Prepared by Region IX Office of Head Start

Arizona Head Start Association
Region 9 Updates
February 17, 2022

Hello from Arizona Program Specialist

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Agenda

► Interim Final Rule With Comment – Vaccination/Masking Requirement

► Moving Toward Full In-Person Services

► Supporting Staff Wellness

► Build Back Better

► Transportation IM

► 2022 Poverty Guidelines

► FY22 Monitoring Process

► CARES Act Oversight Study

► Upcoming National TTA and Regional TTA events

► Questions?

IFC – Masking Requirement

► **Masking requirement** – **Effective immediately upon publication of the IFC (11/30/2021).**

► Universal masking for all individuals two years of age and older, with some exceptions. It applies to all individuals in Head Start programs two years of age and older when:

- There are two or more individuals on a vehicle owned, leased, or arranged by the Head Start program (IM on transportation);
- They are indoors in a setting when Head Start services are provided;
- And for those not fully vaccinated, they are outdoors in a crowded setting or during activities that involve sustained close contact with other people.

IFC – Masking Requirement

► **Masking requirement exceptions** – There are exceptions for individuals who cannot wear a mask, or cannot safely wear a mask, because of:

- A disability defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act;

- Children when they are napping;

- Children and adults when they are eating or drinking; and

- Children with special health care needs, for whom the program should follow the advice of the child's health care provider regarding the best type of face covering.

IFC – Vaccine Requirement

▶ **<u>Vaccine requirement</u>** –

- All staff

- Certain contractors whose activities involve contact with or providing direct services to children and families

- Volunteers in classrooms or working directly with children

IFC – Vaccine Requirement

► Defining "all staff":

- The definition of staff in §1305.2 is "paid adults who have responsibilities related to children and their families who are enrolled in programs."

- Consistent with that definition, "all staff" as noted in this IFC, refers to all staff who work with enrolled Head Start children and families in any capacity regardless of funding source.

- The term "Head Start" is inclusive of Head Start, Early Head Start, and Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships.

IFC – Vaccine Requirement

► <u>Vaccine requirement exemptions</u> may be granted for those with:

- Medical conditions, documented by a medical provider
- Sincerely held religious belief

► Those who are granted an exemption for one of the reasons listed above are required to undergo regular testing.

► Aside from those who are granted exemptions for one of the reasons above, there is no testing option as an alternative to the vaccine requirement.

IFC – Vaccine Requirement

► It is the responsibility of Head Start programs to establish a process for reviewing and granting the exemptions.

► Additionally, programs should develop and implement a written COVID-19 testing protocol for those granted vaccine exemptions.

- Programs should consult with their Health Services Advisory Committee (HSAC) and local public health officials, along with recommendations from their agency's legal counsel and Human Resources department in the development of a COVID-19 testing protocol.

Vaccination/Mask Requirement Resources

► Vaccinating Head Start Staff: Voices from the Field

► Strategies to talk with staff and increase vaccine confidence

- Tips for Talking to Head Start Families and Staff About the COVID-19 Vaccines
- COVID-19 Vaccine FAQs
- Changing the COVID Conversation
- COVID-19 Vaccine Education Initiative
- Get Vaccine Answers

► More information & resources: Vaccinating the Head Start Community

► MyPeers

► More to come!

Vaccination/Mask Requirement Resources

► CDC Strategies to Implement a Workplace Vaccination Program
- Consider COVID-19 Vaccination Options for Your Employees
- Build Confidence in COVID-19 Vaccines
- Best Practices
- Vaccination On Site at the Workplace
- Vaccination Off Site in the Community
- Other Considerations
- Vaccine Mandates & Exemptions
- Vaccinated Workers
- Other Resources

► OSHA Emergency Temporary Standard
- https://www.osha.gov/coronavirus/ets

► EEOC What You Should Know About COVID-19 and the ADA, the Rehabilitation Act, and Other EEO Laws
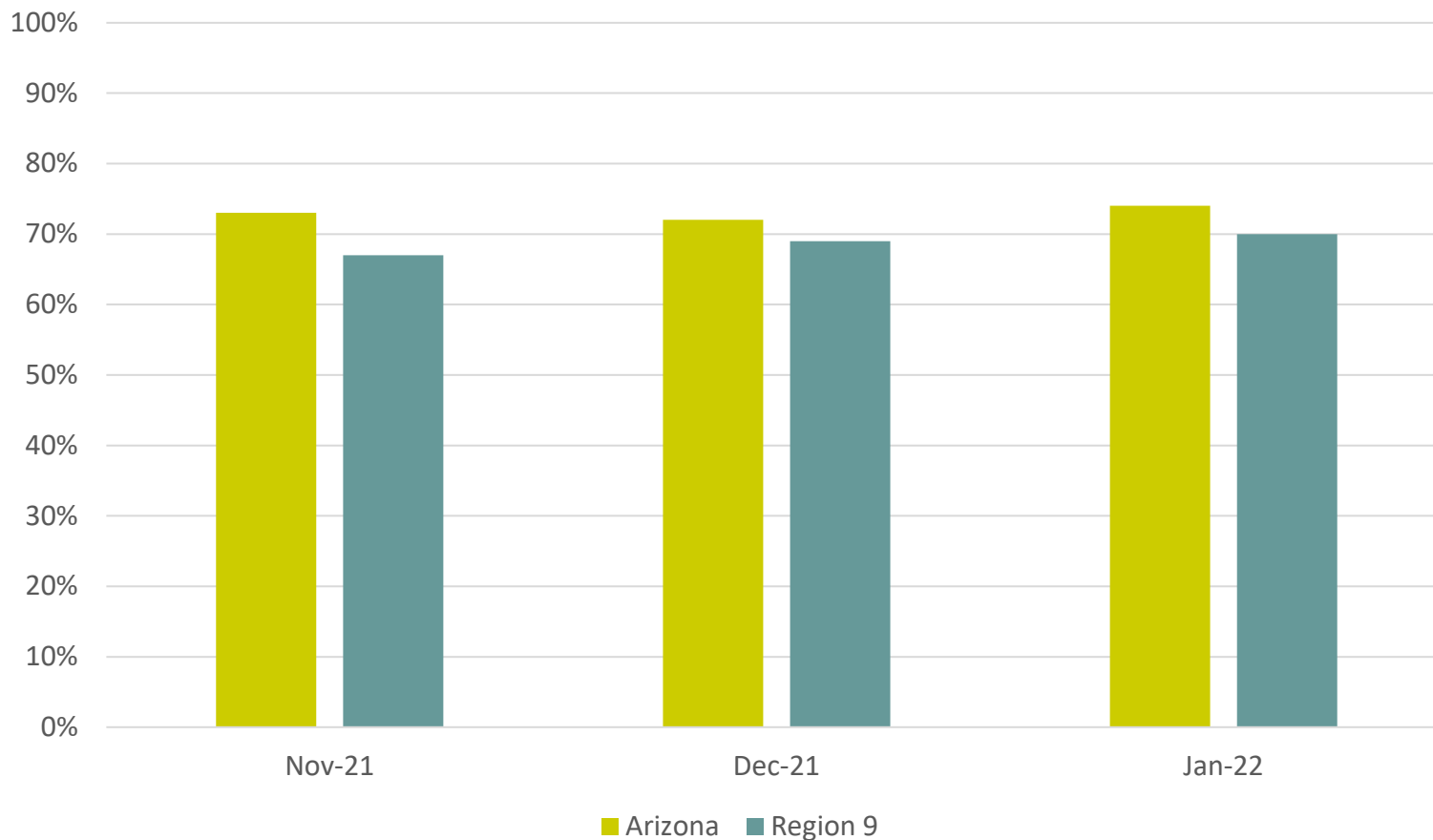
Full In-Person Services

► Programs are working toward full enrollment and fully in-person comprehensive services, contingent upon the CDC, state, and local health department guidance, and in consideration of local school districts' decisions.

► The use of virtual and remote delivery of program services for children, while not a permanent program option, is an interim service delivery strategy.

► Beginning January 2022, OHS will pause the tracking and monitoring of enrollment. Programs are expected to continue to work toward full enrollment and full comprehensive services.
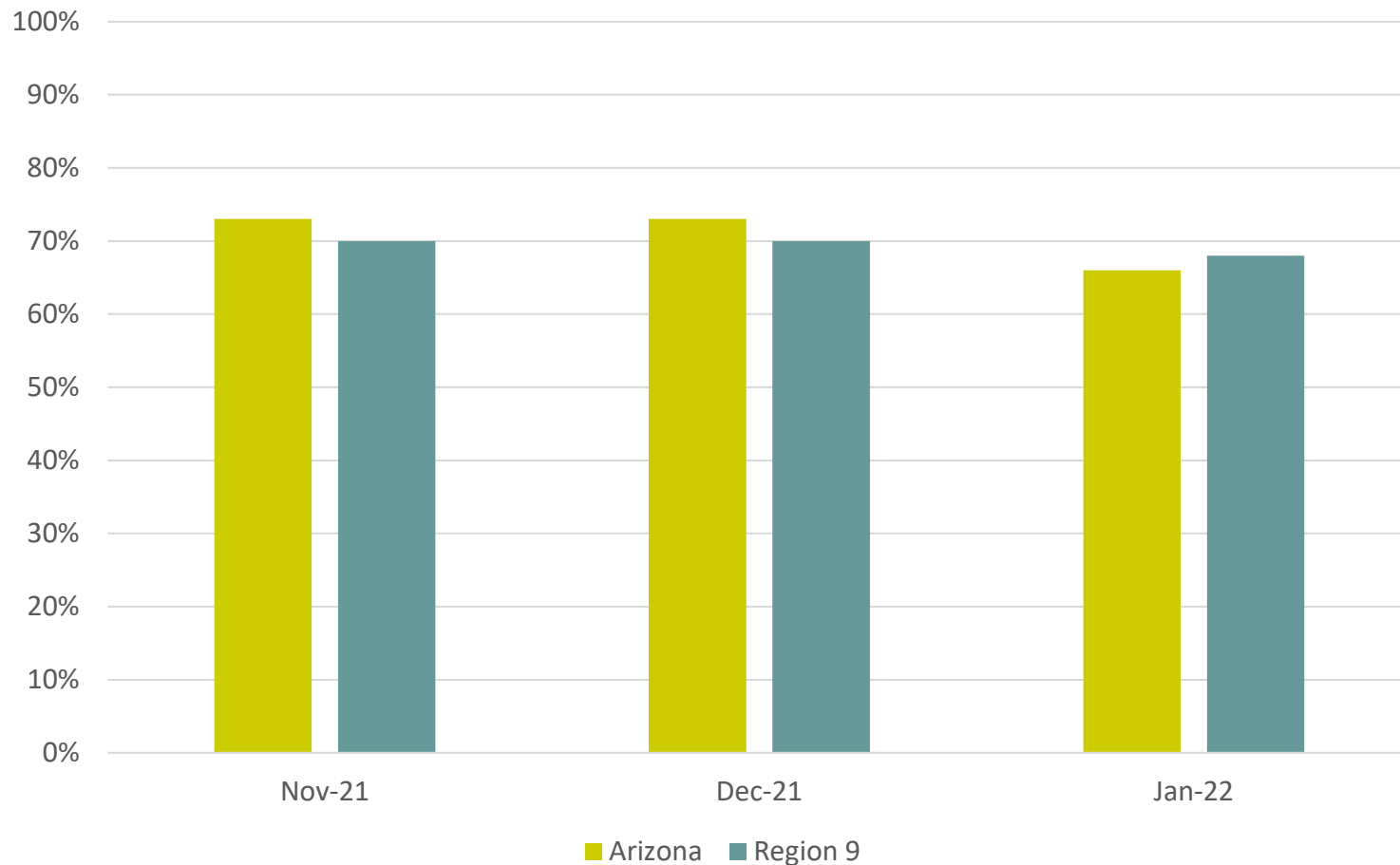
Current Enrollment in Arizona

AZ HS Program % Enrollment

Current Enrollment in Arizona

AZ EHS Program % Enrollment

Supporting Staff Wellness

[ACF-IM-HS-21-05](ACF-IM-HS-21-05)

Issued September 27, 2021

► Prioritize staff wellness in Head Start programs

► Strategies to promote wellness:
- Support a program-wide culture that promotes children's mental and overall health and social and emotional well being
- Keep children safe during all activities
- Foster environment of respect, trust and teamwork
- Use COVID-19 relief funding to support retention
- Make mental health and wellness information available to staff
- Improve workspaces and encourage healthy options
- Ensure staff are aware of their rights as employees

Federal Budget 2022

▶ Continuing Resolution through February 18, 2022

▶ Build Back Better Act

- $450B in total funding

- $15B to increase compensation for the Head Start workforce over six years

- Mandating full enrollment for Head Start, in which state Pre-K systems must look to fill all Head Start slots first before creating new slots

- **Expansion of statewide Pre-K in the model of Head Start, including the possibility of local grants to Head Start if state governments opt out of participating**

- Requirement of state-level child care quality to be held to Head Start Program Performance Standards

ACF-IM-HS-22-01 Transportation IM

Head Start Transportation Services and Vehicles During the COVID-19 Pandemic

► https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/policy/im/acf-im-hs-22-01

► The IM addresses transportation staff safety, requiring staff who are sick to stay home, sending sick staff home, wearing masks, and keeping hands clean.

► Strategies ensuring Head Start vehicles are safe places for transportation of staff and children by following transportation strategies such as masking and hand washing supplies available

► Improving ventilation to allow air quality inside the vehicle.

► Staff conducts health checks before children and staff board the vehicle

► Distance children from each other, help children understand physical distancing

► Wear gloves if touching surfaces contaminated by body fluids.

► Programs should routinely clean vehicles at the end of each day. If a child or adult who rode the bus tested positive for or has symptoms of COVID-19, clean and disinfect the bus before using it again.

2022 Poverty Guidelines

► Issued on 1/25/22

► Utilize guidelines to determine family eligibility for Head Start and Early Head Start services

► https://aspe.hhs.gov/topics/poverty-economic-mobility/poverty-guidelines?cid=708d07a50b3d6fb327d328dfb989bbd8

FY2022 Monitoring Process

[ACF-IM-HS-21-03: FY2022 Monitoring Process for HS & EHS](ACF-IM-HS-21-03)

Issued July 27, 2021

- **Focus Area 1 (FA1)**
  - Virtual – Start Date: October 2021
- **Focus Area 2 (FA2)**
  - In-person – Start Date: January 2022
- **CLASS**
  - FY2022 CLASS review will not be conducted
  - Virtual CLASS pilot
- The OHS will monitor local conditions for each scheduled on-site review and follow CDC recommendations
- The OHS reserves the right to conduct unannounced, on-site or virtual reviews as needed

FA1 and FA2 FY2022 Updates

▶ Recipient will have the opportunity to share:

- Program strengths, creativity and approaches to providing quality services
- Strategies for creating a workplace culture that promotes diversity, belonging and inclusion
- How the program is responding and adapting throughout the COVID-19 pandemic
- How the CARES Act and other funding is being used
- Strategies for continuous improvement and how the program determines programmatic, child and family outcomes
- ERSEA strategies for children and expectant mothers

CARES Act Oversight Study

► The OHS will be conducting a CARES Act Oversight study in FY2022:

- This review takes a collaborative approach to identifying challenges recipients have encountered and aims to inform the development of technical assistance to proactively address issues that could impact payment integrity.

- The study will be conducted remotely using the OHS-approved sampling methodology.

- Eighty recipients will be selected to participate.

Upcoming National TTA Activities

[Upcoming Events | ECLKC (hhs.gov)](#)

- Enrollment Forward: Intentional Workforce Planning: 2/22/22; 10:00 - 11:30 PST

- New Director Mentor Initiative: 3/8/22 – 3/10/22; Los Angeles, CA

- Enrollment Forward: Grant Recipient Strategies to Address Challenges Related to Enrollment: 3/15/22; 10:00 – 11:30 PST

- ERSEA Institute 2022: 4/5/22 – 4/7/22: 8:00 – 2:00 PST

- View past, upcoming events, and registration information [HERE](#).

Upcoming Regional TTA Activities

► Regional Wellness Series

- Session 3 – May 12, 2:00PM – 3:30PM PST

► Arizona Coaching Network

- March 15, 1:00 – 3:00 PM PST

- April 19, 1:00 – 3:00 PM PST

* For more information on registering for any of these events, please contact your assigned TTA Point of Contact (POC) or Program Specialist

Questions & Answers