

## **1304.53 Facilities, Materials, and Equipment**

- (a) Head Start Physical Environment and Facilities  
Head Start Equipment, Toys, Materials, and Furniture

1304.53

- (a) Head Start physical environment and facilities.  
(1) Grantee and delegate agencies must provide a physical environment and facilities conducive to learning and reflective of the different stages of development of each child.

[Curriculum Development](#)  
[Choosing Appropriate Classroom Materials](#)  
[Health & Safety Checklist Procedure](#)  
[Facilities Monitors](#)

- (2) Grantee and delegate agencies must provide appropriate space for the conduct of all program activities (see 45 CFR 1308.4 for specific access requirements for children with disabilities).

[Choosing and Maintaining Appropriate & Safe Facilities](#)

- (3) The center space provided by grantee and delegate agencies must be organized into functional areas that can be recognized by the children and that allow for individual activities and social interactions.

[Choosing and Maintaining Appropriate & Safe Facilities](#)  
[Classroom Daily Plans](#)  
[Curriculum Development](#)

- (4) The indoor and outdoor space in Early Head Start or Head Start centers in use by mobile infants and toddlers must be separated from general walkways and from areas in use by preschoolers.

[Monthly Health and Safety Checklist](#)  
[Choosing and Maintaining Appropriate & Safe Facilities](#)

- (5) Centers must have at least 35 square feet of usable indoor space per child available for the care and use of children (i.e., exclusive of bathrooms, halls, kitchen, staff rooms, and storage places) and at least 75 square feet of usable outdoor play space per child.

[Checklist for Quality Head Start Facilities](#)  
[Monthly Health and Safety Checklist](#)  
[Choosing and Maintaining Appropriate & Safe Facilities](#)

- (6) Facilities owned or operated by Early Head Start and Head Start grantee or delegate agencies must meet the licensing requirements of 45 CFR 1306.30.

[Choosing and Maintaining Appropriate & Safe Facilities](#)  
[Rules and Regulations for Centers](#)

- (7) Grantee and delegate agencies must provide for the maintenance, repair, safety, and security of all Early Head Start and Head Start facilities, materials and equipment.

[Health & Safety Checklist Procedure](#)  
[Facilities Monitors](#)  
[Checklist for Quality Head Start Facilities](#)  
[Choosing and Maintaining Appropriate & Safe Facilities](#)

(8) Grantee and delegate agencies must provide a center-based environment free of toxins, such as cigarette smoke, lead, pesticides, herbicides, and other air pollutants as well as soil and water contaminants. Agencies must ensure that no child is present during the spraying of pesticides or herbicides. Children must not return to the affected area until it is safe to do so.

[Employment Policies](#)

[Tobacco-Free Environment Policy](#)

[OSHA Hazard Communication Program](#)

[Choosing and Maintaining Appropriate & Safe Facilities](#)

(9) Outdoor play areas at center-based programs must be arranged so as to prevent any child from leaving the premises and getting into unsafe and unsupervised areas. Enroute to play areas, children must not be exposed to vehicular traffic without supervision.

[Choosing and Maintaining Appropriate & Safe Facilities](#)

[Monthly Health and Safety Checklist](#)

[Checklist for Quality Head Start Facilities](#)

(10) Grantee and delegate agencies must conduct a safety inspection, at least annually, to ensure that each facility's space, light, ventilation, heat, and other physical arrangements are consistent with the health, safety and developmental needs of children. At a minimum, agencies must ensure that:

(i) In climates where such systems are necessary, there is a safe and effective heating and cooling system that is insulated to protect children and staff from potential burns;

(ii) No highly flammable furnishings, decorations, or materials that emit highly toxic fumes when burned are used;

[Choosing and Maintaining Appropriate & Safe Facilities](#)

[Health & Safety Checklist Procedure](#)

[Facilities Monitors](#)

[Checklist for Quality Head Start Facilities](#)

[Monthly Health and Safety Checklist](#)

(iii) Flammable and other dangerous materials and potential poisons are stored in locked cabinets or storage facilities separate from stored medications and food and are accessible only to authorized persons. All medications, including those required for staff and volunteers, are labeled, stored under lock and key, refrigerated if necessary, and kept out of the reach of children;

[Choosing and Maintaining Appropriate & Safe Facilities](#)

[Facilities Monitors](#)

[Checklist for Quality Head Start Facilities](#)

[Monthly Health and Safety Checklist](#)

[Medication Administration Policy](#)

(iv) Rooms are well lit and provide emergency lighting in the case of power failure;

[Facilities Monitors](#)

[Checklist for Quality Head Start Facilities](#)

[Monthly Health and Safety Checklist](#)

(v) Approved, working fire extinguishers are readily available;

[Monthly Health and Safety Checklist](#)  
[Emergency Preparedness Plan Policy](#)  
[Education Staff \(Teachers\)](#)

(vi) An appropriate number of smoke detectors are installed and tested regularly;

[Monthly Health and Safety Checklist](#)  
[Emergency Preparedness Plan Policy](#)

(vii) Exits are clearly visible and evacuation routes are clearly marked and posted so that the path to safety outside is unmistakable (see 45 CFR 1304.22 for additional emergency procedures);

[Monthly Health and Safety Checklist](#)  
[Emergency Preparedness Plan Policy](#)  
[Fire Evacuation Drill Procedures](#)

(viii) Indoor and outdoor premises are cleaned daily and kept free of undesirable and hazardous materials and conditions;

[Checklist for Quality Head Start Facilities](#)  
[Monthly Health and Safety Checklist](#)  
[Choosing and Maintaining Appropriate & Safe Facilities](#)

(ix) Paint coatings on both interior and exterior premises used for the care of children do not contain hazardous quantities of lead;

[OSHA Hazard Communication Program](#)  
[Checklist for Quality Head Start Facilities](#)  
[Choosing and Maintaining Appropriate & Safe Facilities](#)

(x) The selection, layout, and maintenance of playground equipment and surfaces minimize the possibility of injury to children;

[Choosing and Maintaining Appropriate & Safe Facilities](#)  
[Health & Safety Checklist Procedure](#)  
[Checklist for Quality Head Start Facilities](#)

(xi) Electrical outlets accessible to children prevent shock through the use of child-resistant covers, the installation of child-protection outlets, or the use of safety plugs;

(xii) Windows and glass doors are constructed, adapted, or adjusted to prevent injury to children;

[Monthly Health and Safety Checklist](#)

(xiii) Only sources of water approved by the local or State health authority are used;

[Choosing and Maintaining Appropriate & Safe Facilities](#)

(xiv) Toilets and hand washing facilities are adequate, clean, in good repair, and easily reached by children. Toileting and diapering areas must be separated from areas used for cooking, eating, or children's activities;

[Diapering Policy](#)  
[Hand Washing Policy and Procedure](#)

[Checklist for Quality Head Start Facilities](#)  
[Monthly Health and Safety Checklist](#)

(xv) Toilet training equipment is provided for children being toilet trained;

[Toilet Learning Policy](#)  
[Monthly Health and Safety Checklist](#)

(xvi) All sewage and liquid waste is disposed of through a locally approved sewer system, and garbage and trash are stored in a safe and sanitary manner; and

[Facilities Monitors](#)  
[Checklist for Quality Head Start Facilities](#)  
[Monthly Health and Safety Checklist](#)

(xvii) Adequate provisions are made for children with disabilities to ensure their safety, comfort, and participation.

[Choosing and Maintaining Appropriate & Safe Facilities](#)  
[Classroom Daily Plans](#)

(b) Head Start equipment, toys, materials, and furniture.

(1) Grantee and delegate agencies must provide and arrange sufficient equipment, toys, materials, and furniture to meet the needs and facilitate the participation of children and adults. Equipment, toys, materials, and furniture owned or operated by the grantee or delegate agency must be:

(i) Supportive of the specific educational objectives of the local program;

(ii) Supportive of the cultural and ethnic backgrounds of the children;

(iii) Age-appropriate, safe, and supportive of the abilities and developmental level of each child served, with adaptations, if necessary, for children with disabilities;

(iv) Accessible, attractive, and inviting to children;

(v) Designed to provide a variety of learning experiences and to encourage each child to experiment and explore;

[Choosing and Maintaining Appropriate & Safe Facilities](#)  
[Curriculum Development](#)

(vi) Safe, durable, and kept in good condition; and

(vii) Stored in a safe and orderly fashion when not in use.

[Choosing and Maintaining Appropriate & Safe Facilities](#)  
[Facilities Monitors](#)  
[Checklist for Quality Head Start Facilities](#)  
[Monthly Health and Safety Checklist](#)

(2) Infant and toddler toys must be made of non-toxic materials and must be sanitized regularly.  
1304.53(b)(3)

[OSHA Hazard Communication Program](#)

[Toy Washing Policy](#)

(3) To reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), all sleeping arrangements for infants must use firm mattresses and avoid soft bedding materials such as comforters, pillows, fluffy blankets or stuffed toys.

[Checklist for Quality Head Start Facilities](#)

[Monthly Health and Safety Checklist](#)

[Early Head Start Sleeping and Napping Routine](#)