

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY EMPLOYMENT & HUMAN SERVICES  
DEPARTMENT COMMUNITY SERVICES BUREAU

# POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

SECTION 1-PROGRAM GOVERNANCE  
**2017-19**

Policy Council Approved: 05/17/17  
Board of Supervisors Approved: 08/15/17

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Section 1: Program Governance

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## **PART I. Program Governance**

### **A. Service Area**

Contra Costa County Employment and Human Services Department, Community Services Bureau (CSB) is the designated Community Action Agency for Contra Costa County. CSB is the Head Start and Early Head Start Grantee for Contra Costa and also administers the California Department of Education Child Development Programs, Community Services Block Grant, Stage II/Alternative Payment Programs, Low- Income Home Energy Assistance and Weatherization Programs.

### **B. Service Recipients**

The Bureau's services are directed toward building self-sufficiency among the county's low-income residents and vulnerable populations. CSB serves pregnant women and children ranging in age from birth through kindergarten, individuals and families. All service recipients served under the various CSB funding streams must meet the eligibility requirements of the funding source.

### **C. Program Governance**

**1. The Board of Supervisors:** The Board of Supervisors (BOS) is a body of publically elected officials. Their role is to oversee the operations of county departments and to exercise executive and administrative authority through the county government and county administration. The BOS is also charged with responsibility and oversight to the Head Start and Early Head Start grants as outlined (please refer to part 8).

**2. Policy Council Composition and Formation:** The County Board of Supervisors and the Policy Council determine the total size of the Policy Council, procedures for electing parent members, and selection of community representatives.

Policy Council composition is reviewed annually to ensure ~~that~~ it meets the General Membership guidelines of HSPS 1301.1(a); 1301.3(b)(c). Consideration is given to the number of Head Start and Early Head Start currently enrolled children along with program options (Full Day, Part Day, and Home Base). The following steps explain how to determine Policy Council composition:

- Determine the total number of Head Start and Early Head Start slots
- Determine the total HS/EHS slots for each site by program option based on the current CSB slot map (HS/Full Day, HS/Part Day, EHS/FD, and Home Base (EHS/HS collectively). Calculate the percentage of each program option (multiply the number of program option slots for each site by the total number of slots). This will give you the percentage of membership that each option should represent.
- The number of representatives is determined using the formula  $1/60$  (1 representative per site for every 60 HS or EHS slots).

This information ~~will be~~ included in the Policy Council By-laws approved annually by the Board of Supervisors and the Policy Council. The term for members is one year, September to August. Parent representatives will be (re)elected annually by each center's parent committee. Community representatives will be selected annually. The maximum number of one-year terms an individual can serve is five. No grantee, delegate or child care partner staff or members of their immediate family may serve on the Policy Council or on the Delegate Agency's Policy

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Committee. Immediate family is defined as any parent, child, sibling, grandparent, significant other, co-parent or spouse of staff. At least 51% of the Policy Council members must be parents of currently enrolled children.

[Reimbursements are provided to parent representatives to support participation in their policy council or policy committees meetings/activities as stated in the Policy Council Bylaws and Policy Council Handbook.](#)

**3. Procedures for Electing Parent Representatives to the Policy Council:** The parent committees at each site will elect parent representatives as early as possible in the program year. This is done by voting at the parent meetings. Parent representatives must be parents of currently enrolled children in the program.

**4. Procedures for Electing Community Representatives to the Policy Council:** Community representatives are enlisted from the local community. They represent past parents and local community agencies. All Community Representatives must be elected by the Policy Council. Membership for Individual Community Representatives is also limited to 5 one-year terms. CFR 1301.3(d)(1)(4)

- Past Parent Community Representatives: The past parent representatives must submit a letter to the Policy Council requesting consideration to be a community representative. Letters are read during a business meeting, and the Policy Council must vote to approve the parent's request. If the Policy Council receives more requests than vacancies, all letters are read for consideration, and the Policy Council votes, and the majority decision rules.
- Community Agency Representatives: The Policy Council determines which community agencies ~~they would like to are~~ invited to participate on the Council. Agencies are drawn from the local community and are familiar with resources and services for low-income children and families. CSB staff and Policy Council members assist by contacting agencies to seek interest in joining and requesting the name of an agency representative to be elected onto the Policy Council as early in the program year as possible. Agency representatives are presented and considered for approval by the Policy Council.

**5. Parent Committee:** The Parent Committee must carry out at least the following minimum responsibilities:

- Advise center staff in developing and implementing local program policies, activities, and services.
- [Maintain communication between Policy Council and Policy Committee at the delegate level.](#)
- Plan, conduct, and participate in informal, as well as formal, programs and activities for children, parents and staff.

**6. Policy Council Responsibilities:** The Policy Council has policy-making authority and is governed by its By-laws. Annually the Policy Council and Board of Supervisors are oriented to CSB Program Services and receive training on:

- Policy Council Roles and Responsibilities
- Program Governance [responsibilities](#)
- [Head Start Performance Standards](#)
- [Head Start Philosophy](#)
- [Gran Cycle Process](#)
- [Share Decision Making Process and Parliamentary Procedures](#)
- [County code of Conduct and Conflict of Interests](#)

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- [Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, Attendance ERSEA](#)

A make-up orientation is also provided for members joining later in the program year. A joint training with the Board of Supervisors is also scheduled annually.

**7. Governance and Management Responsibilities:** The following chart outlines the required Board and Policy Council Approvals:

| Procedure/Plan/Application  | Approval Required  |                | Frequency of Approval                    |
|---|--------------------|----------------|--|
|   | Governing Body BOS | Policy Council |  |
| 1. Planning Procedure (Road Map)<br>(Planning Calendar)                                   | X                  | X              | Annually                                 |
| 2. Goals and Objectives (included in the Grant application)                               | X                  | X              | Annually                                 |
| 3. Child Recruitment/Selection Procedures (Selection Criteria/ Recruitment Plan)          | X                  | X              | Annually                                 |
| 4. Budget and Grant Application   | X                  | X              | Annually - and as needed for supplements |
| 5. Self-Assessment Plan for Corrections (if applicable)                                   | X                  | X              | Annually                                 |
| 6. Board Composition Requirements for non-governmental agencies                           | N/A                | N/A            | One-time<br>(until changed)              |
| 7. Board and PC Conflict of Interest requirements (included in Bylaws)                    | X                  | X              | One-time<br>(until changed)              |
| 8. PC Bylaws - Board approval of PC Composition Procedure for how PC members are selected | X                  | X              | One-Time<br>(until changed)              |

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| 9. Financial Management<br>Accounting & Reporting Policies<br>including audit  | X | N/A | One-time<br>(until changed) |
| 10. Policies and Procedures<br>including:<br><br>a) Policy defining roles/<br>responsibilities of governing board<br>members for implementing a high<br>quality program<br>b) Dispute Resolution & Impasse<br>Procedure<br>c) Procedures to resolve community<br>complaints, conduct investigations<br>d) Personnel Policies & Procedures<br>e) Hiring/Termination procedures<br>for Executive, Head Start, Fiscal, HR<br>Directors and program staff. | X | X   | One-Time<br>(until changed) |

Items Requiring Reports to the BOS and PC:

| Required Report                         | Frequency |
|---|-----------|
| a) Budget, Credit Card Expenses reports | Monthly   |
| b) Program Reports                      | Monthly   |
| c) Enrollment Reports                   | Monthly   |
| d) USDA Meals/Snack                     | Monthly   |
| e) Financial Audit                      | Annually  |

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| f) Self-Assessment  | Annually                                     |
| g) Community Strategic Planning Goals and Objectives      | Jan/June Updates                             |
| h) Communication from the Secretary/Human Health Services | As Released                                  |
| i) Program Information Report PIR                         | Annually                                     |
| j) Ongoing Monitoring Results                             | Semi-Annual                                  |
| <a href="#">k) School Readiness Goals-Data</a>            | <a href="#">As Released (3 times a year)</a> |

**8. Responsibilities of Board of Supervisors, Policy Council, Employment and Human Services Executive Director and Community Services Bureau Director:**

**i. Background**

The responsibilities of the Board of Supervisors, Policy Council, and Director of Program Services are described in the Head Start Performance Standards. The Performance Standards describe certain responsibilities for the Director of the Head Start program, leaving decisions regarding other responsibilities to Executive Directors of the local Head Start Grantee.

**ii. Reference**

- Head Start Performance Standards, 45 CFR 1301.1 and CFR 1301.5
- Policy

The Employment and Human Services (EHSD) Director and the Community Services Bureau Director shall ensure that the Policy Council and the Board of Supervisors are routinely and frequently informed of, and trained on, management procedures and functions, as well as the Federal laws and regulatory compliance issues required to ensure a quality program. Mutual communication and understanding between the governing board, the policy council and program management are fundamental prerequisites for a healthy Head Start Program. The EHSD Director and the Community Services Bureau Director will also ensure that the Board of Supervisors has an understanding and

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appreciation of the Head Start Philosophy and the role of parents and Policy Council in shared governance. Careful and complete communication and planning will ensure effective oversight and appropriate actions and interventions that will foster the mutual understanding and actions of all entities responsible to maintain a quality Head Start Program.

#### iii. Procedures

- The Employment and Human Services Department (EHSD) Director will provide a report to the County Administrator's Office monthly.
- Report topics will include all required monthly report items noted in section 7, Enrollment and Average Daily Attendance, and may additionally include, but are not limited to:
  - Fiscal/budget issues
  - Personnel matters
  - Facility issues
  - Policies and Procedures
  - Program planning
  - Annual Self-Assessment
  - Annual independent audit
  - Grant development and submission
  - Correspondence with ACF
  - Program issues
  - Regulatory changes
  - Family Engagement
  - Planning for joint Board of Supervisors/ Policy Council training activities
- The report will be sent monthly to the Health and Human Services Committee of the Board of Supervisors, to be included on the agenda by the Board of Supervisors and provided to the Chair of the Policy Council.
- The Employment and Human Services Director and Community Services Bureau Director will jointly meet throughout the program year, individually, with each member of the BOS to review reports, give updates and advice, and train on new regulations and initiatives.

**9. Role of Policy Council in the Annual Grant Development Process:** Throughout the year, the Policy Council is involved in the grant process through a variety of ways:

- The Program Services/[Ongoing Monitoring](#) subcommittee meets throughout the year to review/[discuss](#) and update the annual program goals and objectives and the annual parent services budget and activities.
- The Fiscal subcommittee meets monthly to develop, adjust and approve the program budget for the coming year's grant and tracks it throughout the year.
- The Policy Council approves the annual program goals and objectives.
- The Policy Council reviews the Community Assessment annual updates and the full easement every five years.
- The Policy Council also reviews and approves the Annual Planning Calendar, Child Recruitment and Selection Criteria, the Self-Assessment Plan for Corrective Actions, all of which are included in the submission of the Annual Grant Application.

Once these components of the grant are reviewed and approved, the Policy Council approves the full grant in the fall



## 10. Resolution of Disputes between the Board of Supervisors and the Policy Council (Impasse Policy)

### i. Background

The Performance Standards require that Head Start grantees establish a policy and necessary implementation procedures for the resolution of internal disputes between the Board of Supervisors and the Policy Council.

### ii. Reference

Head Start Performance Standards, 45 CFR 1301.6

### iii. Policy

The Chairpersons of the Board of Supervisors and the Policy Council will monitor actions and decisions of each body as they relate to their respective responsibilities. It is the policy of Contra Costa County to resolve any disagreements between the Board of Supervisors and the Head Start Policy Council fairly and within required timelines. Whenever possible, disagreements will be resolved through processes of mediation and conciliation, including discussion, compromise, and consensus-seeking between parties, and, if necessary, professional mediation.

### iv. Administrative Procedure

#### ~~Informal Resolution:~~

- ~~Informal Resolution: The Chairpersons of the Board of Supervisors and the Policy Council will monitor actions and decisions of each body as they relate to their respective responsibilities.~~ In Informal Resolution: the event that a conflict exists, they will notify each other in writing within 30 days and give reasons why it does not accept the decision of the other, and then they will initiate informal discussions between representatives of the two bodies and seek a mutually acceptable resolution.

- ~~Mediation: If informal resolution is not effective, the Chairpersons of the Board of Supervisors and the Policy Council shall request that the Community Services Bureau Director identify mutually agreeable qualified individuals who third party to provide professional mediation services. The Chairpersons will confer and mutually designate a professional mediator who will be retained to mediate the disagreement.~~ The mediator will use conciliation, compromise and consensus-seeking between the two bodies. The mediation process shall be non-binding.

- Arbitration: If no resolution is reached with a mediator, the Chairpersons of the Board of Supervisors and Policy Council shall request that the Community Services Bureau Director identify mutually agreeable arbitrator, whose decision is final.

## 11. Resolution of Community Complaints

- "Community complaint" is defined as any complaint from anyone other than staff
- The Policy Council is generally responsible for (and has the legal and fiscal responsibility for guiding/directing/carrying-out the establishment) the method of hearing and resolving community complaints

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iii. Process for Solving Disputes/Complaints: Any parent (enrolled or applying for services) or community member may report a complaint to a program staff member of any of our program/sites, i.e. Site Supervisor, Teacher, Associate Teacher, or Comprehensive Services, Analyst, or clerical staff. If the complaint comes in by phone, the staff member documents that complaint. Complaints may come from sources other than the site, i.e. Board of Supervisors. Anyone receiving a complaint will immediately contact a program manager by phone with the following information:

- Step 1: Document the complaint in writing to include the following information: Contact information of the complainant: Name, Address, Phone Number, email (if appropriate); Information Shared: When was the occurrence? Person/s involved? What happened? Where did it occur? And what was the impact? Other information that the complainant wishes to share may also be documented. If the complaint comes in by phone: program staff document call, note time, date and name of the staff member name
- Step 2: Complaint goes first to the Site Supervisor who must discuss the details with their Assistant Director within 24 hours of the report. The Assistant Director works with the program staff to attempt resolution within 48 hours.
- Step 3: Complaints not resolved within 48 hours will be brought to the attention of the Division Manager, Bureau Director, or their designee.
- Step 4: If the complaint is then resolved, the Bureau Director will send a memo to all involved, stating remedial actions to be taken by staff and the time line for these actions.
- Step 5: If satisfactory resolution is still not achieved, the Bureau Director will request the EHSD Director to review all documentation. When the complaint is then resolved, the EHSD Director will send a memo to all involved, stating remedial actions to be taken by staff and the time line for these actions.
- In addition, Manager, Supervisors and Assistant Directors maintain the "Client Concern Log" to document and track all program concerns/complaints and resolutions.

## Part II. Communications

### A. General Description

All staff is expected to communicate within the department and externally using the following communication tools:

- Common, not technical terms
- A professional tone
- Assurance that the approach is based on each family's cultural/linguistic preferences
- Adherence to the principles of Facilitative Leadership
- Encouragement of a team approach
- Ensure that translation services are available when needed

### B. Internal Communication

Employees must follow County policy with regards to courtesy and confidentiality. High staff morale is dependent

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on friendly greetings, active listening and a display of a helpful attitude toward team members. The following are methods of internal communication with program staff:

- Staff summits
- Regularly scheduled staff meetings at varying levels, such as:
  - Senior Administrative Management
  - Senior Management
  - Comprehensive Services
  - Cluster-based
  - Site-level
  - Daily Interactions
- Staff newsletters
- Internal memos
- Policies and Procedures
- Fax
- Email
- Short Messaging System(SMS/Texting)
- Payroll notices
- Telephone
- Bureau Reports
- Computerized Tracking Systems (CLOUDS)
- Video Conferencing System
- Annual Planning Calendar
- Intranet

#### Internal Communication Expectations:

Purpose: to ensure that multi-level communication occurs throughout CSB and that employees at every level of the organization are kept informed of Bureau updates, happenings and changes and has the opportunity to provide feedback. Communication is woven through each of CSB's values and is critical to the effectiveness of an organization.

#### Communication Expectations:

Supervisors and managers are responsible for sharing critical information and key messages to their staff timely.

Key stakeholders are involved at varying levels in planning, decision making and communication depending on the decision.

Supervisors/ managers are expected to hold regular, one-one meetings with subordinates which includes time for feedback, two-way reflective communication and active listening.

Staff are encouraged to provide feedback verbally, through e-mail and written correspondence

Process, relationship and results are valued as equally important in communicating.

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Written and verbal communication has a positive intent, respectful tone and encouraging word choice. We are models for one another.

Information communicated is tailored to the audience.

Communication is concise and hits on the key messages/ points.

Communication aides such as visuals and presentations are considered and shared as appropriate.

Email protocol is followed. Protocols are saved on the Intranet at CSB Resource Center/Shared Documents/CSB Policies and Procedures/ E-mail Protocol.

Expectations of next steps are clearly defined at the end of each meeting.

Justification for change and context is clearly explained.

We value the 3R's (responsiveness, respect, relationships) in our communications.

When starting a new program, policy, project, etc..., identify 2-3 key points to communicate as to why it is important and how it will make it better.

We maintain the intranet as clear and user-friendly as possible to ensure materials are easily accessed; and use hyperlinks whenever possible in sharing information electronically.

Multi-modes and venues are used to communicate key messages including e-mail, newsletters, memos, verbal, presentations, etc...

| <u>Message</u>   | <u>Method</u>   | <u>Audience</u>  | <u>Frequency</u>                    | <u>Expectation</u>  |
|--|---|--|-------------------------------------|---|
| <u>Bureau Strategic Goals/ direction of the organization</u> | <u>Memo or presentation</u>   | <u>All staff</u>                                       | <u>Quarterly</u>                    | <u>All staff at every level of the organization knows the direction of the Bureau</u> |
| <u>Department, Bureau-wide changes and updates</u>           | <u>Memos, Sr Mgt meetings, newsletter, all-staff calls, e-mails</u> | <u>All-staff</u>                                       | <u>Monthly and Quarterly</u>        | <u>Staff are kept abreast of changes</u>  |
| <u>Communication sessions – circles, focus groups</u>        | <u>Meetings</u>   | <u>A selection of staff bureau-wide</u>                | <u>Bi-annually or as needed</u>     | <u>Staff are kept abreast of changes and Sr managers hear from staff</u>              |
| <u>Year-end report</u>                                       | <u>Memo and/or Meeting Presentation</u>                             | <u>All Managers and Supervisors</u>                    | <u>Annually – December/ January</u> | <u>PowerPoint or report is shared with all staff by managers and supervisors</u>      |
| <u>New staff and promotions</u>                              | <u>e-mail/ and unit meetings</u>                                    | <u>Managers and Supervisors and/ or specific units</u> | <u>As needed</u>                    | <u>Staff know about new hires</u>   |

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| <u>Message</u>   | <u>Method</u>   | <u>Audience</u>                                       | <u>Frequency</u>                | <u>Expectation</u>   |
|--|---|---|---------------------------------|--|
| <u>Unit changes and updates</u>                                | <u>e-mail, unit meetings, All-Cluster meetings</u>              | <u>Managers and Supervisors and/or specific units</u> | <u>As needed</u>                | <u>Staff know about changes</u>  |
| <u>Updates/ information Sr Mgt meetings</u>                    | <u>Unit meetings, All-Cluster meeting</u>                       | <u>Sr Mgt Team</u>                                    | <u>Monthly</u>                  | <u>New projects, issues, updates, changes are shared and discussed as a team</u> |
| <u>Updates/ information from All-Cluster and Unit meetings</u> | <u>Center and staff unit meetings, postings on staff boards</u> | <u>Staff</u>  | <u>Monthly</u>                  | <u>New projects, issues, updates, changes are shared and discussed</u>           |
| <u>Updates and quick messages of upcoming events</u>           | <u>Facebook, etc...</u>   | <u>All staff and greater community</u>                | <u>3X per week or as needed</u> | <u>CSB is publically celebrated and upcoming events are shared</u>               |

Other means of communication:

Planning calendars

Policies and procedures

Unit reports

Board reports

Meeting minutes



### C. Internal Communication with Parents

CSB staff strives to provide exceptional customer service and must always use their best judgment with the utmost professionalism. Every employee is responsible for delivering clear and helpful information to our parents. A key element to ensuring communication is both clear and helpful is to ensure it is delivered in the most supportive manner, place and time.

Staff will not address challenging behaviors that may have occurred during the day with parents at pick-up or drop off; instead they will let the parent know that they would like to discuss challenging behaviors and request a time to meet.

Staff will not request letters of recommendation from parents; however they may accept an unsolicited letter. Requesting such a letter maybe perceived as intimidating. Instead, parents should be encouraged to complete the Parent Recognition of Staff Excellence for any staff member they feel is providing excellent service and support.

The following are methods of communication with parents:

- Monthly Policy Council meetings – program planning, policy and financial information is shared
- Monthly Policy Council sub-committee meetings
- Monthly Policy Council executive board meetings
- Monthly parent meetings
- Monthly food menu with nutrition guidance
- Health Bulletins
- Parent surveys

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- Parent-teacher conferences
- Home visits
- Quarterly family newsletters
- Parent bulletin boards that include:
  - Upcoming activities; posted memos; health and safety information logs; site emergency procedures; parents' and child's rights; and Policy Council minutes and agendas
- Daily classroom schedules
- Weekly lesson plans
- Parent policies and procedures
- Dissemination of pertinent information regarding program planning, communications from Office of Head Start, financial reports and grant applications.
- Planned site activities
- Planned community events
- Social Media Tools
- Communication with Delegate Agency and Community Childcare Partners:
  - Regularly scheduled meetings
  - Regular monitoring
  - Joint trainings
  - Appointed members from the delegates on the Policy Council
  - Joint annual self-assessments
- Email
- Telephone
- Fax
- Monthly reports
- Short Messaging System (SMS/Texting)

#### D. Communications with Governing Bodies and Policy Groups

1. **The Policy Council:** Serves as a link between public and private organizations, the Delegate Agency Policy Committee, Subcontractors, the Grantee-Operated Program Site Committees, the Grantee, the County Board of Supervisors and the community it serves. Mutual communication and understanding between the governing board and program management are fundamental for a high quality Head Start Program.
2. **Monthly meetings with the County Administrator's Office:** The Employment and Human Services Department (EHSD) Director and the CSB Director also ensure that the Board of Supervisors has an understanding and appreciation of the Head Start philosophy and the role of parents and Policy Council in shared governance. Monthly meetings are held with the County Administrator's Office to discuss various areas of the program. A meeting report is generated by the EHSD Director and the CSB Director. The meeting's report is sent monthly to the Health and Human Services Committee of the Board of Supervisors. In addition, the CSB Director and other assigned staff, meet throughout the program year, individually, with each member of the BOS to review reports, tour centers, give updates and advice, and train on new regulations and initiatives.

#### E. External Communication

1. **Communication with Partnerships:** CSB has several types of Community Partnerships and all of them provide valuable services to our children and parents. Our reputation in the community is often dependent

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upon the respect and assistance provided to our partners when in contact with them. Every employee is responsible for delivering clear and helpful information to the public at large and to our partners in particular.

External Partners include but are not limited to:

- State/Local Policy Groups
- State Department of Education
- Local Planning Council
- First Five Commissions
- County Departments
- Community-based Organizations
- Contra Costa County Special Education Local Planning Areas (SELPA's)
- Child Care Partners
- Policy Forum
- Local Education Agencies
- Contra Costa County School Superintendents
- Contra Costa One Stop Consortium
- California Welfare Directors Association Committees
- News / Media Outlets

#### 2. Press Calls:

- i. All press calls should be immediately reported to the CSB Bureau Director and to the Employment & Human Services Department's Community Relations Director (also known as Public Information Officer or PIO) at (925) 313-1779, or the Executive Secretary at (925) 313-1629 in the Office of the Director for the Employment and Human Services Department. This will guarantee that the CSB and EHSD Directors know which stories and issues are attracting press attention. It will also make it easier for the reporter to be connected with the proper Department spokespersons who can respond fully and accurately. In addition, it will ensure there is proper follow up to meet deadlines, address issues and manage photography.

The Community Relations Director will be available to prepare staff for interviews, review the topic of interest and discuss points that will help the interview be complete and accurate while getting the Department's message across to the public.

On occasion, members of the press will take a shortcut into the Department and contact staff directly. If the staff member has been authorized by his/her Bureau Director to respond to the press, they should first notify the Community Relations Director who can assist in managing and maximizing the media opportunity.

- ii. If the staff person has not been authorized by their Bureau Director to respond to the press, they are required to adhere to the following:
  - Do not respond directly to print, vocal, and/or visual media representatives;
  - Politely refer all contacts to the Community Relations Director at (925) 313-1779 or EHSD's Executive Secretary at (925) 313-1629 in the Office of the Director;
  - Inform your manager/supervisor immediately;
  - Provide the following information: date, time, and location of contact
  - Media representative's name, organization, phone number and deadline;
  - Summary and nature of the inquiry

iii. There are many differing aspects and/or components related to the successful operation of our program. It is unfair for individual staff members to be placed in and/or to place themselves in a position of stating, explaining, and/or formulating policy for the department. An innocent comment intended to project a positive view can be reproduced with a negative spin or violate the right to privacy of our clients. Proposed dialogue when fielding a call from the media:

- "I would like to respond to your questions. My concerns rest with preserving and protecting the privacy of our children and their families. Please give me your name, organization, and phone number so that I can properly refer your request."
- Staff with story ideas or events to promote are asked not to contact the press directly, but to contact the Community Relations Director at (925) 313-1779, so these stories can be channeled to the press most likely to cover them.

**3. Tools for External Communication are as follows:**

- Formal/informal agreements
- Electronic Newsletters
- Regular meetings
- E-mail
- Short Messaging System (SMS/Texting)
- Telephone
- Membership activities
- Social Media Tools (Facebook/Twitter and etc.)
- Annual Report
- Fact Sheet

4. CSB E-mail Protocol:

The following is a basic guideline of enhancing our e-mail communications:

Purpose of an e-mail –

To Communicate – To get the reader's attention within few lines of text.

To Document – Send a report, instructions, procedure, information to file, etc...

Only discuss public matters - Ask yourself if the topic being discussed is something you'd write on company letterhead or post on a bulletin board for all to see before clicking "send."

Respond in timely fashion Depending on the nature of the e-mail and the sender, responding within 24 to 48 hours is acceptable.

Avoid using shortcuts to real words, emoticons, jargon, or slang for business e-mails such as "4 u" or "Gr8", etc...

Be clear on who the recipient is – When there are multiple recipients or Cc's but one or two specific people who you are directly addressing, address the specific person(s) by name at the start of the email.



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Be clear in your subject line – the subject line must match the message. Be succinct and to the point in the subject line. Never leave this blank.

Evaluate the importance of your e-mail - Don't overuse the high priority option unless very necessary. If an immediate or less than 24 hour response is needed, it is better to pick up the phone.

Keep it short and get to the point - State the purpose of the e-mail within the first two sentences. Be clear, and be up front. Anything more should happen in a verbal conversation.

Know your audience - e-mail greeting and sign-off should be consistent with the level of respect and formality of the person you're communicating with.

Refrain from sending one-liners - "Thanks," "Oh, OK" and "Action"; do not advance the conversation in any way. Put "No Reply Necessary" at the top of the e-mail when you don't anticipate a response.

-Confidential Information blocked -Do not share any of the following information in e-mail communications:

- Credit Card information
- Social Security numbers
- HIPAA-related medical information ((the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 addresses the use and disclosure of individuals' health information)
- Username and password

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\_\_\_\_\_ Indicate what response/action you expect - such as "Action needed", "Response needed", or, if none "FYI only". Include a deadline or desired deadline for needed action and responses.

Your e-mail is a reflection of you - Every e-mail you send adds to, or detracts from your reputation.  
Always include a signature - You never want someone to have to look up how to get in touch with you.  
You name and contact information should always be included.

Send or copy others only on a need to know basis - Before clicking on the Cc lines, ask yourself if all the recipients need the information in your message.

Beware of the "reply all." - Do not hit "reply all" unless every member on the e-mail chain needs to know.

When not to send an e-mail and pick up the phone - When a topic is sensitive or has lots of parameters that need to be explained or negotiated and will generate many questions or may generate confusion, don't handle it via e-mail. If the email exchange has gone back and forth more than a few times, it is usually better to continue the conversation by phone. Also, e-mail should not be used for last minute cancellations of meetings, lunches, interviews, and never for difficult news. Although, if its news you have to deliver to a large group, e-mail is more practical.

Avoid writing in all capital letters – It sends the wrong message and it is hard to read.

Beware of tone – Communicating tone in email is challenging and must be done by thoughtfully choosing words. Sarcasm, for example, is an expression of anger and often comes across hotter than it would in person, where the face and voice assist understanding.

Beware of emotional reply – Too often someone in anger or frustration types off the reply and hits send before taking time to think. After typing the response, it is advisable to take a moment, think, may be take a short break – proof the reply before sending it.

• \_\_\_\_\_ Adding attachments- Send a link instead.

• \_\_\_\_\_ Out of Office- Be sure to add the date of your return and the name of the person to contact in your absence.

#### 4. Social Media Posting Guidelines:

These guidelines shall apply to any and all employees who are permitted as authorized users by Contra Costa Community Services Bureau (CSB) to post content on CSB's social media sites.

These guidelines are intended to apply to all official blogs or social media platforms maintained by CSB, including, but not limited to Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. All such activities are referred to as "social media postings" in this document.

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- Social media posting privileges are granted to the pre-approved CSB Social Media Committee.
- The primary and foremost purpose of Contra Costa Community Services Bureau social media platforms is to provide public information and education, to recruit staff and reach out to families that need childcare, and to positively promote the work of our agency, staff and volunteers. The intent is to showcase what our agency does and to communicate with the public via social media outlets.
- All authorized CSB social media users shall always be courteous and respectful of all points of view when posting on CSB's' social media platforms.
- All authorized CSB social media users shall adhere to the CSB brand standards (colors, flyer templates, etc.) in an attempt to ensure the content presented is consistent and visually appealing. Visuals play an important part in social media branding and connectivity to the audience.
- In the event that a negative post or comment is placed on any of CSB's social media platforms, CSB social media posters will not engage in a confrontational, ongoing dialogue. We will instead remove the negative comment and address the issue outside of the public-facing platform, possibly through private messaging if appropriate to follow up/attempt to resolve the issue. This will be done with the assistance of the relevant members of the CSB Leadership Team and approved by the Department Director.
- Common sense is typically the best guide when posting content on CSB's official social media platforms. If you are unsure about a particular posting, please feel free to contact the Social Media Project Manager.
- Social media postings for Contra Costa Community Services Bureau (made on official CSB accounts) may be at the direction of the Bureau Director or designees for the exposure of recruitment efforts, special events, program accomplishments etc.
- Social media postings must not disclose or refer to any information that Contra Costa Community Services Bureau considers confidential information as per the confidentiality policy. If you have any questions about what constitutes confidential information, please contact the Social Media Project Manager.
- If a member of the news media contacts you about a social media posting that concerns the business of the Contra Costa County Community Services Bureau, you must refer that person to one of the following: Bureau Director or the EHSD Community/Media relations Manager.
- All CSB social media postings should be made from the perspective of Contra Costa County Community Services Bureau, reflecting our policies, procedures and positions. Social media posts should not reflect any individual's personal point of view or positions.
- Employees need to adhere to the Hatch Act, whose main provision prohibits employees of the federal government and local government employees who work in connection with federally funded programs from engaging in any form of political activity. No lobbying is allowed.
- Be responsible, be nice, have fun and connect

## F. Reporting for County Child Protective Services and State Community Care Licensing

The purpose of these policies and procedures are to provide all department employees with instructions on what specific steps they must take to properly handle any incident involving an abused and/or neglected child, the injury of a child, or a potential child's rights violation. It is important to note that while all employees are charged with the responsibility of reporting incidents involving an abused and/or neglected child, only the EHSD Director or Bureau Director or designee is charged with the responsibility of reporting potential child's rights violations to State Community Care Licensing.

In addition, this policy is intended to make clear the procedure for reporting incidents that may occur both off site and on site.

### 1. Definitions:

- CCL (State): The acronym for State Community Care Licensing, which is a Division of the State of California Social Services Department, and which is responsible for the licensing of the Department's Child Care facilities.
- EHSD Director: The Director of the Employment and Human Services Department
- Bureau Director: The Director of the Community Services Bureau.
- CFS (County): The acronym for Children and Family Services, formerly Child Protective Services, which is a bureau of the County's Employment and Human Services Department and is mandated by the Federal and State government to assess and investigate all referrals which allege that a child is endangered by abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
- Major Injury: Any incident involving a child that requires the intervention of any medical professional (examples of medical professional include: medical advice nurse, hospital, clinic, doctor, ambulance service, emergency room).
- Minor Injury: Any incident involving a child that does not require the intervention of any medical professional as noted above.
- Child's rights violations: Any incident that occurs at a Community Services Bureau facility and involves an employee, contractor, or volunteer of the Department that might violate either the Head Start Code of Conduct or the rights of a child in accordance with State Child Care Licensing Regulations.

All employees, at all levels, are expected to follow the policies and procedures so that accurate and timely reporting can be assured to both the County CPS and the State CCL.

### 2. Reporting to CFS:

- Any employee or contractor who knows or suspects that a child has been abused and/or neglected off site should immediately inform and discuss his/her concerns with the direct supervisor.
- Reports shall be made to Child Protective Services in accordance with mandated reporting responsibilities and laws. A report to the Community Care Licensing (CCL) shall also be made summarizing the CFS report.

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- The employee or contractor making the report will provide a copy of the above referenced report to their Supervisor or Manager, who is responsible to inform their Assistant Director.

Additional policies and procedures related to Mandated Reporting can be found in the Child Development Section of this document, "Child Development Reporting Policies".

### **3. Child Injuries:**

#### **i. Minor Injuries**

Immediately report the injury to your Supervisor and the parent after you have tended to the child. (Includes any incident not involving medical professionals) Employees do not report minor injuries to CCL.

If a parent of a child who has sustained a minor injury reports back to the center that they subsequently took the child to be seen by any medical professional, the injury needs to be reported as a major injury. All head injuries regardless of staff determination that it is minor or major shall be reported to the Supervisor immediately who shall contact the parent immediately to pick up the child. "Head Injuries" are defined as injuries to the skull or cranium, and do not include the mid and lower facial areas. Staff shall complete a written injury report for the parent prior to pick-up time and at pick-up time talk with the parent to explain the injury, action taken by staff, and provide a copy of the written report. Supervisor shall make a complete entry in the Supervisor's Injury Log for all injuries, minor and major.

#### **ii. Major Injuries**

Report the incident immediately to a Site Supervisor, the Assistant Director, and the parent. Depending on the severity of the injury, all staff should take the following steps:

- Comfort the child.
- Phone 911 immediately.
- Report the injury to the Assistant Director, Bureau Director and/or Executive Director.
- The Site Supervisor or designee will make an Unusual Incident Report to Licensing in accordance with the Unusual Incident Reporting policy and procedure.
- The Bureau Director may assign staff to investigate.
- The Department's Licensing Liaison may prepare a written report.
- Staff shall complete a written injury report (form CSB-208) for the parent immediately and provide a copy of the written report to the parent.
- Supervisor shall make a complete entry in the Supervisor's Injury Log for all injuries, minor and major.

#### **iii. Potential Child's Rights Violations**

- Any incident that occurs on site at a facility and involves employee(s), contractor(s), or volunteer(s) of the Community Services Bureau that might violate the rights of a child in accordance with Child Care Licensing Regulations or the Community Services Code of Conduct must immediately be reported to the CSB Administration using the following protocol and

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- in accordance with Mandated Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect ACF-IM-HS-15-04:
- Any potential and/or unusual incident must be reported by CSB employees to the center's Site Supervisor or the designated person-in-charge no later than 15 minutes after being made aware that an alleged incident has or may have taken place.
  - The reporter shall be any employee, contractor or volunteer who has witnessed or heard about an alleged incident, or any employee, contractor or volunteer who was involved in an alleged incident.
  - The Site Supervisor or person-in-charge must phone-in the alleged incident to the Assistant Director and as directed by the AD, the Site Supervisor and the AD will call the CSB Administration Office at (925) 681-6300 no later than one hour after being made aware of the alleged incident.
  - Caller shall make it clear to the clerk answering the phone at CSB Administration Office that you are reporting a possible licensing incident that must be handled by the appropriate staff immediately.
  - When the Unusual Incident Report is phoned into the CSB Administrative Office, the front desk clerk who receives the phone call shall immediately and personally notify the Division Manager. If the Division Manager is not in, the notification succession shall be to the Bureau Director.
  - The Site Supervisor or person-in-charge will then complete, obtain AD approval, and fax the CSB Unusual Incident Report to the CSB Administrative Office within two hours of the alleged incident. The completed form shall be scanned to the Division Manager and immediately followed up by a telephone call to CSB Administrative Office at (925) 681- 6300 to verify that a copy of this report has been received.
  - Site Supervisor shall compile and send upon request all written documentation related to the incident to the Assistant Director, Division Manager and Personnel Services Assistant III. Documentation may include but is not limited to CSB Incident Report, small group conference forms, notes on discussions with parents or other employees, and observation notes. Materials shall be complete, legible, objective, and fact-based.
- It is a requirement of CCL that unusual incidents must be reported to CCL by a telephone call within 24 hours of the County learning that an incident may have occurred.
    - In accordance with CCL protocol, the Site Supervisor remains the official contact with the CCL during any on-site CCL review/investigation process.
    - The Assistant Director must be notified by the Site Supervisor any time a representative from CCL conducts an on-site visit for any reason.
  - Any employee who fails to report an alleged incident as outlined above will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.
  - Any Site Supervisor or person-in-charge who fails to follow the protocol instructions as outlined above will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

**iv. CSB Administration Responsibilities**

- When the Unusual Incident Report is received by the CSB Administrative Office, the front desk clerk will personally deliver copies to the Personnel Administrator, Division Manager and the Bureau Director for review. When the review process is completed, an approved copy of

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the Unusual Incident Report will be scanned to the appropriate Assistant Director to sign and then the AD or his/her designee will fax/scan/email to CCL.

- A fact finding team will immediately be convened and directed to visit the center to gather information and determine if a child's rights have been violated and report these facts back to the Bureau Director.
- After reviewing the facts, if the Bureau Director determines that a true incident has not occurred, the case will be documented as such and closed.
- After reviewing the facts, if the Bureau Director determines that an incident may have occurred, the EHSD Director, Bureau Director or designee will notify the Head Start Regional Office and/or State DOE Early Education and Support Division in accordance with reporting requirements and as applicable to the funding source of the impacted child(ren).
- Only the EHSD Director or designee has the authority and responsibility on behalf of the County to report these matters to Licensing.
- Upon the notification by the EHSD Director or Bureau Director that an incident may have taken place, an investigation team will be sent out by the next business day to investigate and prepare a draft investigative report and findings.

CSB Administrative Office, in conjunction with the Assistant Director and Site Supervisor of the impacted center, will make all decisions related to protecting the rights of children on behalf of the Department until the investigation has been concluded.

Any employee who is considered to be involved with the violation of the rights of a child in connection with the incident report will be immediately re-assigned temporarily to another work location outside of the classroom and without contact with children until the investigation is concluded.

Failure on the part of the employee to report to, and remain at the alternate work location as directed, will cause the employee to receive absence without pay (AWOP) and to be subject to further discipline, up to and including termination.

The investigative team will have three business days to perform the required investigation and prepare a draft report for the Bureau Director and EHSD Director.

The Bureau Director and EHSD Director will review the report and decide next steps, including, if necessary, any disciplinary or remedial action that should be implemented as a result of the report's findings and conclusions.

The investigator's written report shall also include a holistic analysis of the causes associated with the incident and develop specific recommendations to prevent their recurrence.

Recommendations will be reviewed by the Bureau Director and EHSD Director for consistency with appropriate personnel policies prior to being entered into the final report. After appropriate action is taken by the Department, pertinent information regarding each incident shall be shared with key managers and Site Supervisors to prevent the recurrence of a similar incident at another site (Any report information shared with Department employees must be pre-reviewed by CSB Administration to ensure that it does not violate the confidentiality of any employees or children involved in the incident).

For major incidents, a detailed critique by management of the incident itself shall be provided to all employees on a department-wide basis to prevent the recurrence of a similar incident at another site.

**G. Partner Agencies including the Delegate Agency will follow these reporting steps**

- Notify and provide County with copies of any licensing citations, licensing visit reports, unusual incident report, and/or any other citations within 48 hours of Contractor's receipt of the report or citation.
- Maintain full compliance with Community Care Licensing Regulations and State and/or Federal Regulations as applicable given other funding sources received by CSB.
- Notify and provide CSB with copies of any Medical Alerts (such as infectious disease outbreaks) within 48 hours.