

The Order of the Fishermen Ministry Head Start

TITLE OF POSITION: Early Head Start Disability Specialist

This position is organized into major areas of responsibility with the duties detailed under each area. The Position Description is the basis for classification and pay, recruitment and selection, and performance appraisal. The immediate supervisor will review this position description with the employee upon hiring. Management may revise this description if there are substantial changes in the duties or if management feels there is a need for an update.

IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR: Executive Director

GENERAL SUMMARY:

The Early Head Start (EHS) Disability Specialist ensures that children with disabilities enrolled in the program receive the services they need to thrive in a nurturing and inclusive environment. This role is responsible for coordinating disability services in accordance with Head Start Program Performance Standards, IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act), and other applicable federal and state regulations. This position is responsible for implementing early intervention programs to provide education, training and support to teachers and families who have children with developmental delays.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE POSITION-ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS:

Duties of the position are described in major functional areas listed below. Additional duties may be assigned.

SPECIFIC DUTIES-ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS:

- Works to assure smooth transition of all children into and out of Early Head Start, particularly children with developmental delays/ disabilities. EHS develops a program transition protocol for children moving from Early Head Start into the Head Start program or to other preschool placements in the community.
- Identify, coordinate, and monitor services for infants and toddlers with suspected or diagnosed disabilities.
- Ensure timely developmental screenings and follow-up assessments.
- Work closely with families, early intervention agencies (e.g., Part C providers), and EHS staff to support Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs).
- Serve as a liaison between the EHS program and early intervention partners.
- Provide technical assistance and training to staff on disability inclusion, accommodations, and best practices.

- Maintain accurate and confidential records on children with disabilities, including documentation of referrals, services provided, and progress.
- Monitor classrooms to ensure environments support children with developmental delays or disabilities.
- Assist in creating inclusive lesson plans and modifying activities as needed to accommodate all learners.
- Ensure compliance with Head Start Program Performance Standards related to disabilities and inclusion.
- Assist with child enrollment and recruitment to ensure 10% of enrollment includes children with diagnosed disabilities.
- Advocate for appropriate services for children and families.
- Participate in multidisciplinary team meetings and child case conferences
- Oversee the Disability services and referral process.
- Attend home visits, parent conferences and IEP/IFSP meetings when requested or as necessary.

GENERAL JOB DUTIES-ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS:

- Understands, generates and documents in-kind and other allowable costs applied toward the nonfederal share requirement.
- Attends all workshops and meetings as deemed necessary by the immediate supervisor.
- Attends all required staff and parent meetings and activities.
- Responsible for understanding Head Start Performance Standards, Michigan childcare licensing regulations, TOFM Head Start Personnel Policies and Procedures, and all other handbooks, manuals and resources adhere to them.
- Expected to be knowledgeable of the regulations associated with prevention of occupational disease and injury, including the exercise of universal precautions and the prevention of contamination.
- Positively promotes Head Start in the community.
- Maintains strict confidentiality with respect to Head Start/ Early Head Start children, families and staff in accordance with established policies and procedures.

- Monitors compliance with the content area work plans.
- Develops and implements a plan and system of continuous ongoing monitoring and evaluation of activities within the program.

A. KNOWLEDGE AND ABILITIES

- Principles and practices of early childhood development, with an emphasis on infants, toddlers and preschool-aged children.
- Developmental screening tools and assessment methods appropriate for young children.
- Principles of inclusive education and classroom adaptation strategies for children with developmental delays or disabilities
- Performance Standards, with specific knowledge of Education and Early Childhood Development (1304) and (1306) as well as Services to Children with Disabilities (1308) portion of the Standards.
- Local community resources, services providers and referral networks supporting children with special needs and their families.
- Ability to know and implement the Head Start Performance Standards and policies of the agency. Ability to exercise professional judgment in evaluating before making decisions.

LANGUAGE SKILLS

- Ability to communicate ideas and instructions orally and in writing.
- Ability to speak, read and write English well enough to understand and be understood by others. Ability to write reports and business correspondence.
- Ability to read, analyze and interpret general health and disabilities journals and resource materials on Transition.
- Ability to speak before groups of individuals.

REASONING SKILLS:

- Ability to define problems, collect data, establish facts, and draw valid conclusions.
- Ability to interpret an extensive variety of instructions.

- Ability to summarize conclusions and instructions, then make recommendations and develop implementation strategies.
- Ability to maintain strict confidentiality at all times, including the ability to recognize situations in which confidentiality is required.

B. EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE:

- Bachelor's degree in Special Education, Early Childhood Education, Child Development, Social Work, or a related field required. Master's degree preferred.
- Minimum of 2 years of experience working with children birth to 3 with disabilities.
- Knowledge of Head Start/Early Head Start Program Performance Standards.
- Familiarity with IDEA Part C and early intervention services.
- Strong communication, collaboration, and organizational skills.
- Ability to work effectively with diverse families, children, and community partners.
- Bilingual (English/Spanish or other) preferred, but not required.
- Valid driver's license and reliable transportation may be required.

C. PHYSICAL DEMANDS AND WORKING CONDITIONS:

- Travel by car, bus, airplane or train may also be required associated with attendance at conferences and meetings; overnight travel may be required.
- May be required to lift up to 45 pounds.
- Frequent bending, kneeling, and sitting on the floor to interact with young children.
- Must pass all background checks and meet health requirements as required by EHS regulations.
- Some exposure to communicable diseases.
- Noise level in work environment may be moderate to loud.
- Work is generally performed in a classroom setting or in an office environment, involving face to-face communication.
- Some evenings and weekend work may occasionally be required for events such as home visits, parent-teacher conferences, Parent Committee meetings, social and community events.

E.E.O.C. STATEMENT

The Order of the Fishermen Ministry Head Start (TOFMHS) is an equal opportunity employer. It is the policy of TOFMHS not to discriminate in its employment and personnel practices because of a person's race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, age, height, weight, marital status, disability or any other basis protected by federal, state, or other applicable law.

Signature of acknowledgement and understanding of job expectations:

Date

Signature of Supervisor:

Date

Signature of Human Resources Representative:

Date
