

Five County Child Development Program, Inc.

An Equal Opportunity Employer

Five County does not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, disability or age.

2020-2021 PARENT HANDBOOK



Mrs. Janet Moak,
Family Service/ERSEA Director
Dr. Jonathan Bines,
Executive Director
Mr. Andrew Reeves,
Board of Directors, Chairperson

Five County Child Development Program's Mission Statement
"Improving the Quality of Life of Children, Families, and Communities."

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**To view Five County's Covid-19 Reopening Plan,
please visit our website at www.fivecountyhs.org**

Dear Parents of Five County,

Five County Child Development Program, Inc. would like to take this opportunity, to welcome all of our Head Start Parents. Thank you for entrusting Five County Child Development Program, Inc. with your child's education. Our goal is to instill values and principles in the minds of every child and to bring about physical, mental, academic and social development skills needed to succeed in life.

Five County Child Development Program, Inc. employs highly qualified, caring teachers and staff, to make sure that your child/children are properly taken care of while in our facilities. Five County's mission statement is "Improving the Quality of Life of Children, Families, and Communities." Five County Child Development Program, Inc. would not be able to carry out our mission or the philosophy of Head Start without YOU.

This school year, will look a little different due to the covid-19. It will take all of us to ensure that our Head Start program exceed its goals and expectations for our children and families during this time. We ask that we continue to work together to make sure our staff, children and families are safe.

We look forward to partnering with you as we work together to give your child a Head Start. Thank you for your continued support.

Yours truly,

Dr. Jonathan Bines

Executive Director

CHILD CARE REGULATIONS SUMMARY FOR PARENTS

Dear Parents,

The Regulations Governing Licensure of Child Care Facilities require that child care providers supply you with a summary of the Child Care Regulations that govern the licensure of child care facilities. You will find that information below.

The Child Care Regulations are the rules and regulations that each child care facility in Mississippi must follow in order to maintain their Child Care License. You, as a parent, are entitled access to these regulations. Among the subjects covered in the Child Care Regulations are:

Licensing Requirements	Health, Hygiene, and Safety	School-Age Care
Right of Entry and Violations	Nutrition and Meals	Summer Day Camp & School-Age
Facility Policies and Procedures	Discipline and Guidance	Programs
Personnel Requirements	Transportation	Hourly Child Care
Records	Diapering and Toileting	Hearings, Emergency
Reports	Rest Periods	Suspensions, Legal Action
Staff Requirements	Feeding of Infants and Toddlers	and Penalties
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A full copy of the Child Care regulations should be located in the Director’s office of your child care facility. It should be available for your examination upon request. You may also access the Regulations at www.healthyms.com (from the left menu, select Regulations and Licensure, then Child Care). You may direct your questions to the local licensing official, Kimberly Putman at 662-8417870 or you may contact the Child Care Licensure office in Jackson at (601) 364-2827.

Should you have a complaint concerning a child care facility, contact the licensing official listed above or call the Child Care Licensure office, toll free, at **1-866-489-8734**.

Post Office Box 1700 • Jackson, MS 39215-1700

1-866-HLTHY4U • www.HealthyMS.com *Equal Opportunity in Employment and Services*

MANAGEMENT TEAM

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

JONATHAN BINES..... (601) 792-5191

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGER

REGENALD BYRD..... (601) 792-3251

FISCAL OFFICER

TANGELIA REESE..... (601) 792-3230

CHILD HEALTH & SAFETY SERVICES

TANYA FEAZELL..... (601) 792-3256

FAMILY SERVICE/ERSEA

JANET MOAK..... (601) 792-5194

EDUCATION & EARLY CHILDHOOD

LATASHA HARRIEN (601) 792-8573

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EVELYN STRICKLAND..... (601) 792-3246

MAINTENANCE & FACILITIES

CLEVIE BRENT..... (601) 441-1985

NUTRITION

HADASSAH DEVINE..... (601) 792-3240

DISABILITIES/MENTAL HEALTH/TRANSITION

TINA JOHNSON..... (601) 792-3241

PARENT, FAMILY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

SHEANDA ELLIS..... (601) 792-8570

COMPLAINCE OFFICER

LESHIA GRAVES..... (601) 792-8162

CHILD PLUS MANAGER

LURINE PRICE..... (601) 792-3235

“Improving the Quality of Life of Children, Families, and Communities.”



Five County Child Development Program, Inc.

President Lyndon B. Johnson officially declared the “war on poverty” in his message to Congress on January 12, 1964. In that message he outlined the nature of the Federal Anti-Poverty program and the Community Services Administration, formerly called the Office of Economic Opportunity, was established. Five County Child Development Program, Inc., a non-profit Mississippi Charter Corporation, is an outgrowth of this act of the President and Congress.

Community leaders, such as Dr. S. L. Richmond, Reverend L. Z. Blankenship, Sr., Mr. Edgar Bridges, Sr., Mr. J. C. Burns and others pioneered the birth of Sophia Sutton Mission Head Start by organizing the community, mobilizing public and private resources. The purpose of Head Start was and still is to serve underprivileged children and families.

Sophia Sutton Mission Head Start was an eight-week summer pilot program started in March of 1965, in Jefferson Davis County under the directorship of Dr. S. L. Richmond. The Head Start program became full year in September 1966. In 1971, the program was chartered and the name was changed to Five County Child Development Program, Inc., serving the counties of Jones, Jefferson Davis, Covington, Simpson, and Lawrence. In the late 70’s Five County discontinued services in Jones County.

The Board of Directors, directed the program from December 1971 through June 1972. In July of 1972, Ms. Magdalene White was selected as Head Start Director and served through June 1978. Mr. Preston White, Jr. served as interim Head Start Director from July 1, 1978 through June 1979, at which time Mr. Buford Graves was selected as Head Start Director and served from July 1979 through September 2000. Mr. Lee A. Frison, Sr. served as Head Start Director from October 2000 through May 2007. Five County was under the leadership of Dr. Jonathan Bines as Head Start Director since June 1, 2007. On June 30, 2014, Five County Head Start grant ended. The new Head Start grant was awarded to Five County as of July 1, 2014, with Dr. Jonathan Bines as Executive Director.

The agency currently serves three-to-five-year-old children and their families in five counties; Jefferson Davis, Covington, Lawrence, Simpson and now Lincoln County. Five County’s mission statement is “Improving the Quality of Life of Children, Families and Communities”.

Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic Five County’s Policies and Procedures are subject to change without notice.

PARENT NEWSLETTER

Welcome to Five County Head Start!!

We are looking forward to a successful year with you and your child.

Parent Involvement:

Parent Involvement is very important to the growth, development and success of your child. Throughout the year we will need your support and cooperation. We are available to you for conferences about your child/children and to help with any concerns that may arise. **(This has been changed due to the pandemic, currently parents and visitors need to make an appointment and be screened before entering the center.)**

In order for us to operate cooperatively and successfully this year, we ask you to please keep this handbook and make every effort to abide by these rules:

CHILDREN ATTENDING SCHOOL DAILY:

Please send your child to school every day he/she is able. Attendance affects your child's outcomes and success. If for any reason your child will be absent or late, please notify the Center Staff before 8:30 a.m. It is the policy of Five County to attempt to make contact with the parent if the child is unexpectedly absent and the parent has not contacted the center by 8:30 a.m. Attendance also affects funding for our program. **(Due to the pandemic, children may attend class two days each week only on their scheduled days and virtual class two days.)**

BE ON TIME:

Please send your child/children to school only on their scheduled days, please have them at school no later than 8:30 a.m. to assure that the child/children receive all of the day's activities. Children must be picked up no later than 3:30 p.m.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE:

Our Centers are open from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Children cannot be dropped off before 7:30 a.m. and must be picked-up before 3:30 p.m. When bringing your child to school please arrive before 8:30 a.m. Parents are required to sign their child in and out. Please have your child to school on time, this will allow the child/children the opportunity to eat breakfast (served promptly at 8:30 a.m.) and participate in a full day of activities. The afternoon bus departure will take place at 2:45 p.m. unless it is absolutely necessary to leave earlier or later in either case, parents will be notified. The parent or designee must abide by the dress code when entering the centers.

MEALS AND SNACKS PROVIDED:

Your child will be served a nutritious breakfast, lunch and snack daily. Please do not let your child bring food, toys or money to school unless specifically requested by letter from us. We cannot be responsible for lost or stolen items.

KEEP CONTACT INFORMATION UPDATED:

Please keep all contact information *current at all times* and a number where you or someone authorized by you can be reached in case of emergency. If your child gets sick at school, please be sure someone is available to pick him/her up. Please share your email address with your family advocate, as this will be a needed form of communication.

PLEASE SEND A CHANGE OF CLOTHING:

Please send a complete change of clothing including under garments and socks (clearly labeled) to leave at school in case of emergency. Mistakes do happen and we need to be prepared at all times. Please do not send your child to school in their best clothes (unless for special occasion). We do art, and other messy projects on a daily basis as well as get down on the floor or go outside for other activities. Your child should be able to feel comfortable and free to participate in all our learning activities. Please dress your child appropriately for the weather. This will help to keep down illness at the center. In addition, please keep your child home when they are ill. We are not equipped to care for sick children and some illnesses are highly contagious.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN HEAD START

Five County Child seeks to build an effective and supportive partnership with our families. We encourage parents to participate with their children in homebased activities. Parents are encouraged to work with their children in the home, collaborating with the center staff to support the child's Head Start experience. Parents are also encouraged to attend monthly parent meetings, to be involved in decision making about your child's center. *During the pandemic we will hold conference call meetings, ask the family advocate for details.*

Five County Head Start seeks to:

1. Improve the quality of life of the children, families, and communities that we serve.
2. Support parents as the primary educator, nurturer, and advocate for their children.
3. Provide every parent an opportunity for a positive experience in Head Start.
4. Ensure that parents are involved in program policy making and decisions.

PARTNER WITH US TO GIVE YOUR CHILD A HEAD START!!

Be a part of the Five County Child Development team that endeavors to improve the quality of life for the children, families, and communities that we serve.

INSURANCE COVERAGE:

Five County Liability Insurance Risk Management Partners Insurance covers students, volunteers and staff.

Parental Dress Code for Pick-Up/Drop-Off at Centers/Field Trips

Parents, Guardians and Authorized Persons must dress in a manner for the school environment that is neither a distraction nor a safety issue to themselves or others and must abide by Five County Child Development Program, Inc. policies and procedures as written.

We respectfully request that parents and designated persons who drop off and pick-up children to and from school or attend the agency's field trips follow all policies and procedures regarding parental dress code with the expectation of the following:

- ◆ **No sleepwear** to be worn (loungewear, pajamas, gowns, boxer shorts, etc.)
- ◆ No beach wears
- ◆ No clothing that reveals any inappropriate areas
- ◆ No clothing with profanity, obscene language or gestures
- ◆ No exposure of under garments

Center Director/Head Teacher will have complete and final judgment on all matters concerning the interpretation of the standardized dress policy. Matters concerning appearance and dress, not specifically covered in the policy, shall be within the discretion of the administration.

Policy and Procedures:

1. Family Advocates or Family Engagement Staff will discuss with parent the dress code policy during interview/enrollment process.
2. Each parent will sign Parent Dress Code Policy and Parent Handbook Form stating they understand and will follow dress code policy.
3. Each parent will receive a copy of the Parent Handbook with policy outlined.

Dress code policy and procedure will be discussed during the Parent Orientation.

Parents not adhering to dress code policy and procedure must meet with Center Director/Head Teacher to address concerns. Parents and/or designated person(s) will be requested to vacate the premises and upon return be in full compliance of the dress code policy.

Janet Moak– Family Service/ERSEA Director

1. The Family Service and PFCE Departments will collaborate with parents to establish individualized Family Partnership Agreements.
2. Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance activities shall be the operational responsibility of the Family Service/ERSEA Department. Recruitment activities shall be on-going to ensure that the neediest children and families receive priority.
3. Family Service and Education staff will work conjointly to monitor each child's attendance. If a child is at risk of missing ten percent (10%) of school days per year, the Family Service Staff will work with the family to develop appropriate strategies to improve attendance. If your child will not be attending school or will be late, let the center staff know as soon as possible, or **before 8:30 a.m.**
4. Notify the center immediately of any changes in your address and phone numbers.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

It is the policy of the Five County Head Start Program to implement affirmatively equal opportunity and non-discrimination to all qualified applicants, employees, and clients without regard to race, creed, color, sex, national origin, or disabilities.

DRUG-FREE WORK PLACE

It is the policy of the Five County Head Start Program to prohibit the use, sale, or dispensing of drugs and narcotics on agency premises. This policy covers all illegal drugs, alcohol, and legal drugs which impair an employee's ability to perform his/her job. The agency recognizes the harmful effects of drugs and narcotics on the individual user, abhors the unacceptable role model, such as persons present to the clients we serve, and will not tolerate or continue the employment of drug users.

SMOKING POLICY/SMOKE FREE ENVIRONMENT

It is the policy of the Five County Head Start Program that no smoking is allowed at any time in all spaces utilized by the program. Employees found to be in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action.

DISORDERLY AND DISRESPECTFUL CONDUCT

It is the policy of Five County Head Start to provide an environment that is free of violence acts or threats. This includes, but is not limited to, intimidating or violent behaviors, maltreatment and bringing weapons onto the center's property. Additionally, offensive comments, actions, or behavior toward other families, staff or children will not be tolerated. Center Director/Head Teacher will have complete and final judgment on all matters concerning interpretation on this policy and is authorized to call local law enforcement if needed. Violators of this policy may be banned from the Head Start property.

CHILD PICK-UP PROTOCOL POLICY

It is the policy of Five County Head Start that only the parents/guardians or designated persons on the release form can pick-up their child from school or the bus drop-off points. We ask you to list ALL release names at the time of enrollment and include people that may need to pick up the child in case of an emergency. The centers close at 3:30 pm please make sure your child is picked up no later than 3:30 pm daily. It is the policy of Five County to discuss the policy with the parent if a child is not picked up by 3:30, a 2nd occurrence, the parent will be given a written warning and on the 3rd occurrence, a child is not picked up by 3:30 pm a referral will be made to the Department of Child Protection Services.

MY RESPONSIBILITIES AS A HEAD START PARENT

- To notify the center by 8:30 am. if your child will be late or absent.
- To learn as much as possible about the program to take part in major policy decisions.
- To accept Head Start as an opportunity through which I can improve my life and my child/children's lives.
- To take part in the classroom as an observer or a volunteer worker and to contribute my services in any way I can toward enrichment of the total program.
- To provide parent leadership by taking part in elections, to explain the program to other parents and encourage their full participation.
- To welcome teachers and staff into my home to discuss ways in which parents can help their children development at home in relation to school experience.
- To work with the teacher, staff and other parents in a cooperative way.
- To guide my child/children with firmness, which is both loving and protective.
- To offer constructive criticism of the program, to defend it against unfair criticism and to share in evaluating it.
- To take advantage of programs designed to increase my knowledge about child development and my skills in area of possible employment.
- To become involved in community programs which will help to improve health, education and recreation for all.

MY RIGHTS AS A HEAD START PARENT

1. To take part in major policy decisions affecting the planning and the operation of the program.
2. To help develop adult programs which will improve daily living for me and my family.
3. To choose whether or not I participate without fear of endangering my child/children's right to be in the program.
4. To be informed regularly about my child/children's progress in Head Start.
5. To expect guidance for my child/children from Head Start teachers and staff, which will help his/her total individual development.
6. To learn about the operation of the program, including the budget, the level of education and experience required to fill various staff positions.
7. To take part in planning and carrying out programs designed to increase my skill in areas of possible employment.
8. To be informed about all community resources concerned with health, education and the improvement of family life.

IMPORTANT PARENT INFORMATION

- ◆ Parent, guardian, or designee must be at the drop-off location to receive the child/children.
- ◆ Parents are encouraged to send their child/children to school every day he/she is able on his/her scheduled days. The outcomes and success of your child is affected each day he/she is absent.
- ◆ If you bring your child to school, please have him/her at school by 8:30 a.m. so, the child/children can take part in a full day of activities. **Notify the center before 8:30 a.m. if your child will be late or absent.**
- ◆ Parents/guardians are asked to attend parent meetings by conference calls.
- ◆ Please do not send an unauthorized person to receive your child from the school.
- ◆ Please send **two large towels** by your child for rest and relaxation time.
- ◆ If your child is on medication that has to be taken at school, you must send written permission-dated and signed, and in the original container. Give the medication to a staff member.
- ◆ **Please do not send your child/children to school sick.**
- ◆ If your child is allergic to any foods/milk, the Nutrition Staff should be notified along with documentation from your family doctor.

- ◆ Food cannot be brought into or carried from the center.
- ◆ Volunteers must be eighteen (18) years and older.
- ◆ Volunteers must complete an application and sign an oath of confidentiality form and those who volunteer 120 hours must provide documentation of finger printing, criminal background check.

PARENT ACTIVITY POLICY:

The Family Services and PFCE Departments will work in conjunction to assure “Parent Activities” are in compliance with the Head Start Performance Standards. The parent activity funds are allotted to provide parents the opportunity and experience in planning, developing and implementing their own projects. *As with other policies, parent activity is subject to change due to the Covid-19 pandemic.*

Parent Activity Funds Narrative

Parent committees are allocated a specific amount from the Parent Activity Fund to develop and implement parent projects and activities. The Parent Activity Fund is money set aside in the program budget to provide parents the opportunity and experience in planning, developing and implementing their own projects. Parent Committee is allocated a specific amount from the Parent Activity Fund based on the number of children at their site. For example, with a \$5 per child parent activity fund, the fund would be \$300 for a center of 60 children. The Parent Committee decides how to spend the funds and then request approval from the Policy Council.

Specific examples of the kinds of activities supported by the Parent Activity Fund include:

- * Pay a special speaker to present at a Parent Committee meeting and paying his/her fee.
- * Including parents on a field trip to the zoo and paying their entrance fee.
- * Paying the registration fee and expenses for a Parent of the Year to attend a state Head Start Association conference.
- * Purchasing ingredients for a cooking class for parents on low-budget nutritious meals or Chinese cooking or some other special food interest.
- * Including a family photo evening when the school photographer comes to take children's photos and using the parent activity dollars to pay some or a portion of the additional cost for the family portraits.
- * The Parent Activity Fund should be spent on the basis of project relatedness. The Parent Activity Fund must not be used for activities that are *solely* for entertainment. Entertainment can be defined as cost of amusement, diversion, social activities, ceremonials, and incidental cost relating thereto, such as meals, lodging, transportation, and gratuities. However, the Parent Activity Fund can be used for expenses where entertainment may play an incidental part in the activity. Spending must always be for program-related expenses or the spending would be unallowed.

Source: eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/fiscal-management/article/parent-activity-funds-narrative

PROCEDURES FOR SCHEDULING EVENTS

1. Parents at the center level will propose and vote for activities that provide parents the opportunity and experience in planning, developing and implementing their own projects.
2. The Center Supervisor or Family Advocate will contact Family Service/ERSEA Director for approval of activities to assure compliance within the Agency’s guidelines.
3. A request would then be made for approval from the Policy Council.
4. Parents will be notified by written communication of the schedule of activity.

MISSISSIPPI CHILD ABUSE LAW

In accordance with Section 43-21-105 of the Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated, “Abused Child means a child whose parent, guardian or custodian or any person responsible for his care or support, whether legally obligated to do so or not, has caused or allowed to be caused upon said child sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, emotional abuse, mental injury, non-accidental physical injury or other maltreatment. Provided, however that physical discipline, including spanking, performed on a child by a parent, guardian or custodian in a reasonable manner shall not be deemed abuse under this section.”

Any person who knows or has reason to suspect abuse or neglect of a child by a parent, legal custodian, caregiver, or other person(s) responsible for the child’s care, is required by law to make a report to the Mississippi Department of Child Protection Services. See Section 43-21-105 and Section 43-21-353 of the [Mississippi Code](#) for more information.

FIVE COUNTY CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, INC. CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT POLICY

All Head Start employees are required to report child abuse and/or neglect, no matter where the abuse occurred on or away from the Head Start premises, to the 1-800-222-8000 Hotline, in accordance with the agency’s Child Abuse Plan.

Accusations of child abuse or neglect, including corporal punishment and isolation, against a Head Start employee by a parent, staff, volunteer, etc. should be immediately reported to the Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-222-8000 and then to the Family Service/ERSEA Director or Head Start Director. The agency must report each allegation to the Child Abuse Hotline, Licensure Agency and the Regional Office.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT -WHY HEAD START SHOULD BE INVOLVED?

There are many reasons why early childhood program personnel becomes involved in child abuse and neglect, treatment and prevention. Among them are the fact that Head Start works with and for children. The law and policy require their involvement and professional responsibility demands it and that they have a deep sense of personal commitment to the children in their care.

Child Abuse and Neglect is a community problem; its solution requires community action to report suspected child abuse to Mississippi Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-222-8000.

DEFINITION AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF POLICY COUNCIL

A. What is a Policy Council Representative?

A delegate from the local center who speaks for and voices the concerns and suggestions of the parents of the center they represent. The Policy Council is a board of parent representatives who help make decisions about the Head Start Program.

B. Duties and Responsibilities of the Policy Council

Policy Council and a Policy Council Committee at the delegate level, must use ongoing monitoring results, data on school readiness goals and other information to conduct Its responsibilities.

- ◆ The Policy Council shall approve and submit to the governing body decisions about each of the following activities:
- ◆ Activities to support the active involvement of parents in supporting program operations, including policies to ensure that the Head Start agency is responsive to community and parent

needs.

- ◆ Program recruitment, selection and enrollment priorities.
- ◆ Applications for funding and amendments to applications for funding for programs under this subchapter, prior to submission of applications described in this clause.
- ◆ Budget planning for programs expenditures, including policies for reimbursement and participation in policy council activities.
- ◆ Bylaws for the operation of the policy council.
- ◆ Program personnel policies and decisions regarding the employment of program staff, consistent with paragraph (1) (E) (iv) (IX), including standards of conduct for program staff, contractors, and volunteers and criteria for the employment and dismissal of program staff.
- ◆ Developing procedures for how members of the policy council of the Head Start agency will be elected.
- ◆ Recommendations on the selection of delegate agencies and the service area for such agencies.

WHO MAY/MAY NOT SERVE AS A POLICY COUNCIL MEMBER?

Parents serving on the Policy council committee must be elected by the current Head Start Parents. In accordance with Revised Performance Standards, Subpart D 1304.50 (b) (6), no person can serve as a member of the Policy Council while any member of his/her immediate family (as defined below) is employed in the Head Start Program.

HUSBAND, WIFE, FATHER, MOTHER, BROTHER, SISTER, SON, DAUGHTER, FATHER-IN-LAW, MOTHER-IN-LAW, SON-IN-LAW, DAUGHTER-IN-LAW, SISTER-IN-LAW, BROTHER-IN-LAW, AUNT AND UNCLE

Example:

If you have a sibling employed at another center, you cannot serve.

An employee who has been terminated from the agency cannot serve on the Policy Council.

A person cannot serve more than (3) years on the Policy Council.

You must have a child currently enrolled in Head Start. (This includes those who are legal guardians)

POLICY REGARDING THE RIGHTS OF A PARENT TO VISIT AND REMOVE THEIR BIOLOGICAL CHILD FROM SCHOOL

The following Head Start policy reflects the rights of parents as mandated by law and reduces the need for the school to interfere in the private circumstances of families.

Biological parents have the right to visit their child in school while participating in Head Start classroom activities and field trips. They also have the right to remove their child from school during the day or at the end of the day.

Only a court order specifically stating that a parent is not to visit or to remove a child can overrule such rights.

The divorce of parents and the granting of custody to one of the parents does not overrule the right of the other parent to participate in classroom/program activities or to remove the child from school property.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE FOR PARENTS AND COMMUNITY CONCERNS

The following steps will be taken to resolve parent or community concerns:

All Head Start parents or the community at-large shall have the right to present his/her complaint or grievance in accordance with the Policy Council By-Laws.

Steps:

- Report complaint or grievance to the Center Supervisor. Most conflicts can be resolved at the center level.
- If the issue is not resolved at the center level take the following steps:
- Report the complaint to Family Service/ERSEA Director.
- The Family Service/ERSEA Director will attempt to resolve all complaints or grievances with parents.
- If Family Service/ERSEA Director is unable to resolve a grievance or complaint, she must inform the Head Start Director.
- The Head Start Director will attempt to resolve all grievances.
- If unable, the Head Start Director will contact the Policy Council Chairperson, the Policy Council Chairperson then will make contact with the Policy Council Complainant/Grievance committee and make recommendation to resolve the complaints.
- The complainant will be notified in writing of the decision of the Policy Council Grievance Committee. If complainant is not satisfied with this decision it may be appealed to the Board of Directors.

PROMOTING REGULAR ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

The Head Start Performance Standards states that **we must track attendance**. If a child is unexpectedly absent and a parent has not contacted the program within one hour of program start time, the program staff must attempt to contact the parent to ensure the child's well-being.

Parents are asked to notify the center by 8:30 a.m. if their child is going to be late or absent and please let the staff know when the child is expected to return. If the parent does not notify the center by 8:30 a.m., the staff must attempt to contact the parent to ensure the safety of the child.

The following steps are to be adhered to, to comply with this performance standards.

- Teachers report to the Family Advocate when a child is absent or attendance is irregular.
- A program must implement strategies to promote attendance. At a minimum, a program must:
 - (a) Provide information about the benefits of regular attendance;
 - (b) Support families to promote the child's regular attendance;
 - (c) Family Service staff will conduct a home visit or make other direct contact with a child's parents if a child has multiple unexplained absences (such as two consecutive unexplained absences).
- Staff shall inform parents of Average Daily Attendance (ADA) that must be maintained and the impact attendance has on the child and the program. And maintain contact case notes in child's folder.

Sheanda B. Ellis- Parent, Family and Community Engagement Director

Family Engagement in Head Start is about building relationships with families that support family well-being, strong relationships between parents/guardians and their children, and ongoing learning and development for both parents/guardians and children. Research has shown that children whose families involve them in learning at home are more successful in school! In addition, parents/guardians personally benefit from involvement as well. We make every effort to involve both parents/guardians in all aspects of the program. Parents/guardians are the most important people in a child's life. The program strives to engage parents/guardians in all service areas of the program.

Parent, Family and Community Engagement Service Area will work with families to do the following to complete a Family Training Needs Survey:

- ◆ Assigned Family Service Staff will work with families to complete the Family Intake Assessments
- ◆ Assigned Family Service Staff will work with families to establish and implement a Family Partnership Agreement process that is jointly developed to identify strength, needs, interests, and goals. Families will review their individual progress, revise goals and evaluate on an on-going basis until goal completion.
- ◆ Offer the opportunity for parents to participate in a research-based parenting curriculum
- ◆ To provide information about the importance of regular attendance of children
- ◆ To provide information and resources on the benefits of bilingualism

As a parent/guardian, you are so vitally important to your child, you are also vitally important to growth and excellence of the Head Start program. We want it to be the best it can be for your child. No one knows your child like you, so attend meetings, share your opinion and communicate with the program, the program staff and most of all, your child.

GET ENGAGED

- ◆ Attend and participate in parent meetings
- ◆ Volunteering or observing in your child's classroom
- ◆ Get involved with Policy Council to become a part of decision-making process for the agency
- ◆ Participate in Parent/Teacher Conferences and Home Visits
- ◆ Participate in center Family Engagement Activities (Read-A-Book Day, Mom Monday, Father Friday, etc.)
- ◆ Reading the newsletters and information Head Start offers
- ◆ Partner with your assigned Family Service Staff about how you can become involved and develop parent/family and children goals.

FATHER ENGAGEMENT

Head Start encourages participation of the fathers/father figures involved in the lives of Head Start children. Our program will make efforts to reach out to and include fathers, supportive male family members and/or male caregivers in parent engagement activities. Throughout the year, there are numerous opportunities for men to volunteer in the program, participation in father engagement activities and provide input on designing special initiatives to improve the interaction of men with children. Our program celebrates and enhances the male parenting role by:

- Encouraging responsible fathering/male role modeling;
- Helping children and men relate and connect;
- Educating men about parenting;
- Creating opportunities for individual and group male involvement and leadership.

ENGAGING PARENTS WITH SCHOOL READINESS:

- ◆ As a parent, I promise to do the following:
- ◆ Participate in center parent activities and volunteering at the center when able. Read to my child daily and review and display my child's work.
- ◆ Keep teacher and family service staff informed of home, health or situations which may cause a change in my child's behavior or performance (Parents and Staff as partners).
- ◆ Give input in the development of my child's individualized education plan, carry out and reinforce appropriate activities in my home to help my child achieve listed goals.

Mental Health/Disability/ Transition Director

Tina Johnson

All children with disabilities have the right to a free, appropriate, public education and the child's parents have the right and responsibility to be involved in the decision-making process regarding their child's education. Parents and their children have the right to (a) non-discriminatory screening, (b) notification of any meetings concerning their child's placement, (c) placement of the child in the least restrictive environment, (d) appropriate educational and therapeutic services for their child, (e) a written Individualized Education Program (IEP) if the child has been diagnosed as having a disability, (f) due process hearing if their child is not receiving appropriate services. "Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007 defines "disability" as (A) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of such individual; (B) a record of such an impairment; or (C) being regarded as having such an impairment. Head Start provides services to eligible children regardless of any disabling condition. The goals of the Disability Service Area are to:

1. Ensure that children with disabilities receive the full benefits of Head Start experience, including provision of required special education and related services and the opportunity to learn and develop in an inclusive setting with peers.
2. Ensure that at least ten percent of Head Start enrollment consists of children professionally diagnosed as having a disability.
3. Collaborate with state and local agencies to provide services for children with disabilities.

Children with disabilities should be identified before their parents enroll them in Head Start. For record keeping and reporting purposes Head Start has established the following categorical diagnosis: (1) Speech or Language Impairments, (2) Hearing Impairments, (3) Visual Impairments, (4) Health Impairments, (5) Orthopedic Impairments, (6) Emotional/Behavioral Disorders, (7) Mental Retardation, (8) Learning Disabilities, (9) Autism, (10) Traumatic Brain Injury, and (11) Other Impairments. All first time Head Start Enrollees are screened within 45 days of enrollment for speech, language, hearing and vision.

MENTAL HEALTH

The overall goal of the Head Start program is to bring about a greater degree of social competence in children of low-income families. The mental health area promotes mental wellness by providing direct services which includes evaluation and treatment of Head Start children and their parents. Head Start through its innovative and comprehensive approach to the total needs of families, can promote positive mental health practices and therefore, enhance the self-esteem, self-sufficiency and independence of Head Start staff, parents and children through prevention, identification, referral and treatment. Social/emotional development is key to school readiness. The agency has implemented a positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) to guide children in developing appropriate behaviors.

TRANSITION

Head Start's vision is to assist children and their families in making smooth transitions from age three through five. Transition can be made easier by (a) talking to children about the transition, (b) reading books about transitions, (c) allowing children to visit the new setting(s) and (d) promoting high self-esteem in the child.

Latasha Harrien, Ed.S. - Education/Early Childhood Development Director

The agency's goal is to ensure that our children possess readiness on the skills of cognition, language, language and literacy, approaches to learning, social and emotional development, and perceptual, motor, and physical development. Intentional and meaningful activities are offered throughout the learning environment. To ensure positive child outcomes and school readiness, the curriculum, the assessment tool, and teaching strategies are in alignment with the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework and the Mississippi Early Learning Standards. Teachers ensure school readiness for our children entering Kindergarten by implementing goals from the school readiness domains by, effectively, helping our children acquire the social competence, which sets the foundation in acquiring all other school readiness domains.

When children enter our program, teachers administer the Denver II Screener to assess their performance on various age-appropriate tasks. Once they are acquainted with their teachers, the children are assessed three times per school year using the Learning Accomplish Profile (LAP-3). The agency would like to encourage parents to:

- Develop a positive attitude toward their children's learning
- Establish sensible rules for your child to follow
- Teach your child positive social skills (good manners and respect for others)
- Communicate and interact, positively, with your child

BE ENGAGED AND INVOLVED IN YOUR CHILD'S EDUCATION

TITLE: Personnel Policies: Use of Corporal Punishment and Isolation as Disciplinary Measures in Head Start Classrooms AUTHORITY: 1302.90 (c) Head Start Performance Standards.

PURPOSE:

The Issuance sets forth the policy forbidding the use of corporal punishment and total or extended isolation as disciplinary measures in Head Start programs.

BACKGROUND:

Corporal punishment is defined as the use of physical force as discipline measures. This includes, but is not limited to, spanking, slapping, pulling of hair, etc. Isolation refers to separating the child from normal association with classroom activities as a punishment measure. Isolation includes, but is not restricted to, confining the child to a small area, retaining the child in the classroom when other children go to play, or restricting the child from lunch with his/her classmates. Physical punishment and total isolation are not consistent with the Head Start Performance Standards. These Standards define goals of increased social competence, establishment of patterns and expectations of success for the child and the enhancement of dignity and self-worth within the child.

ACTION REQUIRED:

The utilization of corporal punishment and total isolation of the child is not consistent with these objectives and cannot be tolerated in Head Start programs. Isolation in which the child is left totally unattended is unacceptable. If it is necessary to isolate a child from a group, adult supervision will be maintained and the isolation period will be minimal. Performance Standards prohibit the use of meals as punishment, thus isolation at meal times is forbidden. Conduct of preschool children which disrupts normal classroom activities on a frequent or extended basis may be indicative of physical or emotional problems which the Head Start program must take steps to address.

SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULE I

7:30-8:30 TEACHER PLANNING

7:45 -8:30 ARRIVAL: Children participate in quiet activities and prepare for breakfast (**handwashing and toileting**).

8:30-9:00 BREAKFAST and CLEAN-UP: Children will assist with serving breakfast and they will be encouraged conversation.

9:00-9:10 TOILET and TOOTH BRUSHING/HANDWASHING

9:10-9:25 MORNING MEETING: Teachers brings the group together for singing songs and fingerplays, group discussion, and sharing news.

9:25-10:25 WORK TIME: Children will extend play and learning in selected interest area.

10:25 – 10:30 CLEAN – UP: Children put away toys and materials in each interest area and **TOILET/HANDWASHING**

10:30 – 10:55 CIRCLE TIME/STORYTIME: Teachers brings the group together to discuss and participate in theme related activities and read and discuss a storybook, using props to help children to retell stories.

10:55 – 11:25 OUTDOOR PLAY: Children extend learning outdoors through play, exploration, and discovery.

11:25 – 11:30 PREPARATION FOR LUNCH: Children toilet/wash hands, and assist teachers in setting table.

11:30 – 12:00 LUNCH AND CLEAN – UP: Children and teachers prepare tables for lunch. Teachers encourage conversations about the day's events, the meal, and topics of interest to the children. Teachers guide children in cleaning up after lunch.

12:00 – 12:15 TOILET AND TOOTHBRUSHING: Children brush teeth, use bathrooms, wash hands, place cots, and prepare for rest.

12:15-1:15 REST TIME: Children rest on cots. Teacher will provide quiet activities for children who do not sleep.

1:15 – 1:25 TOILET/HANDWASHING: Children use bathroom and wash hands after getting up from resting.

1:25 – 1:55 OUTDOOR PLAY: Children extend learning outdoors through play, exploration, and discovery.

1:55 – 2:15 GROUP TIME: Help children reflect on the day's activities and discuss plans for the next day.

2:15 --2:30 SNACK TIME: Children serve themselves and participate in conversation with each other. Children clean up and prepare for dismissal/departure.

2:30 – 2:45 DISMISSAL/DEPARTURE: Children load on the buses to go home (some children are picked – up by parents).

2:45--3:30 TEACHER PLANNING

Tanya Feazell-Health Services Director

1. Parents or guardians should provide all pertinent health and information concerning the child during the enrollment process (prior to the first day of school) or if child's health status changes during the year (ex. *Seizure Action Plan, Asthma Action Plan, Diabetes Medical Management Plan*).
2. It is the goal of Five County Child Development Program, Inc. to ensure every child has a dental and medical home. This is identified through enrollment forms. Referrals will be provided to assist families in establishing care.
3. Inform the head start center of the child's health coverage and any changes that may occur (ex. Medicaid, CHIP, or private insurance).
4. Accompany your child to the center for physical and dental exams and follow-up treatment (s) when needed if possible.
5. It is the goal of Five County Child Development Program that every child has a current physical on-site before enrollment. All children are **REQUIRED** by Head Start Performance Standards to have an up-to-date physical (medical) exam and dental exam on file. Five County will provide, through contractual services, any physical/ dental exams not provided by child's pediatrician/dentist. All health and dental screenings that expire during the program year **MUST** be renewed. As physicals and dental exams begin to expire, a reminder will be sent 30 days prior to the expiration. Parents choosing not to receive services will be asked to sign a denial form.

This form releases Five County Child Development Program, Inc. of any services not rendered.

a. A physical (medical) exam consist of the following:

- i. Growth assessment (height and weight)
- ii. Blood pressure
- iii. Blood lead level test (not screening)- newly enrolled children only
- iv. Hemoglobin (Iron) blood test- newly enrolled children only
- v. Hearing screening
- vi. Vision screening

*** Blood lead levels- checks are done at 12 & 24 months. Children ages 24-72 months who have not been previously tested must receive a blood lead test. Parents must request a copy of the results from the child's physician during that time of age.

*** Hemoglobin/Hematocrit- checks begin at 9 months and are repeated between 15 months and 4 years. If your child's physician is unwilling to test your child's Hemoglobin/Hematocrit level, check with the physician on previous results.

6. If a child is **REQUIRED** to take medications during school hours, a *Medication Administration Form* and *Parental Consent for Medication Administration Form* **MUST** be completed **PRIOR** to any medication being given at school.

a. Medication **Must** be brought to the Head Start center by the parent/ guardian. Medication should not be sent in a child's backpack or given to the bus monitor.

b. Medication must be in its original container.

c. The prescription label must be intact and include the following:

d. Date (length of time to be given) and

e. Time (how often to give it)

f. Dosage

g. Route (oral, injection etc.)

h. Date & Time of Last Dosage

i. Name of physician prescribing medication

7. Over the counter medications will not be administered to any child without a prescription from a physician. If an over the counter medication is prescribed to a child, the medication must be brought to the head start center by the parent and must be in the original container.

COVID-19 Response

8. If a child is ill, he or she should be kept home in order to avoid contact with other children. If a child comes to school ill or gets ill while at school, parents or guardians will be asked to take the child home. Please see the Center Director or Head Teacher for a complete listing of all exclusions. All children that enter our classrooms will receive a screening. Anyone with symptoms of fever (100.4°F and above), persistent cough, difficulty breathing, sore throat, recent loss of taste or smell, muscle aches, and/or chills, must be excluded until symptoms are gone for 72 hours. Screening will be done outside or curbside, before entering the center, and must allow for physical distancing (six feet apart). Parents are not permitted to enter the building. Only children with a full health screening may enter the classroom. If there is no other option, health screening can also be done in entryways and lobby areas but must allow for physical distancing. Child Screening Procedure- Children have temperature checks upon arrival, before nap time, and before leaving the site. Using face covering, no-touch thermometer, and COVID-19 Health Screening Form: Upon arrival, the parent will be asked if the child has had any of the symptoms

or exposure listed on the COVID-19 Health Screening Form. Documentation of any pre-existing health conditions should be provided by the parent/guardian prior to or at enrollment. Symptoms that are typical for a child based on preexisting health conditions (allergies, asthma, etc.) should not be considered as a failed screening unless the symptoms have worsened, changed, or are in addition to a fever.

Child Face Coverings

Five County will provide children with cloth face coverings or parents may provide a face covering for their child. Face coverings are not required but is recommended for children attending Head Start. Staff will offer children a face covering upon arrival to the center if one is not visible; however not mandatory. Children will not wear face coverings while eating, napping, or during active outdoor play. Staff will guide children in the appropriate use and care of face coverings. Disposable face coverings will be thrown away at the end of each day or when damaged/soiled during the day.

Illnesses

a. A child will be temporarily excluded from school for the following reasons:

- i) Fever: above 100° F if taken under the arm, 101°F if taken orally, and 102°F if taken rectally.
- ii) Vomiting: Two or more times in a 24-hour period.
- iii) Diarrhea: Frequent (3 or more episodes in a 24-hour period) runny, watery, or bloody stools.
A child who is not completely toilet trained and has diarrhea will be excluded regardless of the cause.
- iv) Rash (Chicken Pox, Measles, Mumps): Body rash with a fever
- v) Sore throat: Sore throat with fever and swollen glands
- vi) Severe coughing: The child gets red or blue in the face or makes high-pitched whooping sound after coughing.
- vii) Eye discharge (Pink Eye): Thick mucus or pus draining from the eye
- viii) Jaundice: Yellow eyes and skin
- ix) Irritability: Continuous irritability and crying
- x) See # 7a

9. Based upon the MS State Department of Health Regulations, a child may only be exempt from receiving immunizations for medical reasons. Religious exemptions **will not** be accepted. If a child is exempt from receiving immunizations due to medical reasons, a *Certificate of Medical Exemption* (Form 122) must be on file at the child's head start center. Form 122 **MUST** be signed by the District Health Officer.

a. If a child has a temporary *Certificate of Immunization* (Form 121) on file that expires during the school year, the child **MUST** receive all necessary immunizations and an up-to-date Form 121 must be submitted to the Center Director/ Head Teacher or Family Advocate. If an up-to-date Form 121 is not submitted, the child will be temporarily excluded until documentation or proof of a scheduled appointment is turned in. If the child is unable to receive the immunizations at that time, a temporary Form 121 may be submitted until the child is able to receive the immunizations.

10. Accident/ Incidents that occur at Head Start are reported the same day by staff to the center supervisor and the parent or guardian by phone call or note if unable to reach the parent by phone. Health checks are performed daily by staff to ensure no child enters the center with cuts, bruises, or unexplained medical conditions.

**Nutrition Director
Hadassah Devine**

Meal Schedule at all Centers

BREAKFAST.....	8:30 A.M.
LUNCH.....	11:30 A.M.
SUPPLEMENTAL SNACK.....	2:00 P.M.

Local, State, and Federal Standards for all aspects of food handling will be followed and all Head Start Centers must meet sanitation specifications. Head Start Center Licenses will be displayed at all centers. The Performance Standards will be adhered to in the operation of a quality feeding program for all children.

All food will be served in a family-style manner and all children, staff and volunteers will eat together sharing the same menu, while socializing in a relaxed atmosphere. (family style serving will be altered during the pandemic).

1. No outside food or drinks are allowed at any center under any circumstances.
2. If your child requires a special diet, Parents are required to provide a written statement from their medical provider. (Doctor, Specialist)
3. Balanced nutritious meals are provided according to strict CACFP guidelines, Regulations Governing Licensure of Child Care Facilities, and the Head Start Performance Standards.
4. Family style dining meals are served at all centers, this method is used to foster self-help, social and communication skills which build a foundation for a better family. Parents are encouraged to eat with their child as much as possible.
5. Gradually introduce your child to a variety of new foods.
6. Plan ahead for nutritious snacks and beverages between meals. Replace chips, candy and soda with nutritious fresh fruits and vegetables and water, fat free milk and 100% fruit juice.
7. According to all three governing bodies, food is never to be used as a reward or punishment.
8. Good nutrition helps cultivate good dietary habits at an early age promoting a better quality of life. If you instill proper nutrition, they will learn at an early age what's necessary to maintain good health.
9. Parents are encouraged to come to the center and volunteer in their child's classroom.
10. Parents are invited to join our annual menu planning committee meeting in the Spring of each year.
11. All planned field trips (parent committee or agency) must be approved by the MS Department of Education / Office of Child Nutrition and a permission to travel request must be submitted to the Nutrition Director outlining the destination of trip, time, lunch and departure schedule. Once received the request will be forwarded to MDE/ OCN for approval.
12. If a child has been tested and diagnosed with a food allergy or requires a special diet due to a food allergy, parents are REQUIRED to provide a Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Care Plan PRIOR to the first day of school or at the time of diagnosis.

TRANSPORTATION

Evelyn Strickland, Transportation Services Director

1. Head Start children will be returned to the place they were picked up. If there is to be a change in pick-up or drop-off location a written notice must be given one day in advance, except in case of an emergency.
2. Parents should notify the center when a child will not be attending class.
3. Should the child miss the bus; the parents must transport child to the next pick-up location or center. **No bus will stop in route to load or unload children.**
4. When a child is returned to the authorized destination, the parent or an adult must meet the bus to assure proper release of the child. The authorized person must sign "School Bus Attendance Record" before the child is released.
5. If there is no one at the authorized location, the child will return to the center and it will be the parent's responsibility to pick their child/children up at the center no later than 3:30 pm.
6. If a child has to cross the street to load or unload the bus, he/she must be accompanied by an adult.
7. The child must cross in front of the school bus at all times.
8. There will be no eating food, drinking or smoking on the bus.
9. Toys should not be sent to school with the child.
10. There will be a bus monitor on the bus at all times while transporting children.
11. All bus passengers must wear seatbelts/child restraints.
12. Parents who transport their child to Head Start must accompany the child into the building for proper release.
13. The bus monitor may determine if a child is ill at the time, he or she boards the bus. A sick child will not be permitted to ride the bus until the condition of the child has improved.
14. **Transportation services are not recommended at this time, but we will consider it on an emergency basis.**

MAINTENANCE & FACILITIES

Clevie Brent, Maintenance Director

Ronnie Walker, Head Custodian

1. Assure that outdoor play area is arranged to prevent any child from leaving the premises and getting into unsafe and unsupervised areas.
2. Conduct a safety inspection weekly to ensure that each facility's space; lighting, ventilation, heating and other physical arrangements are consistent with the health, safety and developmental needs of children.
3. Assure that all facilities meet licensing requirements.
4. Provide center-based environment free of toxins and other air pollutants as well as soil and water contaminants.
5. Provide for maintenance, repair, safety and security of all Head Start facilities, materials and equipment.
6. Assure that no child is present during spraying of pesticides or herbicides.
7. Provide appropriate indoor and outdoor space that is conducive for all program activities.
8. Assure that all roofs are in good condition.
9. Assure that all bathrooms are ventilated from sewage gas.
10. Assure that all facilities have smoke and carbon dioxide detectors installed.

2020-2021 School Calendar

September 7.....	Labor Day Holiday
September 8 & 9.....	Pre-Service Training (All Staff)
<u>September 14.....</u>	<u>First Day of School (Children)</u>
September 28-October 16.....	Denver II Developmental Screener
October 26-November 13.....	Pre-Learning Assessment Profile-Diagnostic (LAP-3)
November 16-20.....	Virtual1* Parent/Teacher Conference
November 23-27.....	Thanksgiving Holidays
November 26.....	Thanksgiving Day
December 21-January 6, 2021.....	Christmas Holidays
January 4-5.....	In-Service Training (All Staff)
January 6.....	Classes Resume
January 11-29.....	Mid-Learning Assessment Profile-Diagnostic (LAP-3)
January 18.....	Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday
February 15.....	President Day
March 8-12.....	2 nd Parent/Teacher Conference
March 15.....	In-Service Training (All Staff)
March 15-19.....	Spring Break
March 16.....	Virtual 2 nd Home Visit
April 2.....	Good Friday
April 2-5.....	Easter Holiday
April 12-April 30.....	Post-Learning Assessment Profile-Diagnostic (LAP-3)
<u>June 1, 2021.....</u>	<u>Last Day of School (Children)</u>
May 31.....	Memorial Day Holiday
July 4.....	Independence Day Holiday
September 6.....	Labor Day Holiday

DATES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE



FIVE COUNTY CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, INC.
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601-792-5194 PHONE
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FIVE COUNTY CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, INC.

An Equal Opportunity Employer

*This is to verify that I have received a copy of the 2020- 2021 **PARENT HANDBOOK** from Five County Child Development Program, Inc.*

Child's Name

Signature of Parent or Guardian

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY: Five County does not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or age.