



ALABAMA COUNCIL ON HUMAN RELATIONS, INC.  
ATTENDANCE POLICY - CHILDREN

Appendix #4  
15G150220

This policy is to ensure staff and parents understand child attendance policies. These policies are to encourage good attendance leading to school readiness, must be enforced fairly and must keep the program fully enrolled with regularly participating children. Therefore, ACHR will enforce this attendance policy. This policy was patterned after the Alabama Code for School Attendance. This policy will help families develop habits of good school attendance while in the ACHR Child Development Program (Head Start and Early Head Start).

Data shows children with good attendance at Early/Head Start make greater gains in school readiness than those with poor attendance. School readiness is the overall goal of our program. Therefore the following will happen:

- After the 3rd unexcused day, the family will receive a letter reminding you of the policy.
- On the 5th unexcused day, the family will receive a letter and must have a home or center conference with an ACHR representative to plan how the child's attendance can be improved. Families will be reminded their child can lose their program slot after 10 unexcused absences.
- **After 10 unexcused absences, a child will lose his/her slot and be put on the waiting list. There is no guarantee that the child will be eligible to reenter the program during this program year.**

The family of a child who is absent must call the child's center to report absence and reasons for absence. If unable to call, a note giving the reason for a child's absence must be sent on the day the child returns.

**Excused Absences:** A child's absence from the program **will be considered excused only for**

1. **Illness-Injuries-Doctor/Dentist Visits:**

- With a required doctor's note indicating child "may return to school with no restrictions" after illness, contagious conditions or injuries that cause a child to be absent for 3 or more days.
- With a "may return to school with no restrictions" doctor's note after any hospitalization
- Up to 5 individual absences where illness is given as the reason for absence when family called or sent the center a note about the child's absence each time. After 5 individual absences, a doctor's note will be needed to excuse the child.
- With a doctor's/dentist's medical excuse for appointment.

2. **Family Emergencies:**

- Funeral—immediate family only (3 days excused with documentation provided to center)
- Family Emergencies include natural disasters or accidents such as home fire, flood, and vehicle accident. Administrative approval may be needed for excused absence in this category.

3. **Other Excused Absences:**

- School bus did not run or ran way off schedule (bus broke down, roads bad due to weather so bus could not go in area, or substitute driver ran the route in a very different order;).
- Child behavior issue where child cannot return to school until parent/guardian meets with staff (only up to 3 days excused)
- Legal appointments involving the enrolled child (documentation provided upon return).

**Unexcused Absences**

1. Immunization Expired (family is responsible for keeping shot records up to date and providing copy to center)
2. Periodic "sick" absences beyond the 5 times permitted. Exceptions may be made for documented chronic illness such as asthma or sickle cell.
3. Child not in attendance due to improper hair accessories, shoes, or jewelry not resolved.
4. Missed bus that ran its regular route (due to a variety of circumstances, despite our best efforts buses may run early or late. Parents must be ready early).
5. Late to school (walk-in families) arriving after 8:15 a.m.
6. Out-of-town.
7. Child who is absent because the family must meet with staff (e.g. regarding late pick up from school or family not being at home when bus came to drop off child).
8. Family living within the 2-mile radius failed to transport child to school.
9. Other absences not listed above will be considered unexcused unless authorized by administrative staff.