



City of Chicago  
Richard M. Daley, Mayor

Chicago Department of  
Children and Youth Services

Mary Ellen Caron, Ph.D.  
Commissioner

Executive Office  
2nd Floor  
1615 West Chicago Avenue  
Chicago, Illinois 60622  
(312) 743-0300  
(312) 743-0400 (FAX)  
(312) 746-5445 (TTY)

<http://www.cityofchicago.org>

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## MEMORANDUM

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**TO:** EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS/PROGRAM DIRECTORS/LEAD COPA USERS  
**FROM:** LOUKISHA SMART PENNIX  
DIRECTOR  
CHILDREN SERVICES DIVISION  
**SUBJECT:** NEW ATTENDANCE PROCEDURE FOR HOME BASED HEAD START  
**DATE:** 5/23/2008  
**CC:** DELEGATE AGENCY GOVERNING BOARD

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### Attendance at Home Based Locations – Immediate Action Required

In order to more accurately show how your agency is meeting federal head start standards, we need your cooperation to change how you take attendance at home based locations.

Agencies delivering Head Start services using a Home Based model (Home Visiting Option) have expressed concern that taking attendance for this program option is bringing down the attendance percentage for the entire agency in COPA.

Typically, Head Start Home Based programs are delivering services by visiting the child's home one day a week, accompanied by some additional regularly scheduled socialization days in which children attend a center based activity or field trip. If attendance is taken using the same method as a regular Head Start classroom, the result is an attendance percentage for the "class" of about 20% in COPA.

The solution for this problem is to take attendance for a Head Start Home Based program according to the following method:

**Note: all home visits for the week should be recorded for attendance purposes on the same day, typically Monday.**

- From the "Sites" menu in COPA, click on your agency, then the desired site, then select the COPA "classroom" containing the home based children by clicking on "(Children)" next to the name of the classroom
- Click on Attendance and Meal Count
- Click on the pencil to edit the current week's attendance

- For each child's **home** that was visited during the week, mark that child present for Monday. (regardless of which day the site visit actually occurred)
- For all other days of the week, at the bottom of that day's column, select "non class day" from the pull down menu. This ensures that the children are not counted as absent in computing the agency's attendance percentage.
- For days on which **center based** activities are held, take attendance for the actual day the activity occurred, just as you would for a center based classroom.

In this way, the attendance percentage for a given month will reflect actual participation in the program option for that month.

Please begin this new procedure immediately. If you have any questions, contact Craig Zemke at [craig.zemke@cityofchicago.org](mailto:craig.zemke@cityofchicago.org) or 312-743-1446.