



LSF HEAD START NPRM FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



WHAT IS THE NPRM AND WHAT HAPPENED?

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services released a proposed rule that would significantly revise the Head Start Program Performance Standards governing Head Start and Early Head Start programs nationwide.

This is a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, meaning the proposal is not final. It is currently open for public comment through Oct. 6, 2026.



ARE THESE CHANGES IN EFFECT NOW?

No. LSF Head Start programs continue operating under current requirements. Children and families should continue attending and enrolling as usual.



IS HEAD START CLOSING OR LOSING ITS FEDERAL FUNDING?

No. The proposed rule does not eliminate Head Start, close LSF classrooms or reduce LSF's federal Head Start funding.



WHY IS HHS PROPOSING THESE CHANGES?

HHS says the proposal is intended to reduce federal regulatory burden, eliminate duplicative requirements and give states, local programs and families greater flexibility and authority. Through this change, HHS projects that 162,000 additional Head Start slots would become available.



DOES LSF OPPOSE REDUCING HEAD START REGULATIONS?

LSF supports eliminating unnecessary administrative requirements that take time away from serving children and families without improving outcomes. We believe in operational excellence that goes beyond checking boxes and arbitrary paperwork.

Our current concern is ensuring that regulatory relief does not unintentionally weaken the practices and protections that make Head Start effective. Flexibility should help programs serve children and families better, not simply allow programs to do less.



WILL ANYTHING CHANGE FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES CURRENTLY IN THE HEAD START PROGRAM?

No. This is a proposed rule. LSF Head Start programs remain open, and current services continue.

If a final rule results in changes that affect LSF children or families, LSF will communicate those changes clearly and directly.



WILL CURRENT HEAD START EMPLOYEES SEE A CHANGE IN THEIR JOB OR RESPONSIBILITIES?

No employment changes have been made simply because the NPRM was issued.

LSF is reviewing the proposal and its potential operational implications. Employees will receive information directly from LSF if future decisions affect their roles or responsibilities.



IS LSF PLANNING TO REDUCE STAFF?

LSF has not made staffing decisions based on the proposed rule.

Greater flexibility does not automatically mean LSF will reduce staffing or eliminate existing practices. Any future decisions will be evaluated based on the needs of our children, families and staff.



WHAT SHOULD STAFF DO RIGHT NOW?

Continue serving children and families as usual.

Staff can also share their perspective regarding these proposed changes in appropriate ways. The people working directly with children and families can provide valuable insight into what current standards protect, where unnecessary burden exists and what practices make a meaningful difference.



WHY DOES LSF BELIEVE CONSISTENT HEAD START STANDARDS MATTER?

Head Start families should be able to expect high-quality services regardless of where they live.



WHAT IS LSF DOING NOW?

LSF is actively engaging in the public process while continuing to serve children and families without interruption.

Our Head Start and organizational leadership teams are reviewing the proposal and communicating with legislators about its potential impact on Head Start children, families, staff and communities. LSF also plans to submit public comments and is empowering our staff to share their own experiences and perspectives through the public comment process.

At the same time, LSF is implementing a communications plan that reinforces our strong support for Head Start and the comprehensive services that have made the program successful for generations of children and families.

Throughout this process, LSF will continue advocating for meaningful outcomes, responsible flexibility and the quality and comprehensive support that children and families count on.



CAN EMPLOYEES AND FAMILIES SUBMIT COMMENTS?

The NPRM is open for public comment through Oct. 6, 2026. We encourage you to submit comments through the link listed below.



WHAT HAPPENS AFTER OCT. 6?

HHS will review comments submitted during the public comment period before determining whether and how to move forward with a final rule. Currently, HHS is proposing a phased implementation, with full implementation happening in 2031.

LSF will continue monitoring the process and communicating with our employees and families as more information becomes available.

**TO SUBMIT A PUBLIC COMMENT
PLEASE VISIT:** <https://bit.ly/3SebW5u>

