



The Head Start Fiscal Assistant

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/hsb/hsfa/>

Your guide to the administration and management of Head Start grants!

All the information you need, available at the click of the mouse!

Up until a year ago, a Head Start program manager or administrator didn't have many options when it came to obtaining information on grant management quickly. In fact, the only reliable resource from which a hassled Head Start official could seek instant answers was the Discretionary Grants Administration Manual. The Manual was a bulky, cumbersome three ring binder: rapidly out of date, difficult to use, and not always accessible when needed. The Head Start community needed a fast, efficient, dependable way to find answers to questions regarding the administration and management of Head Start grants.

The **Head Start Fiscal Assistant** is the Head Start community's premier on-line information database for information regarding the administration and management of Head Start funds. Far more than a compendium of Federal laws and regulations, the **Head Start Fiscal Assistant** is an interactive, searchable, user-friendly high-tech tool that allows the Head Start program's increasingly busy administrative staff to locate and make use of vital information quickly and efficiently. The system's on-line availability ensures accurate and up-to-date information, and the forthcoming CD-ROM version will bring the tools included in the Fiscal Assistant to anyone with a CD-ROM drive.

Some of the relevant information provided by the **Head Start Fiscal Assistant** includes:

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|  The Head Start Act |  Appeals Board Decisions |
|  OMB Circulars |  Fillable Standard Forms |
|  Program Regulations and Guidance |  Plain Language Narratives |
|  Head Start Policy Issuances |  Glossary of Definitions |

So much more than just fiscal management...

The **Head Start Fiscal Assistant** is far more than just a fiscal tool. The information contained in the website applies to many different areas of Head Start administration and grants management, including facilities management, the Head Start Performance Regulations, procurement, records access and retention, and so much more. As a result, the **Head Start Fiscal Assistant** is a useful tool for a broad cross-section of the Head Start community:

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|  Program Directors |  Federal Staff |
|  Fiscal Officers and Staff |  Program reviewers |
|  Policy Council members |  Auditors |

The project team has worked hard to insure that the widest possible variety of program types can find relevant information fast, without having to sort through the clutter of non-applicable information.

Fast, friendly, and free!

Getting started with the **Head Start Fiscal Assistant** takes only a few minutes, and it doesn't cost a penny. Simply type the appropriate URL (www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/hsb/hsfa/) into your browser, or you may follow the links from the Head Start Bureau's home page. Once the page has loaded, locate the Getting Started option on the menu bar at left. This introductory manual will provide a brief overview of the website, an introduction to the project itself, and a brief description of the many resources available within the **Head Start Fiscal Assistant**. Though much of the content included within the website is complex, every effort was made to ensure that users of all technical ability levels can feel comfortable turning to the **Head Start Fiscal Assistant** for all of their Head Start administration and grant management needs.

What if I can't find an Internet connection?

In creating the **Head Start Fiscal Assistant**, the Head Start Bureau wanted to provide an informative tool to everyone in the Head Start community, regardless of Internet connectivity. To that end, the Head Start Fiscal Assistant will soon be available in a CD-ROM format. Simply insert the CD into any computer, and the user has instant access to the same Fiscal Assistant tools available in the on-line version. Aside from being useful to those agencies that are not yet Internet capable, the CD version will be an invaluable tool to Head Start administrators and program reviewers who are traveling and need fast answers to Head Start administration and grant management questions.

Is this information current?

One of the virtues of an on-line information resource is the ease with which it can be updated. As the Head Start Bureau has many policy issuances that are updated regularly, such as the family income guidelines, the **Head Start Fiscal Assistant** has been designed from the start to be updateable in real time. By the end of the year, a maintenance module is scheduled for completion that will allow site administrators to instantly update the site whenever the Federal government issues a new policy, updates a regulation, or passes a new law. The CD-ROM version of the site will be equipped with a built-in shelf life and updated on a regular basis to ensure that no Head Start agency needs to worry about having access to accurate and up-to-date information. The **Head Start Fiscal Assistant** is poised to become the only tool for Head Start administration and grant management that you will ever need.

