsibilities, procedures, and federal requirements concerning their capacity and function. The council is trained at an orientation session after their election in the fall and before they officially conduct business. During the orientation the By-Laws are reviewed and given to the Council as part of their Handbook. The By-Laws are reviewed annually in April by the current Policy Council. Any changes can be made by a two thirds vote of members present. The By-Laws are then submitted to the governing board for approval.

### **Policy Council Operating Procedures**

1. The group present at the Policy Council meeting sets the next meeting date.
2. Arrangements for the meeting place are made with PACT's HB Education Coordinator.
3. Arrangements for the meal at Policy Council meeting are made by the HB Education Coordinator and Office Manager.
4. The Executive Director, HB Education Coordinator, and Chairperson prepare meeting agendas.
5. Minutes from the Policy Council Secretary will be typed and made available for review at the next Policy Council meeting by PACT's Office Manager.
6. Copies of approved Policy Council minutes are filed in the Policy Council Meeting file by the Office Manager. Approved minutes are sent to Center Based Site Supervisors, HB Teachers and Family Advocates. These minutes are shared at center Family Events, socializations and team meetings as appropriate and posted on Parent Boards.

7. Policy Council members receive information about upcoming meetings, 7 to 10 days before meeting date to give location, time, date, directions and reminders about babysitting arrangements, including forms for reimbursement and inkind.
8. Typed agendas will be sent to each Policy Council member at least 7 to 10 days prior to the next scheduled Council meeting and extra copies will be forwarded to the Executive Director, the HB Education Coordinator, and filed in the Policy Council Meeting file by the Office Manager. Agendas will list any training to be conducted.
9. Draft budgets, results of program self-assessments, information from Quarterly Reports, and communication from federal and state regulatory agencies are mailed at the appropriate times to all members by the Executive Director and Office Manager.
10. Policy Council meeting is held.
11. Any “handouts” distributed at the Policy Council meeting will be mailed, by the HB Education Coordinator to those absent from the meeting.
12. HB Education Coordinator sends “all staff” email of the next Policy Council meeting time and date and Office Manager puts date on calendar.
13. After each Council meeting, the Council Secretary will forward the meeting minutes to the HB Education Coordinator for review and typing by the Office Manager. Minutes will contain documentation of any training conducted in conjunction with the meeting.
14. The HB Education Coordinator is responsible for disseminating information on Policy Council actions to other staff as appropriate. Personnel files will be given to the Administrative Assistant the day after the meeting.
15. Minutes of the previous Policy Council meeting are amended, if needed, and approved at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Council.
16. All training materials will be kept on file in the HB Education Coordinator’s Office.

## POLICY COUNCIL PROCESS TIME TABLE

Policy Council Timeline for Training and Input to Program Policies and Procedures		
Month	Training	Program Input/Approval/Information
Aug/Sept	Elections and Orientation at Family Events Representation to Policy Council Roles and Responsibilities Parent Engagement in Head Start	SOPM revisions Nomination/election of Community Reps
October		Strategic Plan for PACT
October Orientation	Policy Council handbook Introduction to Head Start Terms Confidentiality/ Standards of Conduct Officer job descriptions Resolution of Internal Disputes Meeting procedures including Robert's Rules of Order Conflict of Interest	
November	Child Abuse and Neglect Overview of Fiscal Procedures and Reports Conference procedures Parent Training Money Federal Regulations and Work Plans	Elect Officers/appoint committee members Financial and Inkind Reports Personnel Annual Audit
December	Self-Assessment Overview	Child Outcomes
January		Semi-Annual Report Recruitment/Eligibility Selection Criteria/child
February	Eligibility Training	Agency Training Plan
March		Grant Input and Approval outcomes
April		Review of Policy Council By-Laws
May		Work Plan Changes
June		Child Outcomes
July		Semi-Annual Report

**Additional items as they occur:**

Additional Grant applications

Audit Report  
Self-Assessment Corrections  
Community Assessment  
PIR  
Communication and guidance from the Secretary of DHS

**Monthly action and reports on:**

Finances including credit card, child care and USDA  
Inkind  
Enrollment and Attendance  
Personnel

**(2) The program must ensure members of the policy council, and of the policy committee at the delegate level, do not have a conflict of interest pursuant to sections 642(c)(2)(C) and 642(c)(3)(B) of the Act. Staff may not serve on the policy council or policy committee at the delegate level except parents who occasionally substitute as staff. In the case of tribal grantees, this exclusion applies only to tribal staff who work in areas directly related to or which directly impact administrative, fiscal, or programmatic issues.**

Grantee staff (or members of their immediate families) may not serve on Policy Council.

Policy Council members are required to sign a Policy Council Code of Conduct signifying that they do not have a conflict of interest with the Head Start agency, and may not receive compensation for serving on the Policy Council or for providing services to the Head Start agency, including employment.

**(c) Duties and responsibilities.**

**(1) A policy council is responsible for activities specified at section 642(c)(2)(D) of the Act. A policy committee must approve and submit to the delegate agency its decisions in each of the following areas referenced at section 642(c)(2)(D)(i) through (vii) of the Act.**

While the Board and the Policy Council share responsibility for many areas of the program, such as: approving financial and in-kind reports, grant applications, results of self-assessment, the audit, and long- and short-term goals and objectives, they also have separate responsibilities and functions. The responsibilities of both parties are outlined in section 1301 Program Governance of the Work Plans for PACT for WCI, as well as in the By-Laws of the Board of Directors and By-Laws of the Policy Council. It is the responsibility of the Executive Director to ensure that both parties follow the approved By-Laws. The Executive Director trains the full Board and Policy Council on their roles and responsibilities, as well as providing new member orientation.

Community Assessment

The Policy Council is presented with the community assessment with discussion held regarding the issues and opportunities identified within the assessment

Self-Assessment

Policy Council members are involved in the program's self-assessment each year. Members receive the results of self-assessment, including non-compliance issues (when the agency does not meet the requirements of the Performance Standards) and program improvement recommendations. All Policy Council members have the opportunity to discuss and give input on the results of self-assessment at the Council's monthly meeting. Policy Council members are also informed of the date and time of the federal monitoring review that occurs every three years. Policy Council members discuss and provide input for any correction plans which are the result of self-assessment or federal monitoring review. The Executive Director is responsible for ensuring the Policy Council is kept up-to-date on the status of any correction plans.



### Program Goals and Objectives

The program includes long range program goals, with short term objectives within the 5 year grant application submitted to the Office of Head Start. These goals are based upon information from the community assessment, self-assessment results, kindergarten readiness outcomes, family engagement outcomes, and staff and parent input. Goals and objectives are reviewed and approved by the Policy Council and Board prior to submission. Yearly progress is documented, reviewed by Board and Policy Council and submitted to the Office of Head Start within the annual grant renewal submission.

### Policies and Procedures

Policy Council, Management Staff, and the governing body (Grantee Board) work closely together to ensure that policies and procedures are developed in such a way that directly benefits service delivery.

### Program Recruitment and Selection

Program recruitment and selection priority are approved by Policy Council and then sent to the Board.

### Funding Applications

All funding applications and amendments to funding applications for Head Start, including administrative services, are presented to Policy Council members and the Board by key Management Staff, for review and input before submission to HHS. At the Policy Council and Board of Directors meetings, there are opportunities for questions and input. Significant program changes are discussed prior to their approval. The Policy Council and Board can discuss and give input and direction to Management staff.

### Budget Planning

Budget planning is part of the funding application process. Policy Council members are involved in budget planning and have input into all budget areas, including policies for reimbursement for Policy Council participation and the budget amount set aside for Policy Council training and conference attendance.

### Criteria for Recruitment and Selection of Policy Council Members

Criteria for recruiting, selecting, and nominating are located in PACT Policy Council Procedures (By-Laws) and PACT agency work plans. This information is reviewed annually by the Policy Council, and any recommendations for change are approved and forwarded to the governing board for approval.

### Annual Audit

Policy Council receives a copy of the annual audit report for review and discussion regarding any recommendations or findings resulting from the independent audit.

## Personnel Policies

The Policy Council approves all personnel policies, union contracts, and standards of conduct. Changes to policies throughout the program year must also have the approval of the Policy Council. The Executive Director is responsible for ensuring Policy Council members are trained and have a thorough knowledge of all policies prior to submission to the Council for approval. Policy Council must approve or disapprove any decision to hire or terminate any PACT staff, with the exception of the Executive Director, Head Start Director (these two positions are the same at PACT), Director of Human Resources, (not applicable at PACT) Chief Fiscal Officer, and any other person in an equivalent position with the agency. These positions fall under the responsibilities of the governing board.

**(2) A policy council, and a policy committee at the delegate level, must use ongoing monitoring results, data on school readiness goals, other information described in 1302.102, and information described in section 642(d)(2) of the Act to conduct its responsibilities.**

Policy Council receives the results of each monitoring review, is part of the self-assessment process and receives monthly data on program goals. Policy Council also receives school readiness data reports. A timetable for the collection of data and report submission on school readiness is contained in 1302.102 of Program Management and Quality Improvement.

### **d) Term**

**(1) A member will serve for one year.**

**(2) If the member intends to serve for another year, s/he must stand for re-election.**

**(3) The policy council, and policy committee at the delegate level, must include in its bylaws how many one-year terms, not to exceed five terms, a person may serve.**

**(4) A program must seat a successor policy council or policy committee at the delegate level before an existing policy council or policy committee at the delegate level may be dissolved.**

All Policy Council Members, Alternates, and Community Representatives shall be elected to serve a term of one (1) year, the term of office to begin the first meeting after Policy Council Orientation and end after the next year's Policy Council Orientation, with the exceptions of the Officers, who serve until new officers are elected. No Representative may serve more than five (5) years. Only duly elected parents and Community Representatives shall hold voting rights. The Chairperson shall vote only in the case of a tie.

**(e) Reimbursement. A program must enable low-income members to participate fully in their policy council or policy committee responsibilities by providing, if necessary, reimbursements for reasonable expenses incurred by the low-income members.**

Transportation is not routinely available for Policy Council meetings due to the distances between members' home. Members are encouraged to car pool where feasible and are responsible for arranging this. However, if lack of transportation is preventing a member from attending, every effort will be made by the HB Education Coordinator to arrange for transportation. Babysitting for parents who wish to have

a sitter is reimbursed at the rates set and approved by the Policy Council. Reimbursement for babysitting will be made to the Policy Council member from petty cash the day of the meeting. Mileage to the meeting is also reimbursed at the currently approved program rate. Reimbursement for mileage may be made from petty cash or by check. *Complete procedures and directions for reimbursement of babysitting and mileage costs to and from Policy Council meetings is in Section V of this Handbook.*

Head Start Performance Standard Number	Who is Responsible	Who Implements	Timelines or Ongoing	Form Name
1301.4 (b)(2)	SS Coor.	SS Coor.	September & Ongoing	

**(2) Have a process for communication with the policy council and policy committee; and**

Policy Council members will be parent committee members and/or parent committee chairpersons at the center/area level to serve as a link between Policy Council and the Parent Committees. If there are multiple Policy Council representatives from one center/area, at least one of the Policy Council members will be a parent committee member and/or chairperson.

These Policy Council members report to the committees at each meeting and inform them of planning and program updates. They also report to the Policy Council at each meeting any updates from their center/area committees and any plans for upcoming family events. Policy Council representatives are invited to be present during Parent Orientation, ensuring that parents understand their rights, responsibilities, and opportunities in Head Start and encouraging their participation.

Head Start Performance Standard Number	Who is Responsible	Who Implements	Timelines or Ongoing	Form Name
1301.4 (b)(3)	SS Coor.	SS Coor.	September & Ongoing	

**(3) Within the guidelines established by the governing body, policy council or policy committee, participate in the recruitment and screening of Early Head Start and Head Start employees.**

Parent committee members are notified when the top candidate for a position in their center/area is being considered for hire. They will be invited to the final interview to ask a pre-determined set of questions agreed upon by the Policy Council. Policy Council approves all personnel policies, union contracts, and standards of conduct. Changes to policies throughout the program year must also have the approval of the Policy Council.

### 1301.5 Training.

Head Start Performance Standard Number	Who is Responsible	Who Implements	Timelines or Ongoing	Form Name
1301.5	HB Ed. Coord. Executive Director	HB Ed. Coord. Executive Director, Fiscal Officer		

**An agency must provide appropriate training and technical assistance or orientation to the governing body, any advisory committee members, and the policy council, including training on program performance standards and training indicated in §1302.12(m) to ensure the members understand the information they receive and can effectively oversee and participate in the programs in the Head Start agency.**

#### Policy Council Training

It is the responsibility of the Executive Director, HB Education Coordinator, and Fiscal Officer to provide orientation and training to Policy Council members on: Leadership Training, the Roles and Responsibilities of the Policy Council and Grantee Board; Policy Council By-Laws; Robert’s Rules of Order; Organizational Structure; Mission and Philosophy; Head Start Policies, Guidelines and Communications; Financial Reports and Non-Federal Share; Grant Application Processes and Timelines; Program Work Plans; Personnel Policies, including the Standards of Conduct; Job Descriptions, PACT/Union Negotiations and Contract; Communication Systems; Role Clarification; Parent Committees; Reimbursement Procedures; Community Assessment Procedures; Self-Assessment Procedures, Performance Standards; Program Indicator Reports (PIR); and the agency’s Internal Dispute Resolution Policy.

It is the responsibility of both the Executive Director and the HB Education Coordinator to provide additional training as needed to enable the Policy Council to carry out their duties effectively.

The Office Manager, Fiscal Officer, and HB Education Coordinator are responsible for the assembling of any materials and supplies to be utilized for Grantee Board and Policy Council Training.

#### Policy Council and Board Attendance at Conferences/Training

Policy Council and Board members may utilize training money set aside for conference/workshop attendance for pertinent training that will assist them in carrying out their responsibilities. Procedures and requirements for reimbursement for training activities is contained in the Fiscal Procedures Manual and the Policy Council Handbook.

### 1301.6 Impasse procedures.

Head Start Performance Standard Number	Who is Responsible	Who Implements	Timelines or Ongoing	Form Name
1301.6	Exe. Director	Exe. Director		

**(a) To facilitate meaningful consultation and collaboration about decisions of and the policy council, each agency’s governing body and policy council jointly must establish written procedures for resolving internal disputes between the governing board and policy council in a timely manner that include impasse procedures. These procedures must:**

- (1) Demonstrate that the governing body considers proposed decisions from the policy council and that the policy council considers proposed decisions from the governing body;**
- (2) If there is a disagreement, require the governing body and the policy council to notify the other in writing why it does not accept a decision; and,**
- (3) Describe a decision-making process and a timeline to resolve disputes and reach decisions that are not arbitrary, capricious, or illegal.**

**(b) If the agency’s decision-making process does not result in a resolution and an impasse continues, the governing body and policy council must select a mutually agreeable third party mediator and participate in a formal process of mediation that leads to a resolution of the dispute.**

**(c) For all programs except American Indian and Alaska Native programs, if no resolution is reached with a mediator, the governing body and policy council must select a mutually agreeable arbitrator whose decision is final.**

Internal Dispute Resolution

The Executive Director in conjunction with the Grantee Board and Policy Council has established a written procedure for resolving internal disputes, including impasse procedures between the governing body and Policy Council. These written procedures are located in the Grantee Board and Policy Council Orientation Handbooks, as well as included in this section.

Policy Regarding the Resolution of Internal Disputes

The Policy Council By-Laws state that the Board of Directors may appoint a Board member to serve as a Community Representative to the Policy Council. The Council must approve this Representative, and the Board Representative is a voting member of the Council.

The Policy Council By-Laws also state that one of the Officers of the Council is designated as a Representative to the Board. The Policy Council Representative must be approved by a simple majority of the Board and also has voting rights.

This composition allows for on-going communication between the Grantee Board and the Policy Council.

Should disagreement/internal dispute occur between the Council and the Board of Directors, both parties shall notify the other within 10 days, in writing, as to why they do not accept the decision of the other.

The Executive Committee (consisting of Officers) of both parties shall meet within 10 days of the written notification to discuss and attempt to resolve the conflict or dispute.

If the dispute is not resolved between the Executive Committees, the Executive Committees will select a mutually agreeable third party mediator within 30 days and begin formal mediation to resolve the dispute

# Complaint Procedure

Community Representatives on Policy Council serve as a link to communities by bringing information from agencies in their communities and also by taking information to their communities.

## **Community Complaints**

Step 1:

Members of the communities served by PACT for West Central Illinois who have complaints about the program should submit their complaints to the Executive Director.

The Director will endeavor to resolve the complaint to the mutual satisfaction of both parties. If the resolution is not satisfactory, complaint proceeds to Step 2.

Step 2:

Complaint shall be submitted in writing to Policy Council for consideration and resolution. Community members will be notified as to when the committee will consider the complaint and given sufficient opportunity to be present.

In the event of a variety of complaints, or in a quest for more information, Policy Council members may wish to schedule a special meeting to give parents and/or community members a chance to ask questions and provide input to Policy Council members.

## **Parent Complaints**

Step 1: Parent complaints should be remitted to the Teacher currently working with the family. If the complaint is not resolved to the parent's satisfaction, parent proceeds to Step 2.

Step 2: Parent should submit complaint, by contacting the Executive Director or the Assistant Director. Parents should receive a response within one week. If complaint is not resolved to parent's satisfaction, complaint proceeds to Step 3.

Step 3: Parent complaint (in writing and dated) will be remitted to Policy Council for consideration and resolution. Parent will be notified as to when the committee will consider the complaint and given sufficient opportunity to be present. Complaint will include written documentation of steps taken by staff to resolve complaint prior to Step 3.

# **SECTION III**

## Policy Council By-Laws



## ARTICLE I - NAME

The name of this organization shall be the PACT Policy Council.

## ARTICLE II - PURPOSE

The PACT Policy Council provides a formal structure through which parents can participate in the process of making decisions about the nature and operations of the program. The primary purpose of the Policy Council is for parents to share in the decision-making process for future programming, be able to bring about effective change within the PACT program, and receive training to enable them to become effective advocates for children in their communities. The Policy Council, PACT management staff, and Governing Board (Grantee Board) work closely together to ensure that policies and procedures are developed in such a way that directly benefit service delivery.

## ARTICLE III - INTENT

1. To participate in, discuss, and provide input on the results of annual self-assessment and federal monitoring reviews of the PACT program.
2. To approve program goals.
3. To approve the selection of delegate agencies, if needed, and areas in the community in which the PACT program shall operate.
4. To approve plans for using community resources.
5. To approve criteria for the selection of children within applicable laws and HHS guidelines.
6. To approve the composition of the PACT Policy Groups and the method for establishing them.
7. To approve PACT Personnel Policies.

8. To approve the establishment of hiring and firing criteria for all PACT staff, regardless of funding source.
9. By being a Parent Committee member, approve the hiring and firing of all PACT staff, regardless of funding source, with the exception of the Executive Director/ Head Start Director (these two positions are the same at PACT) and the Chief Fiscal Officer
10. To approve PACT Career Development Plans.
11. To approve PACT Grievance Procedures.
12. To approve requests for funds and proposed work programs prior to sending to HHS. Including budget planning for program expenditures, including policies for reimbursement and participation in Policy Council activities.
13. To approve PACT's annual Collective Bargaining Agreement (Union Contract).
14. To approve major changes in budget or work programs and program options while the program is in operation.
15. To establish a method of hearing and resolving community complaints about the PACT program.
16. To serve as a link between, and work closely with the Governing Board, Parent Groups, public and private organizations, and the community at large.
17. To initiate suggestions and ideas for program improvements.
18. To plan, coordinate, and organize agency-wide activities for parents.
19. To recruit volunteer services from parents, community residents, and organizations, and mobilize community resources to meet identified program needs.
20. To report to designated Parent Group monthly, to inform them of program updates.
21. To distribute Parent Activity Funds to Parent Committees through the approval of the annual Head Start grant and work plans.
22. To encourage parent involvement in program activities.

ARTICLE IV - FORMATION

Article IV: New members of the Policy Council are elected early in the program year at Parent Orientations and throughout the year as openings occur. Policy Council members are elected from each of PACT’s program area Parent Committees. Community Representatives to the Policy Council are elected by the new Council at their first meeting. Policy Council orientation is held each program year after elections are completed at the Parent Group orientations. The previous year’s Policy Council serves until the new Council is seated and elects officers.

ARTICLE V – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 - Composition of the PACT Council

The Policy Council will consist of Parent Representatives and no more than five (5) Community Representatives: One Past EHS/HS Parent, Two Community at Large members, and One PACT Board Member (See Section 9), and One Representative from the PACT Child Care program.

The parents from each Parent Committee (Family Event) will elect their representatives to Policy Council at their Family Event meetings.

Composition as approved by the board and Policy Council is as follows:

<b>Center</b>	<b># of HS Reps</b>	<b># of EHS Reps</b>
<b>Beardstown</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Camp Point</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Carthage</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Macomb</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pittsfield</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>4</b>

<b>EHS HB</b>		<b># of EHS Reps</b>
<b>Area 1</b>		<b>1</b>
<b>Area 2</b>		<b>1</b>
<b>Area 3</b>		<b>1</b>
<b>Area 4</b>		<b>1</b>
<b>Area 5</b>		<b>1</b>
<b>Area 6</b>		<b>1</b>
<b>Area 7</b>		<b>1</b>
<b>Area 8</b>		<b>1</b>
<b>Area 9</b>		<b>1</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>

Parent Policy Council members will be responsible for communication between the Council and their designated Parent Committees. Other programs (child care) governed by PACT's Policy Council will be given an opportunity to submit a name or names to Policy Council for consideration as a Community Representative.

#### Section 2 - Term of Office

All Policy Council Members and Community Representatives shall be elected to serve a term of one (1) year. The term of office will begin the first meeting after Policy Council Orientation and end after the next year's Policy Council Orientation, with the exceptions of the Officers. No Council Member or Community Representative may serve more than five (5) years.

#### Section 3 - Voting Rights

Only duly elected Parent and Community Representatives shall hold Policy Council voting rights. The Chairperson shall vote only in the case of a tie.

#### Section 4 - Termination of Membership

Membership on the PACT Policy Council is automatically terminated if a member is absent from three (3) duly called meetings. Absences from special meetings will not be counted against Policy Council Members.

#### Section 5 - Resignation

Resignation of members or alternates from the Council shall be by letter, telephone, or in person to the HB Education Coordinator or the Policy Council Chairperson.

#### Section 6 - Vacancies

Vacancies occur in the Policy Council when a member resigns or has missed three (3) duly called Policy Council meetings.

In the event of a vacancy of a seat of a Parent Representative, written notification from PACT's HB Education Coordinator, shall be sent to the Parent Group Chairperson, Teacher, and Family Advocate of that program area. The replacement shall be duly elected by the appropriate Parent Group. After a Board Representative vacancy has occurred, notification shall be sent to the Board Chairperson so that a replacement can be named. In the event of termination or resignation of a Community Representative, a replacement may be elected by the current Policy Council.

### ARTICLE VI - OFFICERS

#### Section 1 - Officers

The officers for the Council shall be Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, and Representative to the Board.

#### **Section 2 - Election of Officers**

Officers shall be elected by the PACT Policy Council each year at the second meeting of the new Council. The officers shall take office at the next meeting following their election. The officers from the previous year shall continue to serve in that capacity until the seating of the new officers.

### **Section 3 - Removal of Officers**

Officers may be removed from office at any time upon a two-thirds vote of those present at any duly called meeting.

### **Section 4 - Vacancy**

Vacancies shall be filled by election at the next regular meeting at which the vacancy occurs. If the vacancy occurs in the office of Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson shall assume the responsibilities until a new Chairperson is elected. If a vacancy occurs in the role of Vice-Chairperson or Secretary, the Chairperson shall appoint a representative to act temporarily in that capacity, until the new Vice-Chairperson or Secretary is elected.

### **Section 5 - Chairperson's Duties**

The Chairperson shall conduct all meetings. He/she shall, in consultation with the Council, set the time and date of the regular meetings and notify the Secretary at least one (1) week prior to all regular meetings and at least one (1) day prior to special meetings.

### **Section 6 - Vice-Chairperson's Duties**

The Vice-Chairperson shall assume all responsibilities of the Chairperson in her/his absence and assist the Chairperson upon request.

### **Section 7 - Secretary's Duties**

The Secretary shall maintain minutes of all regular and special meetings. He/she, in conjunction with PACT's HB Education Coordinator, shall keep a record of attendance for all meetings and notify the Chairperson when a Representative's seat has been vacated due to lack of attendance.

### **Section 8 - Policy Council Representative to the Board**

The Policy Council shall appoint one of its members as a designated Representative to the Governing Board. The designated Board Representative from Policy Council must be approved by a simple majority vote of the Board and has all voting rights as a Governing Board member. The Policy Council Representative to the Board shall be responsible for representing views of the Policy Council to the PACT Governing Board and reporting back to Policy Council information concerning Board action. Ongoing communication flows between the Policy Council and the Board in this way.

## **Section 9 - Board Representative to the Policy Council**

The Governing Board may appoint a representative to the Policy Council to serve as a Community Representative. The Policy Council must approve the Governing Board Representative. The Board Representative is a voting member of the Council. Ongoing communication flows between the Governing Board and Policy Council in this way.

## ARTICLE VII - SUB-COMMITTEES

### **Section 1 - Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee shall consist of the officers of the Policy Council. The Executive Committee may act for the full Council at such time as the Chairperson deems it necessary to carry out the interim business of the PACT program with the exception of hiring and firing of personnel. Actions taken by the Executive Committee shall be reported at the next meeting of the Policy Council.

### **Section 2 - Other Committee**

The Chairperson shall select committee members and Chairpersons to serve on special committees when necessary. A quorum for a committee shall consist of fifty per cent (50%) of the committee membership. Vacancies shall be filled by the Policy Council Chairperson.

## ARTICLE VIII - MEETINGS

### **Section 1 - Regular Meetings**

The time and date of regular meetings shall be set by the Chairperson of each incoming Council in consultation with the membership. All Policy Council meetings are open for any Head Start parent to attend at any time. Other guests may be invited with prior approval of the Policy Council.

### **Section 2 - Special Meetings**

Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson and the PACT Executive Director. Policy Council conference calls are considered special meetings. In emergencies, ballots by mail may also be used to

conduct business, with the exception of hiring and termination of personnel. If a ballot vote is required, care will be taken to ensure that members have received the information beforehand and that input has been asked for. Personnel hiring and terminations must be addressed through regular meeting and/or conference calls.

### **Section 3 - Notice of Meetings**

Members of the Council shall be notified of all regular meetings at least one (1) week in advance of the meeting and as early as possible in advance of all special meetings.

### **Section 4 - Quorum**

A quorum shall consist of fifty per cent (50%) of the voting representatives of the Council. An Alternate who is not elected to serve as a Representative shall not count towards a quorum.

### **Section 5 - Conduct of Meetings**

All meetings shall be conducted according to “Roberts Rules of Order”.

## ARTICLE IX - STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

As Volunteers for PACT for West Central Illinois’ Policy Council, members agree to abide by the following PACT Standards of Conduct requirements:

1. 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.
2. Follow agency confidentiality policies concerning information about children, families, and agency personnel and Policy Council members.



## ARTICLE X – CODE OF CONDUCT

Policy Council members are required to sign a Policy Council Code of Conduct signifying:

1. They do not have a conflict of interest with the agency
2. They do not receive compensation for serving on the Policy Council or providing services to the agency
3. They, nor their immediate family members, are not employed by the agency
4. Members will not solicit or accept personal gratuities, favors, or anything of significant monetary value from contractors or potential contractors.

## ARTICLE XI - RESOLUTION OF INTERNAL DISPUTES

The functions of the Policy Council, which the Council must approve or disapprove, are outlined in the Head Start Performance Standards, Section 1301.3 Policy Council and Policy Committee. Should disagreement occur between the Policy Council and Governing Board upon approval or disapproval of the functions outlined in the By-Laws of the Policy Council and Governing Board and 1301.6 Head Start Performance Standards, Impasse Procedures, and PACT's Work Plans, the Executive Committee of both parties shall meet within ten days of written notification of the impasse to discuss and resolve the conflict or dispute. Should the conflict or dispute reach an impasse, the issue will move into formal mediation. Instructions for mediation are located in 1301.6 HS Performance Standards and PACT Work Plans, and are included in the appendices section of the Policy Council Handbook.

## ARTICLE XII - AMENDMENTS

The By-Laws may be amended by two-thirds vote of those present at any duly called meeting of the PACT Policy Council.

Revision 1/17/17, changed policy council member terms from 3 years to five years.

Revision January 2018, updated by-laws to reflect Head Start Performance Standards, issued September 2016.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES Administration for Children and Families	
1. Log No. ACYF-PI-HS-96-16	2. Issuance Date: 10/04/96
3. Originating Office: Head Start Bureau	
4. Key Word: Mediation	

### Program Instruction

**TO:** Head Start Grantees and Delegate Agencies

**SUBJECT:** Mediation Procedures For Head Start Grantees, Policy Councils, and Delegate Agencies

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this Program Instruction is to provide mediation procedures to be followed by Head Start grantees when conflicts arise, which, if not resolved, could lead to adverse action against the grantee or the delegate agency. Such conflicts could be between the grantee and its Policy Council or between the grantee and a Delegate Agency.

**LEGAL AND RELATED AUTHORITIES:** The Head Start Act, as amended by Title I of the Human Service Amendments of 1994, Section 646 (a) (4) and (b) and 45 Part 1303.

**BACKGROUND:** What is Mediation? Mediation is a process in which two parties allow a trained neutral third party to assist them in resolving a dispute in a manner that is acceptable to both parties. Mediation is different from litigation. It is informal. A mediator is not a judge and does not decide the dispute for the parties. Mediators work to gain the trust of both parties and then use their knowledge and skills to help the parties focus their interests and goals in order to come to an agreement that meets their individual and mutual objectives.

The benefits of mediation are:

- **Mediation allows the parties to retain control.** Mediation allows you to control your dispute and resolve the problems yourself, rather than having someone else do it for you.
- **Mediation fosters more creative solutions.** Since the mediation process empowers parties to craft their own solutions, parties have the opportunity to be far more creative than formal procedures would allow.
- **Mediation is timely.** Mediation allows parties to resolve disputes faster by avoiding backlogged court systems.
- **Mediation is economical.** Although any party is free to consult with a representative at any time, the mediation process does not require parties to have attorneys. Additionally, mediation saves money by resolving disputes in a timely manner.
- **Mediation enhances communication.** Entering into the mediation process enhances communication between parties by allowing the parties to sit down at a table together and talk to one another. Additionally, the mediator's unique position allows him/her to gain a more complete picture of how each of the parties views the problem.

- **Mediation enhances relationships between parties.**  
Increased communication and understanding between parties creates more pleasant and productive relationships.

Engaging in mediation does not mean that you want to compromise. It does mean that you are interested in talking in a confidential setting with another party to find out if a problem can be resolved.

Mediators are strictly prohibited from discussing cases with anyone outside the mediation process. This rule is designed so that no one who might be involved in a possible later adjudication will have any knowledge of what happens during mediation.

**POLICY:** Grantees and delegate agencies are encouraged to utilize mediation in any conflict which might arise in the course of their operations, and should consult with their responsible ACF Regional office about how to proceed. However, in the attachment to this Program Instruction there is specific guidance to be followed in cases where the conflict could have major consequences such as loss of funding. The attachment is written in a form which corresponds to Head Start regulations in 45 C.F.R. Section 1303 to assure that timelines for mediation are appropriately aligned with the timelines specified in those regulations.

**USE OF GRANT FUNDS:** A mediator's fee may be charged to the program grant in an amount equal to the usual and customary fees charged in the locality with the approval of the responsible Federal official. This Program Instruction is effective immediately. For additional information, please contact your ACF Regional Office, the American Indian Programs Branch, or the Migrant Programs Branch.

# **SECTION IV**

## **OFFICERS AND MEETING RULES**

## **Election of Officers and Responsibilities**

Election of new officers will occur at the first meeting of the seating of the new Policy Council which is usually in November.

## **Policy Council Officers Responsibilities**

### **Chairperson's Duties**

The Chairperson shall conduct all meetings. He/she shall, in consultation with the Council, set the time and date of the regular meetings and notify the Secretary at least one (1) week prior to all regular meetings and at least one (1) day prior to special meetings.

### **Vice-Chairperson's Duties**

The Vice-Chairperson shall assume all responsibilities of the Chairperson in her/his absence and assist the Chairperson upon request.

### **Secretary's Duties**

The Secretary shall maintain minutes of all regular and special meetings. He/she, in conjunction with PACT's HB Education Coordinator, shall keep a record of attendance for all meetings and notify the Chairperson when a Representative's seat has been vacated due to lack of attendance.

### **Policy Council Representative to the Board**

The Policy Council shall appoint/elect one of its members as a designated Representative to the Governing Board. The designated Board Representative from Policy Council must be approved by a simple majority vote of the Board and has all voting rights as a Governing Board member. The Policy Council Representative to the Board shall be responsible for representing views of the Policy Council to the PACT Governing Board and reporting back to Policy Council information concerning Board action. Ongoing communication flows between the Policy Council and the Board in this way.

## **Tips for Meetings**

- Be prepared. Copies of the agenda and reports should be available for all members to read and review before the meeting.
- Discuss ideas together, informally, before forming a motion.
- After a motion is stated, let the mover, aided by the members, modify it before voting. But if more than one member objects, changes require formal amendments.
- Never allow an amendment to the amendment. The motion can be defeated and stated again if necessary.
- The Chair must never allow a member to interrupt a speaker, criticize, or ridicule another member.

## **The Rules**

The meeting will be run democratically. The final authority is the will of the members as a whole.

We will have a formal chair. The chair will direct traffic only and may not participate in the discussion.

The chair must confirm that we have a quorum. There are \_\_\_\_\_ members total, \_\_\_\_\_ members present and the bylaws state that we need \_\_\_% for a quorum. (This varies check your organizations bylaws)

To talk you must address the chair and wait until you are acknowledged.

To make a decision you must make a motion. The motion must be affirmative. You can't make a motion to not do something.

## **Democratic Rules of Order**

Someone must second the motion. Then we will discuss the motion.

You may amend the motion. The amendment needs a seconder and must not negate the motion.

You may postpone or refer the motion.

We will vote by show of hands unless someone requests a vote by ballot. A motion passes with a majority, which means that one more than half the votes cast are affirmative. A tie vote means the motion was defeated. However the motion may state that a different ratio is required.

The mover may speak first.

Discuss one motion at a time.

One member may not take up more than a fair share of time.

No interrupting.

No side meetings. You should be paying attention.

No one may speak a second time unless there is time or unless that member has answers to questions.

You may not criticize a fellow member, only an idea.

4 November 2009

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# **SECTION V**

# **REIMBURSEMENT PROCESS**



# Mileage & Babysitting Reimbursement

## Mileage

As a Policy Council member you will receive reimbursement for your mileage to and from Policy Council meetings. You will be paid \$0.50 per mile. A mileage sheet must be completed, signed by you, and approved by the HB Education Coordinator before payment is made.

There is an example of a mileage form attached that has been filled out. Please follow the example when completing your form. Destination and Purpose column's need to contain the following:

Town where your mileage begins (if in country you may write RR Liberty, etc.) and trace your path from there.  
If you must take your children to a sitter in a different town  
From where you live, you should include that on your mileage sheet.

## Babysitting

The following are the maximum rates that you may be reimbursed for Policy Council member's babysitting costs.

1 child.....	\$2.50 per hour
2 children.....	\$3.50 per hour
3 or more children.....	\$4.00 per hour

If you have to pay more than the above amounts, you will be responsible for paying the remainder. Babysitting reimbursement will be paid in cash to the Policy Council member immediately after each meeting.

**We must have a babysitting sheet filled out by you, signed by your babysitter, and approved by the HB Education Coordinator before payment will be made. We will not pay immediate family members (such as siblings, spouses, grandparents, etc.) who reside in the same household for babysitting for you.**

**INKIND CONTRIBUTIONS-NON FEDERAL SHARE**

CHILD'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ CB 1 AREA # 2

VISIT IN HOME: yes \_\_\_ no \_\_\_ AMOUNT OF TIME DONATED: 3 min/hrs MILEAGE: 4

Description of material donated etc: 5

---

FOR WHAT USE: 6 DATE OF CONTRIBUTION: 7

DONATED BY: 8 PRINTED NAME: 9

**PLEASE CHECK THE APPROPRIATE BOX:**

- A-AGENCY OR BUSINESS
- F-FORMER PARENT/GUARDIAN **10**
- N-NON PARENT
- P-PARENT/GUARDIAN

APPROVED BY: \_\_\_\_\_ TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

(PACT EMPLOYEE)

(Attach any receipts for items donated to show value of item)

---

1. and 2. This is the home based area or classroom that your child is in, if you are community representative just write across top

3. This amount is your travel time, your meeting time, and your preparation time (such as reading the materials in your packet) Total

4. If you donate your mileage put total round trip here. If you are being reimbursed leave it blank

5. This is what is donated such as travel time, meeting time, and preparation time

6. This is the name of the meeting such as Policy Council

7. Today's date

8. Your signature

9. Mileage Rates at 50 cents per mile

PRINT your name clearly

10. Check who you are: were you a parent or are you a current parent in the program





# **SECTION VI**

# **POLICIES**

## Confidentiality Training Guide

Head Start Performance Standard Number	Who is Responsible	Who Implements	Time lines or On Going	Form Name
1303.2	Executive Director, All managers	All Staff	On Going	Confidentiality Training Guide Sign-off, Release Forms

### Overview of Confidentiality

#### The Need for Confidentiality

One of the most important issues at the heart of all human services work is confidentiality. Confidentiality is an issue that programs deal with every day. When determining eligibility for services and providing needed and appropriate resources, human service agencies require that children and families share very private information about themselves. It is our obligation to ensure that this information is released only when necessary and with permission.

The information becomes beneficial when the **correct amount** of information is shared in time to plan and deliver services to the parent and child. Confidentiality is based upon the basic rights of the parents; it is an ethical obligation of the service agency worker and is necessary for effective services delivery. The word **confidentiality** comes from the word **ability** and **confidence**: able to keep information held in confidence. Privacy, ethics, and trust all make up a concept known as confidentiality. Every human service worker has the obligation... to respect the integrity and promote the welfare of the family with whom they are working (American Personnel and Guidance Association Ethical Standards, 1961). The Head Start Program Performance Standards state that all staff, consultants, and volunteers must follow their program's written confidentiality policy concerning information about children, families, and other staff members.

Solers and Peters (1993) list several reasons for protecting the privacy of children and families when providing services to them:

- “Confidentiality restrictions *protect embarrassing personal information from disclosure*. This information may include histories of emotional instability, marital conflicts, medical problems, physical or sexual abuse, alcoholism, drug use, limited education or erratic employment.
- Confidentiality provisions also *prevent the improper dissemination of information about children and families that might increase the likelihood of discrimination against them*. Such information—about HIV status, mental health history, use of illegal drugs, or charges of child abuse—can be harmful if released. Harm can occur even if records show that the information is unproven or inaccurate.

- Protecting confidential information can be necessary to *protect personal security*. For example, in a domestic violence situation, an abused woman who leaves home may be in great danger if her new location is disclosed.
- Confidentiality provisions also *protect family security*. Many immigrant families, for example, shy away from using public health clinics or other social services for fear that the Immigration and Naturalization Service will take action against them.
- Restricting the information that human services agencies receive may also *protect job security*. Some information—such as a history of mental health treatment—may have no connection with a person’s actual job performance but could jeopardize the individual’s position, likelihood of promotion, or ability to find new positions.
- Children and families may also want to *avoid prejudice or differential treatment* by people such as teachers, school administrators, and service providers. Teachers may lower their expectations for the children they know are eligible for food stamps or free school lunches. This may set in motion a self-fulfilling prophecy in which lowered expectations lead to lowered performance.
- Confidentiality provisions may also be necessary to *encourage individuals to make use of services designed to help them*. Adolescents may avoid seeking mental health services at a school-based clinic, for example, if they believe that information will get back to their teachers, parents, or peers.” (pp. 6-7)

Families need to be assured their information is kept confidential because it allows people to seek help without fear of stigma, retaliation, disapproval, or damage to other relationships. Confidentiality encourages both disclosure and the maintenance of trust, both essential for effective social service delivery.

### **Need to Know**

In Head Start, before we can help a family, we quite often need to know many things about them. In general, the more that is known about a family, the better they can be served. Staff members gather important information about the family through records, conversations, home visits, or family conferences. During these formal and informal activities, family members often provide details of family life. Having more information about the family allows staff to respond appropriately, however staff should not pry deeper into a family’s personal affairs than is necessary.

## **Policy Council Approval Process**

The Executive Director and/or the HB Education Coordinator will discuss the final candidate with the Parent Policy Council at their next monthly meeting. The candidate's qualifications are discussed during a closed session meeting. During this time, the Policy Council is free to ask any questions regarding the candidate, review the application, resume, references and job simulation, and review the qualifications of the other candidates for the position.

Once the Policy Council comes out of closed session, a vote is taken by the whole Policy Council as to the approval or disapproval of the submitted candidate. If a candidate is not approved, the Executive Director discusses with the Administrative Assistant the qualifications of the other candidates. If a suitable candidate is not found, the hiring process will begin over and continue until such a time that the Policy Council approves a submitted candidate.

Policy Council actions are forwarded to the Administrative Assistant, who notifies management team of the results. The recommended candidate is notified within 48 hours by the Administrative Assistant as to their approval or disapproval by the Policy Council.

When the Policy Council does not have a meeting scheduled prior to the time that the candidate needs to assume the position, the Executive Director may hire the candidate on a temporary basis, pending the approval of the Policy Council. The candidate is made aware of this temporary status and must understand that if the Policy Council does not approve the hire, they are not eligible for employment at this time.

**HIRING OF KEY PERSONNEL-**As of FY 2007, ACF-PI-HS-06-01 specifies that when key personnel (identified as the Head Start Director, Executive Director and Chief Financial Officer) are hired, the board must notify the regional office prior to offering a job to any staff identified as key personnel. Included in this notification should be the name of the person being recommended to be hired, the process used to recruit for the position and why this person was determined to be the most qualified. Regional offices will take no more than a few days to respond to the grantee's proposal. The role of Regional Offices will be only to assure that a reasonable process was used by the grantee in seeking to fill this position and that the person recommended for hiring is qualified for the job.

**HIRING OF SUBSTITUTE/TEMPORARY STAFF-**Supervisors are responsible for recruiting and hiring substitute staff to cover absences. When a candidate is found that meets the job requirements, the supervisor is responsible for completing the appropriate contract, as well as the other paperwork outlined on the DCFS Staff or Substitute Checklist. Using the Substitute Staff Hire for Policy Council Approval form, the supervisor will attach the appropriate copies as indicated on the form and forward to the Executive Director to present at the next Policy Council Meeting for approval. No substitute or temporary staff may be hired until successfully completing the Illinois State Police Criminal Background check.



## **Smoke Free Environment Policy**

### **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 Parent and Child Together (PACT) for West Central Illinois to provide a smoke-free environment for staff, children and participants of PACT programs.

### **DEFINITION:**

- 1. There will no smoking on property owned, leased, or utilized by Parent and Child Together (PACT) for West Central IL.**

PACT facilities include: all offices, classrooms, and socialization sites, the Mt. Sterling Central Office, and any facility the PACT utilizes on a temporary basis. This includes both indoor and outdoor premises, including parking areas.

PACT parents or staff who smoke must do so off of PACT leased/owned property, out of children's sight, and a minimum of 20 feet away from entrances to the building. All smoking trash, including cigarette butts and matches, will be extinguished and disposed of in appropriate containers.

- 2. There will be no smoking in any PACT vehicle.**

There is no smoking permitted in any PACT bus. There will be no tobacco use in personal vehicles when transporting persons on PACT authorized business.

- 3. There will be no smoking by staff, parents, or volunteers off-site when children are present. This includes both indoor and outdoor activities.**

Field trips, walks, and other off-site activities will be smoke-free. PACT recognizes that staff, parents and volunteers are role models for children, and encourages them to refrain from smoking during all PACT activities. Because of the need to maintain a high staff/volunteer/child ratio during field trips, breaks may be scheduled for those parents who feel they cannot refrain from smoking, in arrangement with the Teacher.

Breaks will be taken by one parent at a time, out of sight of children present, at least 20 feet from the entrance of the field trip site, or at least 100 feet away from the activity area if the activity occurs outdoors.

## **FIREARMS/WEAPONS POLICY**

PACT employees and contractual workers, while in pay status and/or on PACT property or at PACT sponsored activities, are prohibited from introducing, possessing, using, buying, or selling unauthorized weapons, firearms, ammunitions, explosives, or items deemed by PACT management to be dangerous.

**Parent/Visitor Policy:** PACT parents and visitors, while on PACT property or at PACT sponsored activities, are prohibited from possessing unauthorized firearms or other weapons.

Unauthorized means any weapon, even if the owner has a legal state permit to carry the weapon. The following exception applies:

- a. A firearm in the possession of a law enforcement officer on duty who is authorized to possess the firearm by the employing law enforcement agency.
- b. PACT requests officers who are visiting classrooms for the purpose of safety education to refrain from bringing their weapons into the buildings.

## **Conference Procedures**

Attendance to conferences is a privilege and we expect all who attend to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner. Conferences are also a valuable learning tool; members should strive to attend as many workshops as possible with sightseeing kept to after conference hours.

Travel advances are available through the Fiscal Officer. The common items for which members might receive an advance are; taxi and/or shuttle service (this is for the purpose of getting to and from the hotel, airport, or train station and to and from the conference workshops.) Taxi or shuttle service to sightseeing places and events is not reimbursed. Members will usually receive advance money for meals, per diem at the Federal Rate. Receipts are not required for food expenses. Reimbursement for mileage will be paid at the rate of .50 cents per mile. Receipts must be obtained for all lodging, parking, common carrier, taxi fares, or toll charges. This must all pertain to conference expenses in order for members to receive reimbursement. After returning from the conference the Policy Council member will complete a written report. If the travel advance exceeds the amount on the travel voucher, the difference will be immediately returned by the Policy Council member to the Fiscal Officer. If the advance does not exceed the amount of travel, the difference will be reimbursed to the Policy Council member on the following pay period. If you do not attend the conference, you must return all of the money advanced to you.

Policy Members are responsible for arranging for any child care needed while they are attending conferences and PACT does not reimburse for child care expense.

PACT hopes every Policy Council member will have the opportunity to attend conferences and that members will make the effort to learn as much as possible from the experience.

### **Travel Reimbursement Procedures for Policy Council:**

1. Policy Council members are given a list of conferences around October of each year that are available to attend.
2. The Fiscal Officer notifies the council as to how much training money is in the Policy Council training budget for the year and then will give the council an approximate cost of what it would be to send 1 person to each of the conferences.
3. The council will vote on how they wish to spend their training money. They will decide what conferences they would like to attend and then how many council members that will be going to the conferences.
4. Once it has been established as to who, what, and how many are traveling the Fiscal Officer will begin making travel arrangements. All travel arrangements are paid for by PACT using the agency's credit card to ensure all reservations have been complete and paid for in full.
5. A Travel Advance form must be completed by each traveler closer to travel time.
6. The Fiscal Officer will obtain the federal per diem rate per quarter and indicate that on the form.
7. It is up to the Manager going with the parents to assist the parents in completing the Travel Advance form correctly.
8. Once the per diem has been established, the parent is given the option to include vehicle mileage if driving to and from conference or to and from airport/train station as well as any additional money for such expenses as taxi fares and/or parking fees. When the total has been established, the form is turned into the Fiscal Officer who will issue a check to the parent prior to travel time – usually one week in advance of the travel.
9. Upon returning from conference an Actual Travel form must be completed.
10. The parent will need to indicate all their “actual” expenses they incurred from the travel. All receipts must be attached to this form along with a copy of the conference's agenda. At the bottom of the Actual Travel form, the form reconciles the amount the parent was advanced to their actual expenses and who owes whom how much.
11. If the advance was more than the expenses, then the parent owes money back to the agency which is usually obtained on their way home from the conference or no later than at the following Policy Council meeting. If the agency owes the parent it is reimbursed to them the following pay period.