

Doña Ana County Head Start/ Early Head Start Personnel Policies and Procedures

This manual contains the policies and procedures regarding employment practices for Doña Ana County Head Start/Early Head Start and the general policies of New Mexico State University. All statements contained are intended to reflect general policies and procedures and do not represent contractual commitments on the part of the university. The provisions of the manual are illustrative and not all inclusive. The provisions of the manual are a unilateral expression of policy by Doña Ana County Head Start/Early Head Start and may be unilaterally changed, amended or revoked with or without notice. Section numbers are indicated where direct information was obtained from the [New Mexico State University Policy Manual](#).” These policies do not include all of the university manual sections. It is recommended that each Doña Ana County Head Start/Early Head Start employee refer to the NMSU Personnel Policy manual located in the Director’s office, and can be accessed online at

<http://manual.nmsu.edu/files/2013/10/06.24.15-NMSU-Policy-Manual-prov-modif-3.pdf>

Or call the New Mexico State University Employee Services office regarding questions or interpretation of Personnel or benefits policies at 575-646-8000.

Additional procedures and policies are cited or made reference to from the HDS (Office of Human Development Services) Grants Administration Manual.

NOTE:

REFER TO THE DACHS PROGRAM FORMS FOUND *ON LINE* (<http://dept-wp.nmsu.edu/dachs/>) AND SELECT THE “FORMS FOR STAFF” DROPDOWN MENU FOR SPECIFIC PROCEDURAL SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES.

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PERSONNEL POLICIES & PROCEDURES

In accordance with *45CFR 1301.31(a)*

[Head Start Regulations](#)

NM Child Care Licensing Regulation *8.16.2.22(g)*

[NM Child Care Licensing Regulations](#)

[NMSU Policy Manual](#)

Qualifications for Hire

([NMSU Policy Manual](#) Section 4.30)

The Board of Regents has delegated to the president or to whomever the president delegates, the employment of all faculty, staff, and other university Personnel. Although the Board should never actively nor directly participate in the actual hiring of university Personnel, with the exception of selection of the president, the Board should always be at liberty to review any particular hiring by the administration to determine whether or not the Board's hiring policies are being followed.

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Employment Contingencies

- A. The DACHS employment/hiring process can be initiated pending the following contingencies:
- Doña Ana County Head Start/Early Head Start Policy Council Approval; (within 30 days of hire); [Head Start Regulations](#) 45-CFR 1304.5(d)(1)(xi)
 - Clearance of a Criminal Record (Fingerprints and Criminal Records Check) of all staff and volunteers working closely with children 6 hours or more per week; [Head Start Regulations](#) HS 45 CFR 1301.31(b)(1)(iii), NM Child Care Licensing Reg. 8.16.2.19 and NMAC 8.8.3
 - Verification of work history, reference checks & required certificates and educational requirements. [Head Start Regulations](#) HS 45 CFR 1301.31 (b)(1)(ii), [NM Child Care Licensing Regulations](#)
 - TB test screening (all classroom staff, drivers and kitchen personnel working in the Head Start classroom facility); [Head Start Regulations](#) HS 45 CFR 1304.52(k)
 - Initial physical exam; [Head Start Regulations](#) HS 45 CFR 1301.52(k)
 - Continued Federal Funding/Budget restrictions or re-organization;
 - Ensuring DACHS adheres to [Head Start Regulations](#) HS 1304.52(b)(1) & (2)(3)(4) and Head Start Reauthorization Act of 2007 Sec. 648(A)(2)(A) & (B) regarding staff qualifications identified in the sections.
 - Ensure we do not hire anyone under the age of 18 to work directly with children [Head Start Regulations](#) HS 8.16.2.23 (A)(2)
- B. Compensatory (Comp) Time and Overtime ([NMSU Policy Manual Section 8.20](#))

All non-exempt employees of the University are eligible to be compensated or given comp time for time worked in EXCESS of the 40 hour work week. Upon election by the employee, overtime work may be compensated in the form of overtime pay or compensatory time off. The university shall designate two (2) opportunities each year for employees' to elect to receive comp time for overtime hours worked, to be effective on January 1 and July 1. Comp time will be at the rate of 1.5 hours off for each hour worked in excess of 40 hours.

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However, if we know longer hours will be needed to attend evening parent meetings, etc. then we will determine whether employees will **exchange** or **replace** hours by leaving work early on Friday afternoons or within the week (**with prior supervisor approval**) or will be receiving overtime or comp-time. The university has no contractual obligation to pay overtime or approve compensatory time. If it becomes necessary for nonexempt employees to work more than 40 hours in a week, the following will apply:

Probation Period

([NMSU Policy Manual](#) **Section 8.50**) *HS CFR 1301.31 (d)*

Benefits

([NMSU Policy Manual](#) **Chapter 7**)

(Worker's Comp, Retirement, Group Insurance and Other Benefits)

Call Employee Benefits (646-8000) for specific answers to benefit questions, or refer to <http://hr.nmsu.edu/>.

Evaluation Procedures

([NMSU Policy Manual](#) **Section 8.50**) [Head Start Regulations](#) *HS 45 CFR 1301.31(a)(5) & 45 CFR 1304.52(j)*

Performance appraisal is a managerial tool that provides the employee with direction, feedback, appraisal, and developmental assistance. Appraisal should be made in concert with an accurate job description and annual individual performance objectives.

Each employee will receive a copy of the completed performance evaluation, a copy will be placed in employee's file at the Head Start Administrative Office. The original will go to NMSU Employee Services Office.

NOTE: For more details of non-exempt and exempt evaluation procedures, see [NMSU Policy Manual](#) **Section 8.50**

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Merit Promotion Plan and Salary Increases

([NMSU Policy Manual](#) *Section 8.50*)

Salary Schedules

([NMSU Policy Manual](#) *Section 8.15*)

All negotiations, questions or concerns relating to salary should be discussed with the Director.

Note: Three-Year Longevity Increase: Non-exempt employees who satisfactorily complete their initial 3 consecutive years of service will be awarded a 5 percent increase effective on the employee's anniversary date. Temporary employees are not eligible for the 3-year service award. Prior service with a break in employment in excess of 5 working days is not credited toward the 3 years of service. Leave without pay will not be included as service time.

Pay Periods

Currently, non-exempt and exempt staff are employed on either an Annual-9 or Annual-12 fiscal year. Paydays are the 15th and the last working day of the month. All non-exempt and temporary employees are paid on the last working day closest to the 15th of the month and on the final working day of each month for the time worked in the preceding semi-monthly payroll period.

- If you have a problem concerning your paycheck, please call the Administration Office and speak to the Director.

NOTE: Paper Timesheets for temporary staff are turned in on the 15th and the last working day of the month to the Administrative Office. Additionally, the employee must complete their electronic timesheet and submit on [myNMSU](#). The supervisor must sign the timesheets. If time is NOT entered and submitted on time, a check will not be issued until the next pay-period. Employees are responsible for picking up their own checks and signing for their release in the Administrative Office - **NO EXCEPTIONS**. If a check must be picked up by someone else, due to illness or injury, etc., a note from the employee, allowing the person to pick-up their check, must be submitted at the time of pick-up and we will ask for that person's photo ID for each occurrence. All employees are eligible to have direct deposit and are encouraged to take advantage of this benefit.

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Rest Breaks

([NMSU Policy Manual Section 8.15](#)) [Child Care Licensing Regulation](#).

A 15-minute break period is allowed for every four-hour work period. The classroom teacher and teacher assistant need to work this out together so the classroom and the children are monitored at all times to ensure the child/adult ratios are meeting the regulation. Break times for other staff should be arranged by the center, on-site supervisor. Non-usage of the break period may not be used to make up time spent away from work. Break times cannot be accumulated.

Work Week/Day/Hours

Services for the Doña Ana County Head Start/Early Head Start program begin on Monday mornings after 7:30 am and end on Friday afternoon at 5:00 pm. A 40 hour work week is maintained during regular program operations. Exceptions may occur when the work load is heavy or a special project requires attention. (See Comp Time Section pg. 3). In this case, Comp Time / Overtime must be approved for non-exempt employees by supervisor and authorized by supervisor for exempt employees, when appropriate. Children will be at all centers from Monday through Thursday unless special circumstances occur. Center staff will utilize Friday as predetermined by staff monthly Planning & Training Calendar and the Management Time Line.

- All employees, whether regular 12 month or 9 month, must take a lunch break of at least 30 minutes, after 6 hours of work. Full day centers need to make arrangements to have adequate coverage. This is a federal labor law.
- Each employee must provide their supervisor and the Director with a copy of their weekly work schedule at the beginning of each school year. Classroom center staff must “sign in” at their center on the DACHS Daily Attendance Record.
- Electronic time sheets will be maintained by all non-exempt employees. Temporary staff will maintain a paper time sheet as well and must have center supervisor sign (initial) the time sheet on a daily basis and turn in on the 15th and last day of the month. If those time sheets are not received at the admin office on these days, those hours will not generate a paycheck for that pay period.

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- The morning session will begin at 8:00 am and end at 11:30 am. The recommended one hour break between sessions will allow staff a 30 minute personal break (see below) from 11:30 am to 12:00 pm and a recommended 30 minute preparation period for the afternoon session from 12:00 pm to 12:30 pm. The afternoon session will begin at 12:30 pm and end at 4:00 pm. Other center staff will follow a schedule appropriate to their duties and approved by their supervisor. **The full day session will begin at 7:30 am and end at 5:30 pm. (Staff will take a 1 hour lunch providing adequate coverage is present 30 minutes minimum).**
- We require full-time teaching staff to take 30 minutes between sessions each day to have lunch, walk, run errands, make phone calls, or do something that will take them away from their work. This mandated 30 minutes will be part of the regular work day but may be used to contribute to overall positive mental health. It will be the employee's responsibility to take this 30 minute break. **NOTE: Exceptions to these schedules will exist for full-day operations.**
- Friday work schedules for Center Direct Service Staff and Administrative Office staff will be 8:00 - 4:30 (with a 30 minute lunch or 8:00 - 5:00 with a one hour lunch). If training is scheduled, work hours will be announced with adequate time as per AFSCME Contract Article 29

[http://hr.nmsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/R I AFSCME Agreement w NMSU.pdf](http://hr.nmsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/R_I_AFSCME_Agreement_w_NMSU.pdf)

- During winter and Spring Break if Supervisors are not on site employees must work out of the Administrative Office. This ensures staff safety who work at our remote sites.
- Center lunch schedule for staff will be staggered to accommodate parents and allow the center to remain open during center operation hours. (1304.40 D-2 Revised Performance Standards). The 30 minute mandated break must be taken and scheduled for each regular center staff.
- Regular, temporary employees will work hours dictated by conditions of employment.

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- It is expected you will meet your work schedule. If you are unable to fulfill this schedule, contact your supervisor.

NOTE: ANY CHANGE IN “ALL” WORK SCHEDULES MUST HAVE PRIOR SUPERVISOR APPROVAL.

EEO-Equal Employment Opportunity

([NMSU Policy Manual](#) Section 3.25)

The university is dedicated to providing equal employment opportunities in all areas of occupation without regard to age, ancestry, color, disability, gender, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status, in accordance with state and federal laws. Employees shall be free to discuss matters with the director of INSTITUTIONAL EQUITY and the Assistant Director of Employee Relations office and file grievances without fear of reprisal. All discrimination allegations (to include sexual harassment and denial of disability accommodations) are to be reported to the Office of INSTITUTIONAL EQUITY and the Employee Relations office immediately.

Social Security Card

([NMSU Policy Manual](#) Section 2.65)

Each applicant must possess a social security card in order to be employed. If an applicant does not have a social security card or requests the use of a name that is different in any way from the name on the card, it is the responsibility of the applicant to have the matter corrected at the nearest Social Security Administration Office.

Change of Address

Employees are required to notify DACHS in writing of any change of name, address, or telephone number so that they may be contacted at all times. In addition, employees will need to change this information and any changes in their W-4 or marital status on-line at [myNMSU](#). Oral notification cannot be accepted.

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Employee Assistance Program

([NMSU Policy Manual](#) *Section 7.08*)

The EAP (Employee Assistance Program) is a confidential counseling and referral service

available to all NMSU employees. Personal problems can affect an employee's sense of well-being and ability to perform on the job. The EAP offers professional help in preventing /resolving these problems. Employees may refer themselves or can be referred by the supervisor to the program by calling 646-6603.

Holiday Leave/Holiday Pay

([NMSU Policy Manual](#) *Section 7.10*)

Regular full-time and temporary employees on a prorated basis are eligible for holiday pay. The university recognizes the following holidays:

Martin Luther King Jr. Day	Labor Day
Spring Holiday (1 day)	Thanksgiving Day
Independence Day	Friday following Thanksgiving Day
Memorial Day	Christmas Eve Day through New Year's Day

When a holiday falls on a Saturday, the preceding Friday is observed; when a holiday falls on a Sunday, the following Monday is observed. The number of holidays during the Winter Break only includes the total number of regular (Monday-Friday) workdays during the holiday period

Nepotism

([NMSU Policy Manual](#) *Section 4.45* and

[Health & Human Services - Grants Administration Manual](#) *Section 5-1*)

Nepotism is prohibited in the Doña Ana County Head Start/Early Head Start Program. Two

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members of the same family may be employed by NMSU and Doña Ana County Head Start/Early Head Start except when one individual will supervise the other. DACHS prohibits the hiring of any individual if a member of the individual's immediate family is employed in an administrative capacity in the agency or is a member of the governing board (Grantee Board - NMSU Board of Regents). Under no circumstances will a supervisor evaluate an immediate family member.

Center Staff and enrolled children who are relatives

We discourage the placement of children whom are members of that center staff's family. All children who have applied and are eligible will be placed in the program, but may not be placed at centers where adult relatives work.

[DACHS Code Of Ethics Form](#) All employees are required to read & sign

A. Ethical Behavior and Responsibility:

In a caring, cooperative work place, human dignity is respected, professional satisfaction is promoted, and positive relationships are modeled. Our primary responsibility in this arena is to establish and maintain settings and relationships that support productive work and meet professional needs. It is **expected** that DACHS employees will:

- ❖ 1304.21(a)(1)(iii) Provide an environment of acceptance that supports and respects gender, culture, language, ethnicity and family composition;
- ❖ assist the program in providing the highest quality of service;
- ❖ maintain loyalty to the program and uphold its reputation;
- ❖ establish and maintain relationships of trust and cooperation with co-workers;
- ❖ share resources and information with co-workers;
- ❖ support one another in meeting Head Start service objectives;
- ❖ comply with and promote an understanding of State, Federal, NMSU and Head Start Policies and support policies and laws that protect the interests of children and families;
- ❖ take care to note when speaking for the organization and when expressing

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- ❖ a personal judgment;
- ❖ recognize how personal values, opinions and biases can affect professional judgment;
- ❖ demonstrate through actions a genuine respect for each child’s family, culture, and life-style;
- ❖ model respect and help children and families demonstrate appreciation of others;
- ❖ provide an environment that reflects the cultures of all families in the program in an integrated, natural way;
- ❖ be open to new ideas and willing to learn from the suggestions of others;
- ❖ Continue to learn, grow and contribute as a professional, maintaining high standards of conduct.

Regulations/Policies

All Head Start Staff will read and comply with all federal, state and local regulations including:

- A. Head Start Performance Standards available online at <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/standards/hsppps>
- B. [NM Child Care Licensing Regulations](#) (Child Care Regulations) copy at each center (Black 3-ring binder)
- C. NMSU Policy Manual - Copy in Administrative Office or online at [NMSU Policy Manual](#).
- D. DACHS Employee Handbook (each employee will receive).
- E. CACFP (Child & Adult Care Food Program) and ED (Environment Department) (Copies in Health & Nutrition Specialist’s office).
- F. DACHS Program [Forms For Staff](#).
- G. DACHS Emergency Preparedness Plan and Exposure Control Plan (copy at each center).

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Resources

Resources are available in the Central/Administrative Office. The Director and specialists / managers also have access to a variety of books, tapes and resource materials. Please call upon them for assistance and utilize these materials for your planning.

Utilization of Program Resources

- A. All DACHS sponsored functions/activities will require prior approval from Director and appropriate supervisor;
- B. Utilizing program time or program resources to promote a self-interest will not be allowed;
- C. No employee of NMSU shall accept favors, gifts, or gratuities either directly or indirectly from any vendor, representative, or business firm ([NMSU Policy Manual](#) Section 7.02.04);
- D. No personal solicitation will be allowed - i.e., donations, sales, fundraisers, business opportunity, chain letters, political or religious propaganda;
- E. Equipment usage will be limited to Head Start-related work.
- F. Checking Out of Equipment: Complete sign out (check out form) in Central office or use Redi-form to inform specialist/manager or supervisor of equipment checkout.

Office Hours

([NMSU Policy Manual](#) Section 3.70)

The Doña Ana County Head Start/Early Head Start Central Office is open from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday through Friday. All Head Start business, picking up mail or paychecks or dropping off timesheets, receipts or materials must be done during regular office hours. Most center site offices will open at 7:45 am and will close at 4:15 pm, unless otherwise arranged. All alternate work schedules are to be in written form. It is understood that not all jobs are open or available for alternate work schedule consideration.

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Dress Code

In the business world, the way employees look says a lot about the company they work for. At all times, we want to ensure that our standards convey the spirit of excellence, professionalism and leadership that is associated with Head Start and other service sectors where meeting the public is continual. The purpose of this information is to offer a more definitive description of what constitutes appropriate working attire. Clothes should fit properly, be in good repair, clean, not revealing, and appropriate for the work being performed.

Doña Ana County Head Start/Early Head Start employees and volunteers in the program shall maintain a clean, neat and professional personal appearance while on duty. **Business Casual** attire will be the “standard” dress code for Doña Ana County Head Start/Early Head Start administrative office staff.

Business Casual attire includes: Suits, jackets/blazers, slacks, khakis, Dockers style pants, shirts/blouses, polo-style shirts, sweaters, vests or other appropriate, professional attire for men and women.

Work attire that is not acceptable: Sweats, short shorts, snug fitting or faded-ragged pants, spandex (athletic wear) clothing, novelty t-shirts (those with printed writing, characters, slogans that shows inappropriate language or pictures or numbers) and tank tops or beach-type flip-flops.

Direct Service staff and maintenance staff will wear clothing and shoes that are appropriate for the duties they perform.

Safety: Flip-flops, slides, mules, clogs, high heeled, platform and open toes/open heeled shoes are not safe for the classroom and kitchen environment and are not allowed.

Casual Friday: Unless otherwise notified, Fridays will be designated as “casual day” for office staff. More relaxed apparel will be acceptable. Jeans and capris may be worn on this one-day

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per week, if you choose. This also applies to employees working during the summer months.

Special meetings, trainings or conferences: Business casual attire will be **required**, unless otherwise notified by management. Remember, when attending a training or conference with others from cooperative agencies, we expect your dress to reflect a proper professional image on behalf of NMSU and Head Start. (See previous page for definition of business casual).

Keep these thoughts in mind, “if you are unsure of whether an article of clothing is appropriate to wear to work, it probably isn’t,” and if it’s too tight, too sleeveless, too short, or too low, then don’t wear it! Clothing you would wear to the swimming pool, the gym, or at home working in the garage or the yard should not appear in the work environment.

Files

All files or reports generated in the course of work are the property of DACHS/NMSU and cannot be removed from the work site. Upon resignation/termination of employment, files and reports will be retrieved from center by DACHS support staff.

A. Master Program/Administrative Files

The master administrative files, to include T/TA, In-Kind and Master forms, (original hard copy and disk copy) will be maintained in the DACHS Central Office. Please make certain that all “program” information is given to the central office staff so that current files are available to staff responsible for up-dating and revising. The central office staff or the appropriate supervisor may retrieve information for you from these master files.

B. Current Child Files

CURRENT child records containing medical, dental and enrollment information will be maintained in a locked file located in each individual Head Start center. Care must be taken to ensure that these files are locked and remain confidential at all times. Any person accessing the child’s file MUST sign a records check out form EACH time the file is accessed. Child records will not leave the building or be released to anyone other

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than the staff or without approval. Circumstances under which a child's file may be removed from the building include IEP's and if child is being transported by ambulance. They will also utilize the "records check out" form. Parents have access to their child's file and staff members have access to their own personnel files. (In accordance with State/Federal Regulations).

C. Personnel Files

A personnel file is completed and maintained for each NMSU employee and archived in the NMSU Payroll Office. The Employee Services Director is the custodian of all personnel files. All information in the NMSU personnel files is confidential. Employees may review their own files in the presence of a Employee Services/Payroll Office staff member, but may not remove the file or any material without the specific approval of the Employee Services Office.

Personnel files will also be maintained in the Administrative Head Start Office in compliance with licensing regulations.

Included in this DACHS file are copies of:

- Hiring Checklist - "Reading Requirements" 2nd page (signed off after completion)
- Job Specification
- Employee Information Form
- NMSU application (non-exempt) resume (exempt)
- Reference Checks/Work History Verifications
- Code of Ethics - with signature
- Affidavit of Confidentiality - with signature
- Head Start Declaration Form - on-site file
- TB Test Results and Criminal Records Check - on-site file
- Training Certification (if applicable) or training log - on-site file
- Payroll-related forms (EAF, PTO & PAF)
- Performance evaluations (on regular NMSU employees only)
- Other forms as required for that particular position (CPR/First Aid).

Verification of current auto insurance and current work schedules will also be on file in Administrative office files.

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D. Staff Records - "ON-SITE" Center Files ([NM Child Care Licensing Regulations](#))

A licensee will keep a complete file for each staff member, including substitutes and volunteers working more than six hours of any week and having direct contact with the children. A center will keep the file for one year after the educator's last day of employment. Records will contain at least the following:

- name, address and telephone number;
- position;
- current and past duties and responsibilities;
- dates of hire and termination;
- documentation of a background check and employment history verification; if background check is in process then documentation showing that it is in process, such as a money order, shall be placed in file;
- an annual signed statement that the staff member would or would not be disqualified as a direct provider of care under the most current version of the Background Checks and Employment History Verification provisions pursuant to 8.8.3 NMAC;
- documentation of current first-aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation training;
- documentation of all appropriate training by date, time, hours and area of competency;
- emergency contact number;
- universal precaution acknowledgment form;
- confidentiality form;
- results of performance evaluations;
- administrative actions or reprimands;
- written plan for ongoing professional development for each staff member, including the director, that is based on the seven areas of competency, consistent with the career lattice, and based on the individual's goals; and
- signed acknowledgment that the staff have read and understand the personnel handbook;
- signed acknowledgement that all staff have reviewed and are aware of the center's disaster preparedness plan and evacuation plan.
- Form I-9, employment eligibility verification.

This staff record must be available for review by NM State Licensing surveyors, (Child Care Licensing - Children, Youth & Families). Substitute classroom personnel staff records must include the same information as a regular DACHS center employee. Substitute staff will maintain a current file when called to substitute. Volunteers working 6 hours or more, must obtain a TB screening and a record of the results must be filed on-site. A Criminal Records Check will also be required if working 6 hours or more in a Head Start classroom. An emergency contact for volunteers should also be on file.

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NOTE: Volunteers must be 18 years of age to “formally” volunteer with DACHS if fulfilling another agencies work/volunteer agreement, unless they are a current Head Start parent. Occasional help or assistance from employee’s children (under 18), while enrolled children are not present, should be cleared through immediate supervisor.
(See [NM Child Care Licensing Regulations Section 24.B](#))

Keys

All employees will have the necessary keys to their offices and to the office building, if necessary. Supervisors will have access, with keys, to employee’s offices, desks and file cabinets of the individual they supervise to obtain program materials or information should employee be unavailable. All keys to file cabinets containing child’s files must be kept in a designated location in the classroom office. All nine-month employees will turn in their keys at the end of the program year to be filed in the Central Office. Keys will be redistributed in August to be used throughout the nine-month Head Start program year. Keys may not be duplicated without authority (Request on Purchase Requisition Form).

Auto Insurance

([Health & Human Services - Grants Administration Manual Section 4-9](#)).

All automobiles used for the program must have at least liability and collision insurance. When the AGENCY provides the vehicle, the cost of transportation liability insurance, including collision, is an allowable item of program costs. When the vehicles are PRIVATELY owned, only the amount for the costs of transportation liability insurance attributable to the use of the vehicle in the Head Start program is an allowable item of program cost.

Interpretation: All of our Agency owned vehicles (vans, buses, cars and truck) are insured with both liability and collision through New Mexico State Fleet coverage and paid for out of our Head Start budget. PRIVATELY owned vehicles are required to have liability coverage. Our agency IS responsible for seeing that this liability insurance is secured

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and covered through the Head Start budget through providing mileage reimbursement. This mileage reimbursement covers an employee who is using their private vehicle on an “excess coverage” basis for liability, but does not cover any of their collision/comprehensive if they are at fault in an accident, when the privately owned vehicle is used for Doña Ana County Head Start/Early Head Start related business/travel. In addition, Head Start programs must comply with any state and local auto insurance requirements.

Leave Policies

([NMSU Policy Manual](#) *Section 7.20*)

“Requests for leave will be considered with primary consideration given to the requirements of the job.” Requests should be made in writing, in five days in advance, whenever possible”.

Temporary and contract employees do not accrue annual or sick leave, nor are they eligible for any other leave listed in this section.

Annual Leave

([NMSU Policy Manual](#) *Section 7.20.20*)

Annual Leave Requests will be submitted on the **DACHS** [Leave Request Form Part A & B](#) located on the DACHS website in the Forms for Staff Menu through the employee’s immediate supervisor. If the supervisor is unavailable to give their approval, the request will go through the Director for approval.

The supervisor will sign off on all Leave Requests. Annual Leave Requests should be submitted to the supervisor five working days PRIOR to the day(s) of requested absence. However, personal emergencies do arise and prior approval cannot always be given. When this occurs, the employee must notify and receive approval from their supervisor or the Director (if the supervisor is unavailable) within 24 hours (and call Central Office) and a [Leave Request Form Part A & B](#) must be completed by the employee and submitted to the Administration Office for inclusion in the monthly

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Leave Report. A & B forms will be entered by employee online and approved by supervisor. After every absence, a [Leave Request Form Part A & B](#) must be completed and routed to supervisor for approval before forwarding to Administration Office. If an employee takes leave that they do not have coming, they will be automatically be placed on Leave With-out Pay.

Annual Leave MAY be taken by teaching staff, with supervisor approval, during scheduled classroom hours, if there are volunteers, parents, or students available to assist the remaining classroom staff. It will be the responsibility of the requesting employee to see that this is done and that there is an assistant in place for the remaining classroom personnel. Taking Annual Leave during regular classroom hours IS THE EXCEPTION and not the rule. Spring Break is NOT given to NMSU Regular Staff. It is only given to students and faculty. Annual Leave must be requested and used for this vacation week, if time off is desired and the hours have been earned and work load permits. Head Start classes may be "in session" regardless of public school or NMSU Spring Breaks.

Annual Leave MAY NOT be taken during regularly scheduled staff meetings, curriculum planning days (teaching staff), in-service training days that relates to your specific job or component, or scheduled special staffing (such as IEP meetings) unless there is an extenuating circumstance that arises. In that case, approval must be obtained from the employee's immediate supervisor. Annual Leave MAY NOT be taken between May 1 and May 15 for Center Staff, as this time is necessary for doing final reports, putting supplies in storage, and turning in files. Annual Leave MAY NOT be taken between August 16-31 for Center staff, as this time is necessary for preparing files, setting up classrooms and Pre-service Training. **For teaching staff leave request approval will be contingent upon completion of approved lesson plans.**

NOTE: Annual-9 Regular Employees are NOT eligible to draw unemployment insurance during the summer months, as Annual-9 status is permanent employment.

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Leave-Absence, Unauthorized

([NMSU Policy Manual](#) Section 7.20.20)

An exempt or non-exempt employee who is absent from work without proper authorization or notification for a period of 1 working day, or if less than 1 working day for more than one occurrence, may be terminated. Such action will be considered as just cause for termination and processed as an involuntary termination. If subsequent investigation and information reveals extenuating circumstances, the employee may use annual leave, sick leave, or leave without pay for the days absent and may be subject to other disciplinary action.

Compassionate Leave

([NMSU Policy Manual](#) Section 7.20.30)

Sick Leave

([NMSU Policy Manual](#) Section 7.20.75)

Nine-Month and Other Non-faculty Employees

([NMSU Policy Manual](#) Section 7.20.75)

Leaves - Family and Medical

([NMSU Policy Manual](#) Section 7.20.45)

Leave Records

Supervisors will record leave requests, annual leave, and sick leave usage for all persons reporting directly to them. Supervisors and the Administration Office will be responsible for establishing and maintaining the appropriate records. The administrative office will prepare a computer report, and it will be reviewed and accumulations shared with individual employees

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on a monthly basis. The annual leave record will be forwarded with the Personnel Action Form when an employee terminates or is placed on leave without pay.

In the event the teacher is absent, the teacher assistant will assume the teacher's role in the classroom with substitutes, volunteers or other appropriate staff assisting. This typically is a short term situation. In the event a teacher is absent longer than 30 days, an appropriately qualified sub will be assigned to the site.

POLITICAL ACTIVITY

([NMSU Policy Manual](#) *Section 3.86*)

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

- A. Procedures for handling medical emergencies are located on the bulletin board in each Head Start classroom. Please refer to the Doña Ana County Head Start/Early Head Start Emergency Preparedness Plan, First Aid Manual, and Exposure Control Plan.
- B. Fire Drills are conducted by all NMSU Pre-school centers and lists of times are posted in the classroom. All Head Start centers in the county handle their own drills and report on a monthly basis. (Please refer to the [NMSU Policy Manual](#): *Environmental Health & Safety 2.60*)
- C. A Fire Evacuation Plan and Procedure is posted in all centers.
- D. All "on-the-job accidents" or injuries must be reported immediately to the injured employee's supervisor. A Notice of Accident (located at each center) form must be completed and submitted to the Director whether or not medical care is needed ([NMSU Policy Manual](#) *Section 7.45*). An employer's First Report of Accident Form and a supervisor's Accident Investigation Report Form will be completed by the Director. All 3 forms must be sent through the DACHS Administration Office and to the NMSU Human Resources Office within 24 hours. (See Process & Procedures in detail in DACHS [Forms For Staff](#).)
- E. Inform supervisor immediately of any emergency situation which would affect the staffing requirements at the center.
- F. All staff must review the DACHS Emergency Preparedness Plan and Exposure Control Plan.

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VEHICLE RESERVATION PROCEDURES

1. Contact Central Office 24 hours prior to the time the vehicle is needed.
2. Calls should be made to the following number: 647-8733 Central Office
3. Information that should be provided at the time of request for vehicles: Date of Use, Time, Destination.
4. Keys for center vehicles are at the respective centers. All vehicle(s) parked at Hadley Center will have keys available through Central Office.
5. It is required of staff members to return vehicles to Hadley Center after use.
6. If GAUGES indicate need for fuel or vehicles are dirty, it is your responsibility to refuel and maintain before returning vehicles. If you see that the vehicle needs washing, please notify the Administrative Office.. All citations in Head Start vehicles or private vehicles must be reported to the Administrative Office. Failure to do so may result in discipline including suspension or termination. All violations will be **paid by the driver**.

Due to the growth of our program, your compliance with this procedure will help us keep our vehicles in good working and appearing condition.

YOUR COOPERATION IS GREATLY APPRECIATED!

MILAGE FOR USE OF PERSONAL VEHICLE

Mileage will only be reimbursed for miles used to carry out Head Start job responsibilities. No employee will be reimbursed for mileage accrued going to and from the work site, to pick up or drop off mail, paychecks or time-sheets or attend local training, meetings, etc. Mileage will be reimbursed for on-site monitoring visits, home visits and meal pick-ups, and shopping trips for groceries and supplies, only if a Head Start vehicle is unavailable.

It is expected that Head Start vans (vehicles) will be utilized for all travel, training, field trips, monitoring visits, program shopping, meetings, and mail run, when available. Reservation of DACHS vehicles needs to be made with the central office front desk. Administrative office staff will use "sign-out" board for vehicle check out. Using DACHS vehicles will reduce mileage

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claims, considerably. Private vehicles used for out of town travel is allowable when DACHS vehicles are unavailable, or for other reasonable reasons as approved by the Director, mileage will be reimbursed.

NOTE: Mileage claims will be reviewed and audited by the administrative office to assure accountability within the program. Odometer readings and justification will be required. Please round off mileage figures on the Mileage Claim form. If reimbursement is under \$25.00, we will hold reimbursements until total accrues to \$25.00, then we will process a check. If a privately owned vehicle is used to transport more than one employee, reimbursement for mileage will be limited to one employee.

WEEKLY/MONTHLY REPORTS

On the last Friday or last working day of each month, several reports are due from the staff. Teaching staff/assistants must turn in the Monthly Attendance Record, Time Sheets, (all non-exempt staff) Weekly Meal Count, Volunteer Hours, Volunteer/Visitor Sign-in Log, In-Kind/T/TA Reports and Contributions, and any receipts (on a weekly basis). All staff must turn in Mileage Reports, (unless accumulating over several months - not to exceed three months), Related Services Sign-in Sheet, Parent/Staff Contact Reports, Monitoring Summaries, etc. All reports should be placed in the appropriate content area manager, specialist, supervisor or administrator "communication" folder or binder, all folders/binders list appropriate forms that are required for monthly reports.

SUPPLIES/EQUIPMENT

-See DACHS Purchase Requisition Procedure in P.O.G. online found under Administration.

TELEPHONE USE

Work-related long distance calls may be made on the center telephone and printouts of all calls will be reviewed. A printout will reflect calls made out of state on administrative staff phones (verification and certification required). Personal calls are discouraged during working hours and personal cell phones should be turned off. Please inform your friends and family members of the appropriate break times to call. Administrative office occupants have extension numbers

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listed on the locations and contact person (staff list), messages can be left on voice mail. A phone log of all calls on DACHS phones must be utilized for purposes of documentation. If calls are longer than 15 minutes documentation will be requested for back-up.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

(Career Development) ([NMSU Policy Manual Section 7.05](#)) All Doña Ana County Head Start/Early Head Start (NMSU) regular employees, working 50% time or more, are entitled to take two traditional NMSU courses per semester (Fall/Spring) (up to six credits) without a tuition charge, up to four credit hours may be taken for each summer session. The legal spouse or domestic partner may take the course, if the eligible employee chooses not to register. As a member of the Doña Ana County Head Start/Early Head Start staff, we recommend that full-time employees take no more than TWO courses per semester. However, if **teaching staff** is working toward BA degree as per Head Start mandate, exceptions will be reviewed. **Teaching staff** should, if possible, take the course after regular classroom hours or scheduled program functions, **on weekends** or during the summer sessions. It will be expected that work time be made up (as per NMSU regulations) for course work taken during regular work hours. A 30-minute lunch must be taken/scheduled and time made up going to and from classes. Registration for course work must be made with the approval from the immediate supervisor and Director. [Tuition Remission Benefit Authorization Form](#) must be submitted online via [myNMSU](#). Please note that this class is tax-free if employee or spouse is “pursuing a degree program”, if class is not being taken as a requirement of a degree program then you may be taxed on the benefit of the class. (IRS Regulation 520).

TRAINING/ADVISING

All regular DACHS staff members are expected to attend all relevant in-service training sessions throughout the year. There is a 24 hour training required by the State Licensing Department for classroom teaching staff and the Director (12 hours in Early childhood and 12 hours in safety related training). The DACHS Training log must include date of training, contact hours, competency area, and source of training and training certificates, if any). The Doña Ana County Head Start/Early Head Start program will pay for registration and travel expenses for in-state and out-of-state travel when training is required. Staff is responsible for obtaining certification renewals CEU’s and license renewals, etc., and payment of any fees connected with minimum requirements of the position. Physical exams are a requirement for employment with Head Start and fees are the responsibility of the employee.

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A. Physical Exams (AFSCME Agreement with NMSU [NMSU Policy Manual Section 8](#))

When the health of an employee is adversely affected by exposure of potentially harmful physical agents, toxic materials, or infectious agents in the course of their employment, the University agrees to pay for any physical examinations and other necessary tests, as determined by a medical provider designated and/or approved by the University, that are administered for diagnostic purposes.

Out of area training will depend on availability of T/TA travel funds, program need and appropriateness. Should staff be selected and approved to attend out of area training, they will be asked to share training information with others through presentation and in-service training.

Temporary staff members may be called upon to attend in-service training when deemed relevant to their positions. All staff members are encouraged to be involved in Early Childhood training, professional development or in the pursuit of an advanced degree.

NOTE: For local training or seminars (not provided by DACHS), whether or not the training is free, you must submit a Local In-State Travel Request Form and obtain prior approval from Supervisor, to leave the work site and attend the training.

Pre-approval is needed from Supervisors/Director on all DACHS provided training agendas.

Submit an “Out of Area Travel Request” if you are traveling out of the area (excluding El Paso).

TRAVEL

- See Travel/Training Form for Out of Area travel instructions in Forms for Staff menu - Administration on-line –.

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DISCIPLINARY ACTION (Non-probationary - Regular Employees)

([NMSU Policy Manual](#) *Section 8.30*)

Except in those instances of a serious nature where more stringent discipline is warranted (e.g. physical abuse, theft, falsification of documents, or willful misconduct), a progressive discipline policy will be instituted. This policy will normally involve the following steps:

- Oral reprimand or warning - Supervisor prepares **memorandum of record** for DACHS Administration Personnel files.
- Written reprimand, warning or notification of unacceptable performance. Supervisor prepares a memorandum to the employee, obtains NMSU Employee Services Office approval, and forwards a copy to the Employee Services Office for inclusion in the employee's file.
- Suspension or Demotion (Requires NMSU Employee Services Office approval)
- Dismissal (Involuntary termination) (Requires NMSU Employee Services Office approval)

JUST CAUSE

(Non-Probationary Regular Employees) ([NMSU Policy Manual](#) *Section 8.30*) Doña Ana County Head Start/Early Head Start personnel can be terminated, demoted or suspended for Just Cause which includes, but is not limited to, inefficiency, incompetency, misconduct, negligence, insubordination or conviction of a felony or misdemeanor. Although impossible to cite an all-inclusive list of actions which constitute just cause, examples include but are not limited to:

- Falsification of documents.
- Threatening, assaulting, or abusive behavior towards a supervisor, student, employee, guest or customer of the university.
- Sexual harassment of an employee, student, guest or customer of the university on or off campus which may explicitly or implicitly affect an employee's performance or unreasonably interferes with a person's employment or academic endeavors.
- Jeopardizing the safety or health of an employee (including one's self), student, guest or customer of the university.

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- Dishonesty or intentional fabrication of events.
- Negligent, incompetent, inefficient or unacceptable performance of duties.
- Willful disregard of reasonable directives or policies or a defiant attitude of noncompliance toward regulations, directives or policies applicable to an employee.
- Conduct that interferes with the efficient operation of the university.
- Inability or unwillingness to perform the duties required of a position.
- Possession or use of alcohol or illicit drugs, reporting to work under their influence, or being under the influence while on the job.
- Possession of drug paraphernalia or stolen property.
Conviction or admission of a felony or certain misdemeanors.
Careless, negligent, improper, unauthorized, or malicious use of, or theft of, property, equipment, or funds.
- Abuse of privileges.
- Failure to report for work or to timely report justifiable reason for absence to the department head or immediate supervisor.
- Repeated tardiness or poor attendance.
- Misconduct which adversely affects the interest or reputation of the university or its employees.
- Any repetition of offenses which resulted in a reprimand, warning, demotion, notification of unacceptable performance or suspension.
- Job abandonment

COMMUNICATION & DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS

- A. Doña Ana County Head Start/Early Head Start [Channels of Communication](#) (Refer to the [Doña Ana County Head Start/Early Head Start Program Organizational Chart](#))

Much of the atmosphere of a school or child care center depends upon the interactions

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that occur among staff members. It is essential that all Doña Ana County Head Start/Early Head Start staff members communicate their feelings, ideas and concerns to one another. It is expected that staff use the direct lines of communication outlined in the [Doña Ana County Head Start/Early Head Start Program Organizational Chart](#). This is not to prevent employees from speaking freely to other staff members but merely a management tool for eliminating confusion. All DACHS staff is encouraged to resolve issues through discussion with the immediate Supervisor. If attempts have been made to correct a situation through the direct channels outlined but to no avail, then the Director will be available to discuss the situation further.

B. Dispute Resolution: Tips for dealing with Interpersonal Conflicts.

- **Deal with the person directly.** Try to work out differences with the person with whom you are having a conflict. You can always speak to the employee's supervisor later, but in most cases, it is best to first try going one-on-one.
- **Arrange a meeting.** Request an informal, private meeting with the person. Inform the person ahead of time what the purpose of the meeting is and phrase it positively. During the meeting, focus specifically on work-related issues and behaviors.
- **Sort out feelings ahead of time.** Before the meeting, defuse your emotions by talking it over with a friend, family member or Employee Assistance Program counselor.
- **Use "I" statements.** During the discussion, begin statements with "I" instead of "you". This makes it easier for the listener to hear you and not get defensive. If the person grows defensive, he or she will not be free to problem solve.
- **Ask for input.** Give the person a chance to talk, and be sure to listen. Perhaps you may have unknowingly done something to upset the person. Ask the person for ideas on how to make the relationship work. People are more committed to the outcome if they've been asked for their input.
- **Clarify and rephrase.** To prevent misunderstandings, ask the person to clarify what was said and agreed upon.
- **Show appreciation.** Thank the person for his or her willingness to discuss and work on the issues.
- **Check back.** At the end of the meeting, arrange another meeting a week later to

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- discuss the progress. If there has been no progress, express your disappointment with specific examples of behavior. The two of you may agree to give it one more try or you may choose to consult with management next.

NOTE: The 3-part “Redi-form” or DACHS “Contact Form” will be utilized to document communications among the staff.

C. Doña Ana County Head Start/Early Head Start Internal Communication System

- All staff members/centers will have a box for receiving mail and pertinent notices and memos. The boxes will be located in the Head Start Central Office unless otherwise indicated. Please check your box often! All mail is confidential - respect co-workers right to privacy. All outlying centers should contact the office regularly for any messages that apply to their center. Mail pick up for outlying centers will be delivered Monday through Friday by mail courier.
- General Staff Meetings will take place as set forth in the annual Time Line, so that each staff person can receive information on program deadlines, meetings, workshops, training and activities. Updates to the DACHS website will be posted regularly to inform staff of upcoming events.
- Specialists/Managers will also meet **once a week** with the Director at the regularly scheduled Management meeting time as per Time Line and monthly planning & training calendar.
- Administrative Support Staff will also meet when needed.
- An ANNUAL STAFF CALENDAR will be distributed to new and returning staff in August of each year. A monthly Planning and Training Calendar will be distributed to all staff and centers during program year.

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GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

([NMSU Policy Manual](#) *Section 4.05.10*)

While employees are encouraged to resolve issues through discussion with the immediate supervisor(s), all discrimination matters are to be reported to the INSTITUTIONAL EQUITY Office immediately. There may be occasions when disputes may be resolved at the departmental level without direct involvement of the INSTITUTIONAL EQUITY Office, however, the INSTITUTIONAL EQUITY director is to be consulted to ensure consistency. Employees shall be free to discuss matters with the INSTITUTIONAL EQUITY director and file grievances without fear of reprisal.

RESIGNATIONS

([NMSU Policy Manual](#) *Section 8.60*)

A non-exempt employee who wishes to terminate services with Doña Ana County Head Start/Early Head Start (NMSU) should submit a signed resignation statement to their supervisor two weeks prior to the date of termination. An exempt employee should give a thirty day notice prior to termination. If the employee is not available to sign or refuses to sign a statement, the supervisor should so note on the Personnel Action Form and forward for processing. The Notice of Employee Separation Form and I.D. card for faculty/staff employees must accompany the Personnel Action Form. All benefits coverage's cease at midnight the date of termination. If an employee's separation from the university is less than 5 working days, seniority and other such employment privileges may be reinstated with approval from the Employee Services director. Employees may not appeal a voluntary resignation even if the action was in lieu of termination, unless the employee alleges discrimination. Building and office keys as well as the NMSU staff ID card, credit cards (gasoline, procurement) must be turned in upon termination.

All revisions to the Doña Ana County Head Start/Early Head Start Personnel Policies and Procedures are reviewed and approved annually by the Policy Council and by the NMSU Employee Services Office, as revisions are made.

If you have questions, seek advice, clarification, and counsel from your supervisor. Supervisors/managers are in place to assist, guide, authorize, monitor, evaluate and to provide leadership within the DACHS organization as a whole.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This will serve to notify my employer, Doña Ana County Head Start/Early Head Start, that I have received my electronic copy of Doña Ana County Head Start/Early Head Start Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual and the URL Link to the NMSU Policies Manual and that it is my responsibility to read and follow the policies, practices, rules and regulations as a condition of employment.

SIGNED: _____

(Employee's Signature)

DATE: _____

SIGNED: _____

(Supervisor's Signature)

DATE: _____

Print out this page after review and signature and submit to the Director to be placed in your administrative personnel file.

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