

COMMUNITY ACTION TEAM
CHILD & FAMILY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS
Bus Transportation Policy for Participants

Child and Family Development Programs of Community Action Team must comply with Federal & State of Oregon Department of Education Transportation regulations. Additionally, CFDP must comply with Federal Performance Standards 1310 and State of Oregon Child Safety Regulations.

To ensure the safety of children, CFDP staff will apply these guidelines to any vehicles used in a transportation system established to transport enrolled children to and from CFDP. Staff will follow the policy regardless of whether the transportation system is owned and operated by CFDP, a part of the contracted service, or a part of a public transportation system and arranged by CFDP staff.

General

The program will assist as many families as possible who need transportation in order for children to attend the program.

Each vehicle used to provide transportation services must meet federal and state school bus or alternative vehicle requirements and be equipped with 1) a communication system for emergencies; 2) safety equipment (fire extinguisher); 3) first aid kit; 4) seat belt cutter and 5) safety triangles. Assurance auxiliary seating is maintained and annually inspected.

All accidents involving vehicles transporting children must be reported in accordance with applicable state requirements. Centers will use Emergency Form 3-11 to ensure children are only released to those who have been identified in writing by the parent or legal guardian. Emergency Forms 3-11 must be kept up-to-date for each child enrolled in the program.

Restraints

All children will be fitted for a safety seat or other program approved child restraint system appropriate for age, height and weight which meets Federal and State laws.

Once fitted the children will use the restraint system appropriate for age, height and weight following Federal and State laws.

Maintenance of vehicles

Vehicles used to transport children must be maintained and in safe operating conditions at all times. Each vehicle will be inspected annually (Form 581-2255-M) by a state licensed operator. Each Center Manager will be

responsible to assure a systematic prevention maintenance schedule is in place and followed for vehicles used to transport the children. Bus drivers will complete the daily pre-trip inspection Form 1-59 daily and turn it into Center Managers monthly.

Operation of vehicles

All children will be seated in a child restraint system appropriate to the age, height and weight of the child while the vehicle is in motion. Aisles will remain clear and the doors and emergency exits will remain unobstructed at all times. At least one bus monitor will be on board at all times. All vehicle occupants must be seated and wearing appropriate safety restraints while the vehicle is in motion on all school buses with safety restraints. All items carried on by children or adults must be secured.

Driver qualifications and training

Qualified bus drivers will meet Oregon Department of Education, Pupil Transportation requirements and maintain a current Oregon Student Transportation Permit and Oregon CDL driver's license.

In addition, drivers will receive instruction in the following areas including Procedure 1-98:

1. Orientation that includes a minimum of the goals and underlying philosophy of Head Start
2. Child abuse and neglect/mandatory reporting requirements
3. Transportation services for children with disabilities. Ongoing training will be recorded and records maintained per Oregon Department of Education. Ongoing training will include child guidance and communication skills with both children and adults.

Each driver will be evaluated annually. Such evaluation will include on-board observation and road performance.

Bus monitor training

Before bus monitors begin their duties they must receive training in the following areas which include Procedure 1-98:

1. Child boarding and exiting procedures
2. Use of child restraint systems
3. Any required paperwork
4. Responses to emergencies
5. Use of special equipment
6. Child pick-up and release procedures
7. Pre- and post-trip vehicle checks. Bus monitor training will be documented on form 1-36. Ongoing training will include child guidance and communication skills with both children and adults.

Trip routing

Safety of the children is the primary consideration when planning fixed routes. Bus routes are determined at the beginning of each program year based on established routes, parent/guardian needs and classroom transportation enrollment. If a parent/guardian chooses to attend another classroom at the center other than the one designated by home address, they may choose to transport. Each route must not exceed one hour unless there is no shorter route available or any alternative shorter route is either unsafe or impractical.

Vehicles cannot be loaded beyond maximum capacity at any time and vehicles must not back up or make "U" turns except when necessary for reasons of safety or because of physical barriers. Stops must be located to minimize traffic disruptions and when possible, stops will be located to eliminate the need for children to cross the street to board or leave the vehicle. If children must cross the street they must be escorted across the street by the parent/guardian or another adult. Emergency procedures will be followed in cases of emergencies or hazardous conditions. Bus mileage documentation will be kept up-to-date on form 1-10.

Transportation of children to and from the site

At the beginning of the school year, each site will have a plan to ensure that at least one staff person will be at the site until all children transported by others are gone. The program manager or designee will be available on site or by phone to assist the bus driver in the event that a child is returned to the center on the bus.

Safety education

Parents/guardians and children will be offered pedestrian safety education within the first thirty days of the program year, Performance Standard 1310.21 (a). Such education will include an emphasis on the importance of escorting their children to the vehicle stop and reinforcing the crossing-the-street safety training provided to the children.

Children will receive safety lessons which will include: 1) crossing-the-street lessons; 2) safe riding practices; 3) safe boarding and leaving the vehicle lessons; 4) danger zone recognition and 5) emergency bus evacuation. Staff will develop developmentally appropriate and individualized activities to remind children of the safety procedures. Such activities will become an integral part of the programs activities.

Staff will conduct at least three bus evacuation drills every school year for every classroom according to Performance Standard 1310.21 (2) d and State regulations. Form 2-24b will be completed after each drill and turned into the Center Manager at the end of the month.

Children with disabilities

Whenever possible, children with disabilities must be transported in the same vehicles used to transport other children enrolled in the program, according to Performance Standard 1310.22 (a). CFDP staff will comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Center managers will work with the ECSE to ensure that special transportation requirements in a child's IFSP are followed including: (1) special pick-up and drop-off requirements; (2) special seating requirements; (3) (5) any special training for bus drivers and monitors.

Coordinated transportation

To control the costs of transportation, the program will make reasonable efforts to coordinate transportation resources with other human services. The agency will identify the true costs of providing transportation so that the costs of providing transportation directly can be compared with the costs of contracting the service. The program will also explore the options to coordinate public or private transportation systems in each community and when there is no coordinated system in the community, the program will make reasonable efforts to establish such a system.

Safety checks to assure no child is left on the bus

"The bus driver and bus monitor should, independently of each other, take attendance as children board and disembark from the bus so that all children are accounted for at all times. A supervisor should review bus attendance sheets on a regular basis" (ACF-IM-HS-09-06).

Procedure 1-98:

1. CP 2317 will be used by the Bus Driver to sign children in on the bus and out when transferring to the designated staff; and
2. CP 2318 will be used by the Bus Monitor to sign children in on the bus and out when transferring children to the designated staff.
3. The bus driver will complete visual checks of the bus once all children have disembarked and initial the statement that documents this action on CP 2317.
4. The bus monitor will complete visuals check of the bus once all children have disembarked and initial the statement that documents this action on CP 2318.
5. Bus monitor and bus driver will give both attendance sheets to the designed staff person receiving the children.
6. Bus monitor will give a verbal number of children arriving and wait for the designated staff person to count and confirm verbally that the same number of children is received.
7. The teacher will submit all attendance sheets to CM daily.
8. CM will monitor daily, weekly and monthly.