

The 2008 Family Income Guidelines

ACF-IM-HS-08-05-R

Abstract

This Information Memorandum supersedes ACF-IM-HS-08-05. Children are eligible to participate in Head Start if they are from families with incomes below the federal poverty level or if their families are eligible for public assistance. The 2008 Family Income Guidelines must be used to determine eligibility for Head Start for families who are eligible because they have low incomes.

The 2008 Family Income Guidelines

ACF Administration for Children and Families	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES	
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	3. Originating Office: Office of Head Start	
	4. Key Words: Income Guidelines	

NOTE: This IM supersedes ACF-IM-HS-08-05

INFORMATION MEMORANDUM [[See Attachments at the bottom](#)]

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

SUBJECT: The 2008 Family Income Guidelines

INFORMATION:

The Head Start Act establishes income eligibility for participation in Head Start programs based, in part, on the poverty guidelines updated annually in the Federal Register by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under the authority of 42 U.S.C. 9902(2). The attached 2008 Family Income Guidelines were published in the Federal Register on January 23, 2008 (Vol. 73, No. 15, pp. 3971-3972).

The attached definition of "income" that is used by Head Start is derived from the U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports and earlier reports in the same series. It provides a more detailed guidance on the term "income" than is found in 45 CFR 1305.2(i). However, there are certain exceptions to this definition that are applicable to Head Start programs:

Section 645(a)(3)(A) of the new Head Start Act requires that certain types of pay and allowance to members of the uniformed services not be counted as income for purposes of determining Head Start eligibility. Specifically, the following two pay/allowances are

to be excluded when determining Head Start eligibility:

The amount of any special pay payable under section 310 of title 37, United States Code, relating to duty subject to hostile fire or imminent danger.

The amount of basic allowance payable under section 403 of title 37, including any housing allowance. (Please see Section 645(a)(3)(ii) of the Head Start Act for the full statutory language.)

In addition, under 37 U.S.C. 402 a (g), the child or spouse of a member of the armed forces (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard) receiving a "supplemental subsistence allowance" who, except on account of such allowance, would be eligible to receive a service provided under the Head Start Act, shall be considered eligible for such benefits notwithstanding the receipt of the allowance. The subsistence allowance would therefore not be counted in determining eligibility for programs authorized by the Head Start Act.

The definition of "family" to be used in determining eligibility is found at 45 CFR 1305.2(e), which defines family as all persons living in the same household who are:

- (1) supported by the income of the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the child enrolling or participating in the program, and
- (2) related to the parent(s) or guardian(s) by blood, marriage or adoption.

Questions about the Income Guidelines should be addressed to your OHS Regional Office or the American Indian/Alaskan Natives or Migrant/Seasonal Program Branches.

Sincerely,

/ Patricia E. Brown /

Patricia E. Brown
Acting Director
Office of Head Start

Attachments:

[Family Income Guidelines 2008](#)
[Head Start Program Definition of Income](#)

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The 2008 Family Income Guidelines. ACF-IM-HS-08-05-R. DHHS/ACF/OHS. 2008. English.

- IM-06 Head Start Risk Management Process
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- IM-04 Head Start Reauthorization: Effective dates
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- IM-03 [Attachment:] Head Start Reauthorization: Two new provisions
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- IM-01 Head Start Reauthorization: P.L. 110-134
- IM-01 [Attachment:] Head Start Reauthorization: P.L. 110-134