

ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

- AGENCY:** U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (ACF)
- ACTION:** Announcement of availability of funds and request for applications to sponsor a Head Start program in the towns of **Danbury, New Fairfield, Sherman, Brookfield, Bethel, Newtown, Redding and Ridgefield in Fairfield County, Connecticut.**
- SUMMARY:** The Administration for Children and Families solicits applications from local public or private non-profit or local for-profit organizations that wish to compete for funds which are available to provide Head Start services in **Danbury, New Fairfield, Sherman, Brookfield, Bethel, Newtown, Redding and Ridgefield in Fairfield County, Connecticut.** Faith-based organizations are eligible to apply. The Head Start Act authorizes the Secretary to designate as a Head Start agency any local public or private nonprofit or local for-profit agency within a community. In the remainder of this document the term “Head Start program” means a program for pre-school children ages 3 to 5.
- The intent of this announcement is to provide for the continuation of services in **Danbury, New Fairfield, Sherman, Brookfield, Bethel, Newtown, Redding and Ridgefield in Fairfield County, Connecticut** previously provided by Community Action Committee of Danbury. Funds in the amount of approximately **\$1,648,877** annually will be available to provide Head Start program services to eligible children and their families.
- The former grantee was funded for a total enrollment of 289 children and families to operate a Head Start program in **Danbury, New Fairfield, Sherman, Brookfield, Bethel, Newtown, Redding and Ridgefield in Fairfield County, Connecticut.** Head Start regulations allow for a variety of program options and designs. Applicants should propose a design or designs that best address the needs of the proposed service area. Applicants have flexibility in determining the appropriate number of children to be served by the various program options (center-based, home-based, or combination) and program designs (hours per day, days per week, weeks per year.)

CLOSING

DATE: The closing date for receipt of applications under this announcement is 5:00 p.m. **July 31, 2003.**

**APPLICATION
RECEIPT
POINT:**

Educational Services, Inc.
ACYF Operations Center
1150 Connecticut Avenue, NW Suite 1100
Washington, D.C 20036
ATTN: Kristi Merritt
(202) 628-8080

Envelopes should be clearly marked "Danbury, CT Replacement."

Hand delivered applications are accepted at the above address during the normal working hours of 9:00 am to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, on or before the closing date.

**FOR FURTHER
INFORMATION:**

Any questions related to this announcement should be directed to Louise Eldridge at phone 617-565-1150 or fax 617-565-2493.

Copies of grant documents, forms, assurances and certifications are found at:

<http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm>

Copies of Head Start legislation, regulations and policies are found at:

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/hsb/budget/index.htm>

Copies of OMB circulars are found at:

http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/grants_circulars.html

INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS:

Table of Contents

This announcement is divided into five sections:

- Part I is an introductory section which discusses the purpose and goals of the Head Start program.
- Part II contains key program information such as a description of eligible applicants, project periods and applicable Head Start regulations.
- Part III Project Description and overview
- Part IV presents the criteria upon which applications will be reviewed and evaluated.
- Part V contains instructions for preparing and submitting the application.

PART I. PROGRAM BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE:

The purpose of this Request for Applications is to announce and solicit applications from local public and private non-profit or local for-profit organizations to provide Head Start services in **Danbury, New Fairfield, Sherman, Brookfield, Bethel, Newtown, Redding and Ridgefield in Fairfield County, Connecticut.**

Head Start is a national program whose purpose is to promote school readiness by enhancing the social and cognitive development of low-income children through the provision, to low-income children and their families, of health, educational, nutritional, social and other services. The Head Start program is based on the premise that all children share certain needs, and that children of low income families, in particular, can benefit from a comprehensive developmental program to meet those needs.

The program embodies a comprehensive approach which includes health, education, nutrition, social services and parent involvement, and is based on the philosophy that a child benefits from a comprehensive interdisciplinary program which fosters optimum growth and development and which remedies problems through a broad range of services. Involvement of the child's entire family, as well as the community, is critical. The program recognizes that the family is the principal influence on the child's development. The parents are also supported in pursuing their own self-sufficiency goals. The recent changes in the welfare system have a direct effect on many of the children and families served by Head Start. The need for collaboration with child care providers is critical as parents will, in many cases, need to secure full-day, full year services for their children in order to meet the work requirements under the welfare reform legislation, as well as reach the goal of self-sufficiency.

Head Start began in 1965 in the Office of Economic Opportunity and is now administered by the Administration for Children and Families, one of the principal components of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Beginning in 1995, the Early Head Start program expanded the scope of Head Start to include pregnant women and children from birth to age 3 with comprehensive, developmentally appropriate services for eligible infants and toddlers and pregnant women. Both programs are now referred to as Head Start.

PART II. PROGRAM INFORMATION AND REQUIREMENTS

A. Statutory and Regulatory Authority:

The Head Start program is authorized by Title VI, Subtitle A, Chapter 8, Subchapter B, of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981, Public Law 97-35 as amended, (42 USC 9831 et. seq.).

This Act was amended by the:

- Head Start Supplemental Authorization Act of 1989, Pub. L. 101-120;
- National Health Service Corps Revitalization Amendments of 1990, Pub. L. 101-597;
- Human Services Reauthorization Act of 1990, Title I, Pub. L. 101-501, as amended;
- Head Start Act Amendments of 1994, Pub. L. 103-252; and
- Community Opportunities, Accountability, and Training and Educational Services Act of 1998 (also referred to as the Coats Human Services Reauthorization Act of 1998).

Minor amendments to the Head Start Act were also made by the Technology-Related Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities Amendments of 1993, Pub. L. 103-218.

The regulations relevant to Head Start are:

- 45 CFR Part 1301, Head Start Grant Administration
- 45 CFR Part 1302, Policies and Procedures for Selection, Initial Funding and Refunding of Head Start Grantees, and for Selection of Replacement Grantees
- 45 CFR Part 1303, Appeal Procedures for Head Start Grantees and Current or Prospective Delegate Agencies
- 45 CFR Part 1304, Program Performance Standards for the Operation of Head Start Programs by Grantees and Delegate Agencies
- 45 CFR Part 1305, Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment and Attendance in Head Start

- 45 CFR Part 1306, Head Start Staffing Requirements and Program Options
- 45 CFR Part 1308, Head Start Program Performance Standards on Services for Children with Disabilities
- 45 CFR Part 1309, Head Start Facilities Purchase
- 45 CFR Part 1310, Head Start Transportation
- 45 CFR Part 1311, Head Start Fellows Program
- 45 CFR Part 74, Administration of Grants
- 45 CFR Part 92, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments

Copies of the Head Start Legislation, regulations and policies are found at:

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/hsb/budget/index.htm>

Copies of the current applicable Head Start regulations are available in the application kit. In addition, the following circulars by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) also apply to Head Start grantees:

- Administrative Requirements
 - OMB Circular A-102
 - OMB Circular A-110
- Cost Principles
 - OMB Circular A-21
 - OMB Circular A-87
 - OMB Circular A-122
- Audits
 - OMB Circular A-133 and Compliance Requirements

Copies of OMB circulars are found at:

http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/grants_circulars.html

B. Eligible Applicants:

Any *local* public or private non-profit (including Faith-based) or *local* for-profit agency or organization, *within a community*, is eligible to apply for funding to establish a Head Start program under this announcement. Applicants should provide documentation and an explanation as to how they meet this eligibility requirement. The Head Start Act defines a community as:

a city, county or multicounty or multicounty unit within a State, an Indian reservation (including Indians in any off-reservation area designated by an appropriate tribal government in consultation with the Secretary), or a neighborhood or other area (irrespective of boundaries or political subdivisions) which provides a suitable organizational base and possesses the commonality of interest needed to operate a Head Start program.

For-profit agencies must agree to waive their fee/profit. Faith-based organizations are eligible to apply. Applicants will be required to submit: (1) proof of legal or corporate status (2) proof of non-profit status if a non-profit agency; (3) certification of the organization's last audit report or other similar evidence of financial capability; (4) a copy of its personnel policies and procedures; and (5) resumes of key staff in the organization and proposed Head Start program. To be eligible for funding, applicants must provide evidence of their legal status and financial viability to meet the requirements of 45 CFR 1302.1 and 1302.2. In order to receive Federal grant funds, the applicant must have an Employer Identification Number (EIN) established by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

For-profit agencies should also know that a significant cost (10-20%) of operating a Head Start program is food for snacks and meals served to participating children. Head Start programs receive cash or commodities for this function from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). USDA regulations, however, do not permit assistance to for-profit entities, regardless of whether profit is actually earned in the activity for which assistance is available.

Any non-profit organization submitting an application must submit proof of its non-profit status in its application at the time of submission. The non-profit agency can accomplish this by providing a copy of the applicant's listing in the Internal Revenue Service's (IRS) most recent list of tax-exempt organizations described in Section 501(c) (3) of the IRS code, or by providing a copy of the currently valid IRS tax exemption certificate, or by providing a copy of the articles of incorporation bearing the seal of the State in which the corporation or association is domiciled.

"Legal status" means being established as a public agency or non-profit or for-profit agency under applicable State or Federal law. For the purposes of this announcement, "financial viability" means: 1) having the capability to furnish the non-Federal share of the cost of operating a Head Start program; 2) being financially stable; and 3) demonstrating the capability to assume accountability for the fiscal management of the grant.

ACF reserves the right to deny funding to any applicant that is presently designated as "high risk," probationary or not in good standing; or has been debarred or defunded by any Federal agency. In addition, ACF may elect not to fund applicants that have management or financial problems that make it unlikely that the applicant would be able to provide effective Head Start services.

C. Eligible Participants

Head Start is intended primarily for children from the age of three to the age when children enter kindergarten and whose families have incomes at or below the poverty line or are eligible for public assistance. In addition, section 645A of the Head Start Act provides authority for programs (known as Early Head Start) to serve low-income pregnant women and families with infants and toddlers (ages 0-3). The law permits up to ten percent of the Head Start children to be from families that do not meet these low-income criteria.

Head Start also requires that a minimum of ten-percent enrollment opportunities be made available to children with disabilities. Such children are expected to be enrolled in a full range of Head Start services and activities in an inclusive or mainstream setting with their non-disabled peers, and to receive needed special education and related services.

D. Project Period and Funding:

A total of approximately \$1,648,877 in ACF funds will be available. Awards, on a competitive basis, will be for a one-year budget period. Applications for continuation grants funded under these awards, beyond the first one year budget period, will be entertained in subsequent years on a non-competitive basis, subject to availability of funds, and satisfactory progress of the grantee. The program will be thoroughly reviewed at the end of the first year to determine its suitability for receiving continued funding.

In most cases, the grantee selected under this announcement will spend some portion of the first year on start-up activities. Applicants may submit a separate budget for start-up costs to clearly separate them from ongoing operational costs. ACF expects that this grantee will work with the current grantee, the interim grantee (if applicable) and the funding office in the transition process. The grantee will be expected to begin serving eligible children and families as soon as possible.

Applicants are advised that the Head Start Act and implementing regulations at 45 CFR 1301.32 limit the cost of administration and development in a grantee's budget to a reasonable level as determined by the responsible HHS official or to no more than 15% of the total approved costs of the program. Applicants that have an approved indirect cost rate are advised that this statutory limit may reduce the rate applied to the Head Start grant if the approved rate would result in administrative and development costs that exceed 15%.

E. Required Grantee Share of the Project

Section 640(b) of the Head Start Act requires that at least 20 percent of the total cost of Head Start projects come from sources other than the Federal government. The non-Federal share may be in cash or in-kind, including facilities, equipment or volunteer

services. Therefore, a project requesting \$1,648,877 in Federal funds must include a match of \$ 412,219 (20% of total project costs). Grantees may request a waiver to the required match if they meet one or more of the criteria for such a waiver specified in Section 640(b) of the Act.

PART III. THE PROJECT DESCRIPTION OVERVIEW

PURPOSE

The project description provides a major means by which an application is evaluated and ranked to compete with other applications for available assistance. The project description should be concise and complete and should address the activity for which Federal funds are being requested. Supporting documents should be included where they can present information clearly and succinctly. In preparing your project description, all information requested through each specific evaluation criteria should be provided. Awarding offices use this and other information in making their funding recommendations. It is important, therefore, that this information be included in the application.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

ACF is particularly interested in specific factual information and statements of measurable goals in quantitative terms. Project descriptions are evaluated on the basis of substance, not length. Extensive exhibits are not required. Cross referencing should be used rather than repetition. Supporting information concerning activities that will not be directly funded by the grant or information that does not directly pertain to an integral part of the grant funded activity should be placed in an appendix.

Pages should be numbered and a table of contents should be included for easy reference.

INTRODUCTION

Applicants required to submit a full project description shall prepare the project description statement in accordance with the following instructions and the specified evaluation criteria. The instructions give a broad overview of what your project description should include while the evaluation criteria expand and clarify more program-specific information that is needed.

PROJECT SUMMARY/ABSTRACT

Provide a summary of the project description (a page or less) with reference to the funding request.

OBJECTIVES AND NEED FOR ASSISTANCE

Clearly identify the physical, economic, social, financial, institutional, and/or other problem(s) requiring a solution. The need for assistance must be demonstrated and the principal and subordinate objectives of the project must be clearly stated; supporting documentation, such as letters of support and testimonials from concerned interests other than the applicant, may be included. Any relevant data based on planning studies should be included or referred to in the endnotes/footnotes. Incorporate demographic data and participant/beneficiary information, as needed. In developing the project description, the applicant may volunteer or be requested to provide information on the total range of projects currently being conducted and supported (or to be initiated), some of which may be outside the scope of the program announcement.

APPROACH

Outline a plan of action which describes the scope and detail of how the proposed work will be accomplished. Account for all functions or activities identified in the application. Cite factors which might accelerate or decelerate the work and state your reason for taking the proposed approach rather than others. Describe any unusual features of the project such as design or technological innovations, reductions in cost or time, or extraordinary social and community involvement.

Provide quantitative monthly or quarterly projections of the accomplishments to be achieved for each function or activity in such terms as the number of people to be served and the number of activities accomplished. When accomplishments cannot be quantified by activity or function, list them in chronological order to show the schedule of accomplishments and their target dates.

If any data is to be collected, maintained, and/or disseminated, clearance may be required from the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB). This clearance pertains to any "collection of information that is conducted or sponsored by ACF."

List organizations, cooperating entities, consultants, or other key individuals who will work on the project along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution.

STAFF AND POSITION DATA

Provide a biographical sketch for each key person appointed and a job description for each vacant key position. A biographical sketch will also be required for new key staff as appointed.

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILES

Provide information on the applicant organization(s) and cooperating partners such as organizational charts, financial statements, audit reports or statements from CPAs/Licensed Public Accountants, Employer Identification Numbers, names of bond carriers, contact persons and telephone numbers, child care licenses and other documentation of professional accreditation, information on compliance with Federal/State/local government standards, documentation of experience in the program area, and other pertinent information. Any non-

profit organization submitting an application must submit proof of its non-profit status in its application at the time of submission. The non-profit agency can accomplish this by providing a copy of the applicant's listing in the Internal Revenue Service's (IRS) most recent list of tax-exempt organizations described in Section 501(c)(3) of the IRS code, or by providing a copy of the currently valid IRS tax exemption certificate, or by providing a copy of the articles of incorporation bearing the seal of the State in which the corporation or association is domiciled.

BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

Provide line-item detail and detailed calculations for each budget object class identified on the Budget Information form. Detailed calculations must include estimation methods, quantities, unit costs, and other similar quantitative detail sufficient for the calculation to be duplicated. The detailed budget must also include a breakout by the funding sources identified in Block 15 of the SF-424.

Provide a narrative budget justification that describes how the categorical costs are derived. Discuss the necessity, reasonableness and allocability of the proposed costs.

GENERAL

The following guidelines are for preparing the budget and budget justification. Both Federal and non-Federal resources shall be detailed and justified in the budget and narrative justification. For purposes of preparing the budget and budget justification, "Federal resources" refers only to the ACF grant for which you are applying. Non-Federal resources are all other Federal and non-Federal resources. It is suggested that budget amounts and computations be presented in a columnar format: first column, object class categories; second column, Federal budget; next column(s), non-Federal budget(s), and last column, total budget. The budget justification should be a narrative.

PERSONNEL

Description: Costs of employee salaries and wages.

Justification: Identify the project director or principal investigator, if known. For each staff person, provide the title, time commitment to the project (in months), time commitment to the project (as a percentage or full-time equivalent), annual salary, grant salary, wage rates, etc. Do not include the costs of consultants or personnel costs of delegate agencies or of specific project(s) or businesses to be financed by the applicant.

FRINGE BENEFITS

Description: Costs of employee fringe benefits unless treated as part of an approved indirect cost rate.

Justification: Provide a breakdown of the amounts and percentages that comprise fringe benefit costs such as health insurance, FICA, retirement insurance, taxes, etc.

TRAVEL

Description: Costs of project-related travel by employees of the applicant organization (does not include costs of consultant travel).

Justification: For each trip, show the total number of traveler(s), travel destination, duration of trip, per diem, mileage allowances, if privately owned vehicles will be used, and other transportation costs and subsistence allowances. Travel costs for key staff to attend ACF-sponsored workshops should be detailed in the budget.

EQUIPMENT

Description: "Equipment" means an article of non-expendable, tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of (a) the capitalization level established by the organization for the financial statement purposes, or (b) \$5,000. (Note: Acquisition cost means the net invoice unit price of an item of equipment, including the cost of any modifications, attachments, accessories, or auxiliary apparatus necessary to make it usable for the purpose for which it is acquired. Ancillary charges, such as taxes, duty, protective in-transit insurance, freight, and installation shall be included in or excluded from acquisition cost in accordance with the organization's regular written accounting practices.)

Justification: For each type of equipment requested, provide a description of the equipment, the cost per unit, the number of units, the total cost, and a plan for use on the project, as well as use or disposal of the equipment after the project ends. An applicant organization that uses its own definition for equipment should provide a copy of its policy or section of its policy which includes the equipment definition.

SUPPLIES

Description: Costs of all tangible personal property other than that included under the Equipment category.

Justification: Specify general categories of supplies and their costs. Show computations and provide other information which supports the amount requested.

CONTRACTUAL

Description: Costs of all contracts for services and goods except for those which belong under other categories such as equipment, supplies, construction, etc. Third-party evaluation contracts (if applicable) and contracts with secondary recipient organizations, including delegate agencies and specific project(s) or businesses to be financed by the applicant, should be included under this category.

Justification: All procurement transactions shall be conducted in a manner to provide, to the maximum extent practical, open and free competition. Recipients and subrecipients, other than States that are required to use Part 92 procedures, must justify any anticipated procurement action that is expected to be awarded without competition and exceed the simplified acquisition threshold fixed at 41 USC 403(11) (currently set at \$100,000). Recipients might be required to make available to ACF pre-award review and procurement documents, such as request for proposals or invitations for bids, independent cost estimates, etc.

Note: Whenever the applicant intends to delegate part of the project to another agency, the applicant must provide a detailed budget and budget narrative for each delegate agency, by agency title, along with the required supporting information referred to in these instructions.

CONSTRUCTION

Description: Costs of construction by applicant or contractor.

Justification: Provide a detailed budget and narrative in accordance with the instructions for other object class categories. Identify which construction activities/costs will be contractual and which will be assumed by the applicant.

OTHER

Description: Enter the total of all other costs. Such costs, where applicable and appropriate, may include but are not limited to insurance, food, medical and dental costs (non-contractual), professional services costs, space and equipment rentals, printing and publication, computer use, training costs, such as tuition and stipends, staff development costs, and administrative costs.

Justification: Provide computations, a narrative description and a justification for each cost under this category.

INDIRECT CHARGES

Description: Total amount of indirect costs. This category should be used only when the applicant currently has an indirect cost rate approved by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Division of Cost Allocation, or other cognizant Federal agency.

Justification: An applicant that will charge indirect costs to the grant must enclose a copy of the current rate agreement. If the applicant organization is in the process of initially developing or renegotiating a rate, it should immediately upon notification that an award will be made, develop a tentative indirect cost rate proposal based on its most recently completed fiscal year in accordance with the principles set forth in the cognizant agency's guidelines for establishing indirect cost rates, and submit it to the cognizant agency. Applicants awaiting approval of their indirect cost proposals may also request indirect costs. It should be noted that when an indirect

cost rate is requested, those costs included in the indirect cost pool should not also be charged as direct costs to the grant. Also, if the applicant is requesting a rate which is less than what is allowed under the program, the authorized representative of the applicant organization must submit a signed acknowledgement that the applicant is accepting a lower rate than allowed.

PROGRAM INCOME

Description: The estimated amount of income, if any, expected to be generated from this project.

Justification: Describe the nature, source and anticipated use of program income in the budget or refer to the pages in the application which contain this information.

NON-FEDERAL RESOURCES

Description: Amounts of non-Federal resources, in cash or in-kind, that will be used to support the project as identified in Block 15 of the SF-424.

Justification: The firm commitment of these resources must be documented and submitted with the application in order to be given credit in the review process. A detailed budget must be prepared for each funding source.

TOTAL DIRECT CHARGES, TOTAL INDIRECT CHARGES, TOTAL PROJECT COSTS ARE SELF EXPLANATORY

PART IV. EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR COMPETITIVE REVIEW OF PROPOSALS

Applications will be reviewed and evaluated competitively against the following criteria:

Criterion 1. OBJECTIVES AND NEED FOR ASSISTANCE (20 Points)

The applicant must identify the geographic location to be served by the program. The applicant must define the area(s) of greatest need and show how it will direct Head Start resources to these areas.

The following factors will be used to assist in the review and evaluation of applicants under this criterion:

- The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that services will be provided to those families and children who have the most urgent need for Head Start services, including those receiving services from the former grantee.
- The extent to which the applicant addresses how it will ensure a smooth transition of Head Start program operations from the current grantee to the applicant agency to

meet the need for services. The applicant should also include a time frame for completing this transition and becoming fully operational.

- The extent to which the applicant demonstrates the need for child development services for Head Start eligible children and families, including the estimated number of eligible children by geographic location, racial and ethnic composition, and non-English language children. Include data regarding the education, health, nutrition, social, child care and other service needs of the proposed children and families.
- The extent to which the applicant provides evidence of community support. Describe the process for involvement of currently served parents and parents to be served in the future, service providers, organizations and other members of the community in determining the need for services in the geographic locations proposed by the applicant.

Criterion 2. APPROACH (40 Points)

The applicant must describe the design and approach of the proposed program and how it will meet the needs of the population it plans to serve. Program services must meet the Head Start Program Performance Standards, the Head Start Staffing Requirements and Program Options, and the Head Start Program Performance Standards for Children with Disabilities.

The following factors will be used to assist in the review and evaluation of applicants under this criterion:

- The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that the proposed program will provide comprehensive, high quality educational, health, mental health, nutritional, social and other services to children and their families.
- The extent to which the applicant proposes to demonstrate the capacity to measure child outcomes.
- The extent to which the applicant describes how children and families will be recruited and selected for the program to ensure that services will be provided to those who have the most serious need for Head Start services. The applicant should describe how the program will ensure that at least 10 percent of enrollment opportunities will be available to children with disabilities and how the full range of Head Start services and activities will be provided in a mainstream setting.
- The extent to which the applicant's plan: proposes to include non-English language children and their families; proposes to offer families substance abuse counseling, including information on drug-exposed infants and fetal alcohol syndrome; and proposes to inform custodial parents about the availability of child support services and refer eligible parents to State and local child support services.

- The extent to which the applicant’s plan proposes to collaborate and cooperate with the State’s Child Care and Development Fund program.
- The extent to which the applicant justifies the program option or options most appropriate for the communities in which it proposes to provide services (e.g., part or full day center-based, home-based or combination option). The applicant should specify the planned number of hours per day, days per week, and weeks per year of program operations. Describe how the program option(s) and services are responsive to the child care needs of Head Start-eligible families who are employed, in education or training programs, or participating in welfare reform initiatives designed to enhance family self-sufficiency. The applicant should discuss the approaches which would be used to assure that the activities are developmentally appropriate and how multicultural principles will be implemented within the program.
- The extent to which the applicant indicates how the Policy Council/Committee will be organized and how the Policy Council/Committee will participate in the operation of the program, as required by 45 CFR Part 1304.50, Appendix A, Governance and Management Responsibilities.
- The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that it will provide experiences and activities that support and enhance the parental role as the principal influence in their child's education and development.
- The extent to which the applicant proposes to enter into partnerships or cooperative agreements with other public or private agencies which would assist the applicant in providing high quality child health and developmental services and program management services. Such partnerships must include a plan to coordinate the proposed Head Start program with other child care and preschool programs, programs under Part C and Section 619 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and with the educational programs that children to be served will enter upon leaving Head Start.
- The extent to which the applicant describes the proposed organizational structure that supports the accomplishment of program objectives and will assure high quality services. Applicant should discuss the following: assignment of key management functions; assignment of content area expertise; the organization's supervisory structure, including support staff.
- The extent to which the applicant demonstrates the existence of management systems for program planning, internal and external communication, record keeping, issuance of internal and external reports and program self assessment and monitoring.
- The extent to which the applicant describes an ongoing strategy for professional development, peer support, supervision, and evaluation of staff and program

managers, oriented to improving skills, knowledge, effectiveness, and career opportunities of all employees.

- The extent to which the applicant proposes to provide employment opportunities for existing Head Start staff and target area residents, and career development opportunities for paraprofessional and other staff.

Criterion 3. STAFF AND POSITION DATA/ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILES (20 Points)

This section measures the qualifications and experience of the applicant and the applicant's staff in planning, organizing and providing comprehensive child development services at the community level.

The following factors will be used to evaluate this criterion:

- The extent to which the applicant proposes a clear plan for reviewing the qualifications and effectiveness of existing qualified Head Start staff employed by the current grantee and making decisions on their continued employment.
- The extent to which the applicant demonstrates potential for administering a Head Start program effectively and exercising sound fiscal management, based on experience. Applicants that served as delegate agencies to the former grantee and operated programs that met or exceeded the performance standards and measures should provide appropriate information.
- The extent to which the applicant demonstrates the ability to provide timely and efficient implementation of all program components and services, including planning during the start-up period, the availability of classroom space which meets required standards, the ability to provide necessary transportation and the ability to recruit eligible children and families. All applications must include an implementation timetable which expressly states when children will begin receiving Head Start services.
- The extent to which the applicant demonstrates how the applicant's experience and history document an ability to effectively and efficiently administer a project of this size, complexity and scope with the proposed program director and proposed key project staff should be included.
- The extent to which the applicant outlines plans and demonstrates capacity in its senior executive managers and governing board to: (1) exercise effective oversight of program operations and accountability for Federal funds; (2) include the Policy Council in the planning and decision-making process; (3) assure representation of the diverse community served; (4) set and monitor overall agency priorities and operational systems; and (5) conduct self-assessments and outcome-based evaluations.

Criterion 4. BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION (20 Points)

This section will evaluate the extent to which the project's costs are appropriate and reasonable in view of the activities to be carried out and the anticipated outcomes.

The following factors will be used to assist in the review and evaluation of applications under this criterion:

- The extent to which funds are budgeted to provide all required comprehensive Head Start services to eligible children and families in a cost-effective manner as indicated in the application narrative.
- The extent to which the applicant provides evidence that start-up costs are reasonable. Start-up costs include ensuring that proposed facilities comply with State and local requirements and are adequately equipped, both indoors and outdoors. Where facilities are not available, a plan to acquire them should be presented.
- The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that it will contribute the required non-Federal share of the total project cost.
- The extent to which the applicant shows its ability to meet the 15 percent limitation on development and administrative costs.
- Where the applicant proposes combining Head Start resources with other early childhood funding sources, systems to track, manage, and account for multiple funding streams and allocate costs to different funding sources are clearly described.

PART V. THE APPLICATION PROCESS

A. Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995

Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13), the Department is required to submit to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and approval any reporting and record-keeping requirements or program announcements. This program announcement meets all information collection requirements approved for ACF grant applications under OMB Control Number 0970-0139.

B. Required Forms

Eligible applicants interested in applying for funds must submit all of the required forms referred to in this section and described below.

Copies of grant documents, forms, assurances and certifications are found at:

<http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs ofs/forms.htm>

In order to be considered for a grant under this announcement, an application must be submitted on the Standard Form 424 which has been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under Control Number 0348-0043. Each application must be signed by an individual authorized to act for the applicant and to assume responsibility for the obligations imposed by the terms and conditions of the grant award.

In order to receive Federal grant funds, the applicant must have an Employer Identification Number (EIN) established by the Internal Revenue Service.

Applicants are required to submit Standard Form 424A "Budget Information - Non Construction Program" and the Standard Form 424B, "Assurances: Non-Construction Programs" with their application.

Applicants must provide a certification concerning lobbying. Prior to receiving an award in excess of \$100,000, applicants shall furnish an executed copy of the lobbying certification. Applicants must sign and return the certification with their application.

Applicants must certify their compliance with the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 and submit a copy of the certification form as part of the application. By signing and submitting its application, the applicant is providing the certification required by 45 CFR Part 76.

Applicants must certify that they are not presently debarred, suspended or otherwise ineligible for an award. The form titled "Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters - Primary Covered Transactions. By signing and submitting its application, the applicant is providing the certification required by 45 CFR Part 76.

Applicants must provide evidence of fiscal integrity. This must be in the form of an opinion or other professional attestation by an independent auditor.

Applicants must submit the qualifications for board members, Executive Director, Head Start Director, and Financial Manager/Chief Financial Officer.

Applicants must also understand that they will be held accountable for the smoking prohibition included within P.L. 103-227, The Pro-Children's Act of 1994

C. Executive Order 12372 - Notification Process

STATE SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT (SPOC)

This program is covered under Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," and 45 CFR Part 100, "Intergovernmental Review of Department of Health and

Human Services Programs and Activities." Under the Order, States may design their own processes for reviewing and commenting on proposed Federal assistance under covered programs. NOTE: STATE/TERRITORY PARTICIPATION IN THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS DOES NOT SIGNIFY APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE UNDER A PROGRAM. A POTENTIAL APPLICANT MUST MEET THE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS OF THE PROGRAM FOR WHICH IT IS APPLYING PRIOR TO SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION TO ITS SPOC, IF APPLICABLE, OR TO ACF.

As of March 5, 2003, Connecticut has elected not to participate in the Executive Order process. Applicants from this jurisdictions or for projects administered by Federally-recognized Indian Tribes need take no action in regard to E.O. 12372:

Although the jurisdiction listed above no longer participates in the process, entities which have met the eligibility requirements of the program are still eligible to apply for a grant even if a State, Territory, Commonwealth, etc. does not have a SPOC. All remaining jurisdictions participate in the Executive Order process and have established SPOCs. Applicants from participating jurisdictions should contact their SPOCs as soon as possible to alert them of the prospective applications and receive instructions. Applicants must submit any required material to the SPOCs as soon as possible so that the program office can obtain and review SPOC comments as part of the award process. The applicant must submit all required materials, if any, to the SPOC and indicate the date of this submittal (or the date of contact if no submittal is required) on the Standard Form 424, item 16a. Under 45 CFR 100.8(a)(2), a SPOC has 60 days from the application deadline to comment on proposed new or competing continuation awards.

SPOCs are encouraged to eliminate the submission of routine endorsements as official recommendations. Additionally, SPOCs are requested to clearly differentiate between mere advisory comments and those official State process recommendations which may trigger the "accommodate or explain" rule.

When comments are submitted directly to ACF, they should be addressed to:

Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
JFK Federal Building, Room 2000
Boston, Massachusetts 02203
ATTN: Louise Eldridge

D. Application Format

Applications should be organized according to the evaluation criteria in Part III of this announcement. The application must be paginated and contain a table of contents listing each section of the application with the respective pages identified. One signed original and two copies of the grant application, including all attachments, are required. ACF encourages the submission of *[one]* additional copy to facilitate the review process.

E. Checklist for a Complete Application

The checklist below is for your use to ensure that the application package has been properly prepared.

- (1) Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424 package which includes SF-424 [Application for Federal Assistance,] SF-424A [Budget Information - Non Construction Programs], and SF-424B [Assurances - Non Construction Programs]);
- (2) Table of Contents;
- (3) Budget justification for Section B-Budget Categories, including subcontract agency budgets;
- (4) Project Summary;
- (5) Application Narrative and Appendices;
- (6) Documentation and explanation regarding being local within the community;
- (7) Résumés of key staff in the organization and proposed Head Start program;
- (8) Proof of legal or corporate status;
- (9) Proof of non-profit status (for non-profit organizations).
- (10) Certification of the organization's last audit report or other similar evidence of financial capability;
- (11) *If needed*: Executive Order 12372 State Point of Contact Project Notification Certification;
- (12) A copy of the applicant's personnel policies and procedures;
- (13) Certification Regarding Lobbying;
- (14) Indirect Cost Negotiated Agreement;
- (15) Tribal Council Resolution (for American Indian programs only).

F. Closing Date for the Receipt of Applications

The closing date for submission of applications is 5:00 p.m. on July 31, 2003. Applications received after the closing date will be considered as late.

Deadline: Mailed applications shall be considered as meeting an announced deadline if they are either received on or before the deadline date or sent on or before the deadline date and received by ACF in time for the independent review.

Applicants are cautioned to request a legibly dated U.S. Postal Service postmark or to obtain a legibly dated receipt from a commercial carrier or U.S. Postal Service. Private metered postmarks shall not be acceptable as proof of timely mailing.

Applications handcarried by applicants, applicant couriers, or by overnight/express mail couriers shall be considered as meeting an announced deadline if they are received on or

before the deadline date, between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. between Monday and Friday (excluding Federal holidays) at

Educational Services, Inc.
ACYF Operations Center
1150 Connecticut Avenue, NW Suite 1100
Washington, D.C. 20036
ATTN: Kristi Merritt

Applicants are cautioned that express/overnight mail services do not always deliver as agreed.

ACF cannot accommodate transmission of applications by fax or through other electronic media. Therefore, applications transmitted to ACF electronically will not be accepted regardless of date or time of submission and time of receipt.

Late applications: Applications which do not meet the criteria above are considered late applications. ACF shall notify each late applicant that its application will not be considered in the current competition.

Extension of deadlines: ACF may extend an application deadline for applicants affected by acts of God such as floods and hurricanes, or when there is widespread disruption of the mails.

G. Application Submission:

Interested agencies and organizations should return completed applications to:

Educational Services, Inc.
ACYF Operations Center
1150 Connecticut Avenue, NW Suite 1100
Washington, D.C 20036
ATTN: Kristi Merritt

H. Application Consideration

Applications will be reviewed against the evaluation criteria described in Part III above. The review will be conducted by reviewers knowledgeable about the Head Start program and early childhood development.

The results of the competitive review will be taken into consideration by ACF in deciding the project to be funded but are not in themselves binding. The responsible HHS official will consider other relevant factors, some of which are described below, in making the final decision.

ACF may elect not to fund applicants who have management or financial problems that make it unlikely that the applicant would be able to provide effective Head Start services.

Also, ACF may decide not to fund projects with what it regards as unreasonably large initial start-up costs for facilities or equipment, or projects with unreasonably high operating costs.

Applications which do not meet the Head Start Act's criteria for an agency which is a local agency "within a community" will be screened out and not reviewed by the review panel. See Section 641(a) of the Head Start Act. To be considered, applicants should clearly have the organizational base and commonality of interest with the community(ies) to be served. This could be established by virtue of the grantee being a provider of services in the community or having a clear relationship to the community as evinced, for example, by board representation from the community or by evidence of the support of community leaders, including, but not limited to mayors, city council members, school principals, presidents of local chambers of commerce, county government officials, social service provider organizations, community organizations representing low income, minority or other relevant sectors of the community, and child-care providers and organizations.

For-profit agencies which wish to apply for Head Start funding should be aware that there are regulatory and statutory provisions that relate specifically to them. The most important of the regulations is at 45 CFR Part 74, Subpart E "Special Provisions for

Awards to Commercial Organizations," which states that "no HHS funds may be paid as profit to any recipient." As a result, applications from for-profit, nonprofit, and public agencies will be reviewed in the same manner. For-profit applicants should also be aware that the Head Start Act at Section 641(g) states that in designating a Head Start agency, the Secretary may give priority to a nonprofit agency when a for-profit agency has an application of equivalent quality. This Section also states that priority will be given to agencies which have "demonstrated capacity in providing comprehensive early childhood services to children and their families."

Applications may be funded in whole or in part. Successful applicants will be notified through the issuance of a Financial Assistance Award which sets forth the amount of funds awarded, the terms and conditions of the grant, the budget period for which support is given, the non-Federal share to be provided, and the total period for which support is provided.

Organizations whose applications will not be funded will be notified of that decision in writing within 30 days after final funding decisions are made.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Number 93.600, Project Head Start.)

Dated:

*Joan E. Ohl
Commissioner
Administration on Children
Youth and Families*

NECESSARY FORMS ARE AVAILALBE ON THE WEB-SITES NOTED

- (01) Application For Federal Assistance (SF-424 package which includes SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance), SF-424A (Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs) and SF-424B (Assurances - Non-Construction Programs)
<http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/ofs/grants/sf424.pdf>
<http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/ofs/grants/sf424a.pdf>
- (02) Head Start Act
<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/hsb/budget/headstartact.htm>
- (03) Head Start Regulations (45 CFR Parts 1301-1310)
<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/hsb/performance/index.htm>
- (04) If needed, Executive Order 12372 State Points of Contact Project Notification Certification and State Single Points of Contact Address Listing
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/spoc.html>
- (05) Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters - Primary Covered Transactions
<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/oa/debar.htm>
- (06) Certification Regarding Lobbying
<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/oa/lobby.htm>
- (07) Certification Regarding Drug-Free Workplace Requirements
<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/oa/drugfree.htm>
- (08) The Smoking Prohibition included with P.L. 103-277, The Pro-Children's Act of 1994.
http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/research_data/youth/464119.htm
- (09) Family Income Guidelines (current ACYF Information Memorandum)
http://www.headstartinfo.org/publications/im03/im03_03.htm
- (10) 45 CFR Part 74, Administration of Grants
http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx_99/45cfr74_99.html
- (11) 45 CFR Part 92, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments
http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx_99/45cfr92_99.html