



# Luzerne County Head Start, Inc.

*Building Strong Families Since 1965*

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS AND CONTRACT FOR PRESCHOOL AND INFANT/TODDLER BUS TRANSPORTATION

DATE: May 6, 2022

GENERAL INFORMATION:

### PURPOSE:

This Request for Proposal (RFP) is to contract for Preschool and Infant/Toddler Bus Transportation Services for Luzerne County Head Start, Inc.

**Price quotes/proposals must be received no later than 12:00 PM, Monday, May 27, 2022**

Luzerne County Head Start, Inc. will be accepting request for proposals (RFP) for Preschool and Infant/Toddler Bus Transportation Services would begin on August 15, 2022. Luzerne County Head Start, Inc. will lease our fleet of buses to the awarded Contractor. The Contractor will then be responsible for insurance, maintenance, inspections, drivers, bus monitors, and gas. It is our intention to determine the most responsible Contractor through evaluation of various criteria, including, but not limited to: a minimum of three (3) years of preschool student bus transportation experience, cost (overall cost of services to be rendered), quality of management and operations, company and employee stability, service reputation, training program; including CDL for drivers and CPR training for bus monitors and drivers, random drug testing with results supplied to Luzerne County Head Start, Inc.

### EVALUATION and AWARD PROCESS

After determining that the proposal have attached all required documentation, Luzerne County Head Start, Inc. shall use objective analysis in conducting a comparative assessment of all of the proposals. After the initial screening process and review of references, an interview may be conducted with the Contractor. The following method of evaluation will be used;

Years of experience with preschool, infant, and toddler transportation	Up to 5 points
Cost	Up to 5 points
Stability—Company	Up to 5 points
Stability—Employees	Up to 5 points
References	Up to 5 points
Training program—CDL requirements	Up to 5 points
CPR Trained staff	Up to 5 points
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Up to 35 points</b>

Web address: <http://www.lcheadstart.org> E-Mail: [lchsinfo@hsweb.org](mailto:lchsinfo@hsweb.org)

23 Beekman Street • Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania 18702 • 570-829-6231 • Fax 570-829-6206 • In PA 800-551-5829

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>3 points</b>	<b>4 points</b>	<b>5 points</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Years of experience in preschool, infant, toddler transportation</b>	3-5 years' experience	5-10 years' experience	10+ years' experience	
<b>Cost</b>	Highest	Mid	Lowest	
<b>Stability—Company</b>	Less than 5 years company is in business	5-15 years company is in business	15+ years company is in business	
<b>Stability—Employees</b>	50% of employees have been employed less than 5 years	51-75% of employees have been employed more than 5 years	76-100% of employees have been employed more than 10 years	
<b>References</b>	3 references listed with required and exceptional experience	3-5 references listed with required and exceptional experience	5+ references listed with required and exceptional experience	
<b>Training program—CDL requirements</b>	Less than 50% of Employees are trained with proper, up to date, requirements	More than 50% of Employees are trained with proper, up to date, requirements	All Employees are trained with proper, up to date, requirements	
<b>CPR Trained staff</b>	Less than 50% of Employees are trained	More than 50% of Employees are trained	All Employees are trained	
<b>Company's Total Score</b>				

## **INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS:**

The Contractor will provide, prior to work commencing, a Certificate of Insurance, which satisfies Luzerne County Head Start, Inc. insurance requirements as outlined below. The Certificate of Insurance must name Luzerne County Head Start, Inc., as additional insured and certificate holder.

- Commercial General Liability
  - Minimum limit of \$1,000,000 per occurrence and \$2,000,000 general aggregate
  - Must include personal injury and contractual liability
  - Must include Luzerne County Head Start, Inc. as the additional insured
- Automobile Liability
  - Must have a minimum limit of \$1,000,000 combined single limit
- Abuse or Molestation Liability
  - Must have a minimum limit of \$1,000,000 per occurrence
- Worker's Compensation
  - Worker's Compensation & Occupational Disease insurance in compliance with all statutory laws of the State of Pennsylvania and Employers Liability Insurance in the amount of \$500,000/\$500,000/\$500,000 each person and each occurrence applicable to persons employed or otherwise retained by Contractor.
- Excess Liability
  - Umbrella/Excess Liability insurance in the amount of \$1,000,000 each occurrence and \$1,000,000 general aggregate
  - Must include Luzerne County Head Start, Inc. as the additional insured
- Notice of Cancellation
  - The Certificate of Insurance must provide a definitive 30-day notice in the event of cancellation or material change in policy terms and conditions.

## **SCOPE OF SERVICE**

1. To provide safe transportation to and from preschool, to and from Early Head Start socializations, and other school-related functions, such as study trips. A typical regular school year will require 180 school days. Luzerne County Head Start, Inc. will **only** be billed for days that service is provided by the Contractor.
2. A school year will have a minimum of 180 school days, but may have more days as warranted. Luzerne County Head Start, Inc. will **only** be billed for days that service is provided by the Contractor.
3. All children must be placed in a five (5)-point harness system. Harness system will be provided by LCHS to the Contractor.
4. The Contractor will provide an annual safety inspection including annual State Police inspections/Department of Transportation and other applicable law enforcement agencies. **A copy of all inspection paperwork will be given to the Director of Operations within a week after inspection.**
5. The Contractor will lease all busses from LCHS for \$10 per school year, payable by September 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.
6. The Contractor will carry out all systematic preventive maintenance on vehicles and provide records to the Director of Operations.
7. The Contractor will provide daily pre-trip bus inspection given to the Director of Operations on a weekly basis. LCHS will provide the form for the pre-trip inspection. Contractor will withdraw a bus from services if a serious defect exists, which includes, steering, brakes, primary vision, exhaust, wheels, tires, or any other serious condition which may make the vehicle unsafe for student transport and will repair the issue. If too serious of a repair, will discuss with LCHS.
8. The Contractor agrees to comply with and observe all provisions of the PA vehicle Code and all other applicable laws.
9. The Contractor allows for bus runs that only allow students minimal riding time to and from school, which will **not exceed 60 minutes** of riding time per run.
10. The Contractor will maintain proper behavior of bus monitors and bus drivers including an agreement on confidentiality.
11. The Contractor will ensure the safety and supervision of all students.

12. The Contractor will have a close working relationship with the Director of Operations of LCHS.
13. The Contractor will ensure that the fleet is equipped, at Contractor's expense, with an emergency communication system that is clearly labeled and appropriate.
14. Luzerne County Head Start, Inc. will supply each bus with a video camera that must be turned on the moment the driver turns on the bus until the moment the driver parks the bus at the end of the day. The Contractor will ensure that the camera is safe and secure at all times and will maintain the camera as well as replace it if it lost, stolen, or damaged.
15. The Contractor will supply LCHS a copy of their Substance Abuse Prevention Plan and conduct random drug screenings. **The reports of the random drug screening will be supplied to LCHS within a week of receipt to the Contractor.**
16. The Contractor will invoice Luzerne County Head Start, Inc. for the days of service on a bi-weekly or monthly basis using the applicable rates as set forth in proposal. All invoices will detail the services provided including the number of service days, dates of service, and daily cost of bus aide.
17. The Contractor will assist the Director of Operations with bus routes, if needed.
18. The Contractor will provide at least one bus monitor on board each bus at all times.
19. The Contractor is to provide skilled, well-trained staff.
  - a. Drivers-
    - Must attend mandated training at initial employment and then annually thereafter provided by Luzerne County Head Start, Inc.
    - Must be evaluated in writing by on-board observation of road performance **annually** by Contractor and evaluation submitted to LCHS within a week after evaluation was completed.
    - Must have a valid Commercial Driver's License (CDL) for vehicles in the same class as the vehicle the driver will operate.
    - Must meet any physical, mental, and other requirements necessary to perform job-related functions with any necessary reasonable accommodations.
    - Have required and up to date clearances; including PA State Police Criminal Record Check, PA Child Abuse History Clearance, FBI Criminal Background Check, and Certificate of Child Abuse Training.
      1. At initial hire, clearances must less than one year old.
      2. All clearances will need updating every five years.
    - Be certified in child Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and first aid.
    - Will **not** make U turns or back up.
    - Will allow parents/guardians on the bus if allowable by LCHS.

- Will conduct and supply the Director of Operations and Center Manager with monthly requirements and reports including; evacuation drills, route changes, and time changes.
- Maintain roll books, seating charts, and emergency contacts.

b. Bus Monitors-

- Must have high school diploma/equivalent
- Must attend mandated training at initial employment and then annually thereafter provided by Luzerne County Head Start, Inc.
- Must be evaluated in writing by on-board observation of road performance **annually** by Contractor and evaluation submitted to LCHS within a week after evaluation was completed.
- Must meet any physical, mental, and other requirements necessary to perform job-related functions with any necessary reasonable accommodations.
- Will allow parents/guardians on the bus if allowable by LCHS.
- Be certified in child Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and first aid
- Have required and up to date clearances; including PA State Police Criminal Record Check, PA Child Abuse History Clearance, FBI Criminal Background Check, and Certificate of Child Abuse Training.
  1. At initial hire, clearances must less than one year old.
  2. All clearances will need updating every five years.
- Maintain roll books, seating charts, and emergency contacts.
- Be positive and talk with the children while on the bus.
- Maintain active supervision of all children.

20. The Contractor will include LCHS as part of the driver application process. The review process must ensure, at a minimum:

- a. Disclosure by the applicant of all moving traffic violations, regardless of penalty.
- b. A check of the applicants driving record through the appropriate state agency, including a check of the applicant's record through the National Driver Register.
- c. A check that drivers qualify under the applicable driver training requirements in the state of Pennsylvania.
- d. A medical examination, performed by a licensed doctor of medicine or osteopathy, establishing that the individual possesses the physical ability to perform any job-related functions with any necessary accommodations.

21. The Contractor agrees to assist Luzerne County Head Start, Inc. in complying with all of the terms and conditions governing grants under Section 204 and 205 of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, and other governing laws and regulations.

22. The Contractor will abide by all Head Start Performance Standards related to transportation.
- **In the event that a child is left unsupervised on the bus, let off the bus without the supervision of a parent/guardian, or is unsupervised at any time, the driver and the bus monitor will be immediately terminated from their position. The awarded Contractor would be fined \$5,000 per incident and any additional costs sustained. Luzerne County Head Start, Inc. has a zero tolerance for this negligent act, which can cause the agency to cease business**
23. The Contractor agrees to provide Luzerne County Head Start, Inc. with the following documentation for each bus driver and bus monitor:
- a. Annual Commercial Driver's License with **P Endorsement**
  - b. Annual School Bus Driver's **S Endorsement**
  - c. Annual Physical Certification (DL 742)
  - d. Certification of Act 151 PA Child Abuse History Clearance
  - e. Certification of Act 34 PA State Police Criminal Record Check
  - f. Certification of Act 72 FBI Criminal Background Check via DHS registration.
  - g. Certificate of Child Abuse Training
24. **LCHS can modify the amount of transportation based on need and/or costs.**

**Contract period for services will begin on or about August 15, 2022**, and shall continue for a period of Five (5) years – August 1, 2027.

The Contractor understands that the increase of cost per bus run and bus monitor cost will coincide with the Cost of Living Adjustment and satisfactory performance. Either party may terminate the contract for just cause during the contract period with sixty (60) days written notice. Upon receipt of such notice, all obligations and liabilities of Owner under this contract shall terminate.

***Luzerne County Head Start, Inc. may, at its discretion, request presentations by or meetings with any or all Contractors, to clarify or negotiate modifications in the Contractor's proposal.***

Luzerne County Head Start, Inc. reserves the right to make an award without further discussion of the proposals submitted. Therefore, proposals should be submitted initially on the most favorable terms, from both technical and price standpoints, which the Contractor can propose.

Luzerne County Head Start, Inc. will make a final decision based a minimum of three (3) years of preschool student bus transportation experience, cost (overall cost of services to be rendered), quality of management and operations, company and employee stability, service reputation, training program; including CDL for drivers and CPR training for bus monitors and drivers, drug testing with results supplied to Luzerne County Head Start, Inc.

Proposals may be judged non-responsive and removed from further consideration if any of the following occur:

1. The proposal is not received timely in accordance with the terms of this RFP
2. The proposal is not complete

**Required documentation supplied with proposal**

1. A letter of debarment must be included with the proposal (attached)
2. A cost per bus route which includes (attached);
  - a. A driver
  - b. All children picked up/dropped off at a bus stop with parents/guardians entering the bus
  - c. Each child being placed in a 5 point harness system by the bus monitor
  - d. A daily cost per bus monitor
3. Cost increase timeline and increase percentage if not following Social Security COLA
4. Proof of Insurance
5. Proof of Worker's Compensation
6. Proof of training plan
7. References listing experience of transporting preschool children
8. Total number of employees
9. Number of years served by each employee- Stability percentages
10. Number of years business has been in business

Each proposal shall be delivered to Luzerne County Head Start, Inc. no later than  
**12:00 PM on Friday, May 27, 2022 to:**

Luzerne County Head Start, Inc.  
C/O Dawn Smith  
23 Beekman Street  
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18702

CONTACT: Dawn Smith—Director of Operation  
PHONE: 570-829-623, ext. 322  
EMAIL: [dawns@hsweb.org](mailto:dawns@hsweb.org)

*This RFP does not commit Luzerne County Head Start, Inc. to award a contract, to pay any costs incurred in the preparation or presentation of a proposal, or to procure or contract for any services or supplies. Luzerne County Head Start, Inc. reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received as a result of this request, to negotiate with any/all sources, or to cancel this request in part or its entirety. Luzerne County Head Start, Inc. will not contract a potential vendor for clarification or additional information as a result of the RFP. Therefore, we suggest that all vendors carefully prepare their proposal to meet all specifications of this RFP.*



# Proposed Bus Runs

*Bus Runs can be added or deleted at the request of Luzerne County Head Start, Inc.*

Center	
Beekman Street	4 classrooms with 4 runs sharing 2 buses
Back Mountain-Lake Lehman	2 classrooms with 2 runs on the same bus
Dodson	2 classrooms with 2 runs on the same bus
Edwardsville	2 classrooms with 2 runs on the same bus
New St. and Beekman	2 classrooms (at different locations) with 2 runs on the same bus
Hazleton	<b>48 passenger bus</b> to transport up to 4 classrooms with 2 runs on the same bus
LCCC Nanticoke	2 classrooms with 2 runs on the same bus
Mehoopany and Tunkhannock	2 classrooms (at different locations) with 2 runs on the same bus
Pittston New Street	2 classrooms with 2 runs on the same bus
Early Head Start Runs	1 bus per location for a 1 hour route
Study Trips	Up to three trips per school year per classroom

**Total of up to 20 Bus runs**

Company's Name:

<b>Beekman Street</b>	<b>#1/#4</b>	\$	\$	\$
<b>Beekman Street</b>	<b>#14/#17</b>	\$	\$	\$
<b>Back Mountain-Lake Lehman</b>	<b>#1/ #2</b>	\$	\$	\$
<b>Dodson</b>	<b>#1/#2</b>	\$	\$	\$
<b>Edwardsville</b>	<b>#2/#4</b>	\$	\$	\$
<b>New St. and Beekman</b>	<b>#1/#15</b>	\$	\$	\$
<b>Hazleton</b>	<b>Up to 2 classrooms</b>	\$	\$	\$
<b>Hazleton</b>	<b>Up to 2 classrooms</b>	\$	\$	\$
<b>LCCC Nanticoke</b>	<b>#1/#3</b>	\$	\$	\$
<b>Mehoopany and Tunkhannock</b>		\$	\$	\$

## Certification Regarding Debarment and Suspension

As required by Executive Order 12549, Debarment and Suspension (see 45 CFR Part 76), for prospective participants in primary covered transactions (CFR 76 Sections 76.105 and 76.110);

The primary prospective participant certifies to the best of their knowledge that he/she and its principals:

- (a) Are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible to participate in public transactions (Federal, State or Local),
- (b) Have not within the last three (3) years, been convicted or have had a civil judgment rendered against them for commission of fraud, violation of federal or state antitrust statutes, embezzlement, theft, forgery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statement or receiving stolen property.
- (c) Are not presently indicted for, or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by any governmental entity with commission of any offenses stated in (b) above,
- (d) Have not with in the last three (3) year period preceding this application/proposal, had one or more public transactions terminated for cause of default.

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Signature

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Date

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Name and Title (Print)



# HEAD START | ECLKC

Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center

## 1303.71 Vehicles. | ECLKC

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(a) *Required use of schools buses or allowable alternative vehicles.* A program, with the exception of [transportation services](#) to children served under a home-based option, must ensure all vehicles used or purchased with grant funds to provide transportation services to enrolled children are school buses or allowable alternate vehicles that are equipped for use of height- and weight-appropriate child restraint systems, and that have reverse beepers.

(b) *Emergency equipment.* A program must ensure each vehicle used in providing such services is equipped with an emergency communication system clearly labeled and appropriate emergency safety equipment, including a seat belt cutter, charged fire extinguisher, and first aid kit.

(c) *Auxiliary seating.* A program must ensure any auxiliary seating, such as temporary or folding jump seats, used in vehicles of any type providing such services are built into the vehicle by the manufacturer as part of its standard design, are maintained in proper working order, and are inspected as part of the annual inspection required under paragraph (e)(2)(i) of this section.

(d) *Child restraint systems.* A program must ensure each vehicle used to transport children receiving such services is equipped for use of age-, height- and weight-appropriate child safety restraint systems as defined in part [1305](#) of this chapter.

(e) *Vehicle maintenance.* (1) A program must ensure vehicles used to provide such services are in safe operating condition at all times.

(2) The program must:

(i) At a minimum, conduct an annual thorough safety inspection of each vehicle through an inspection program licensed or operated by the state;

(ii) Carry out systematic preventive maintenance on vehicles; and,

(iii) Ensure each driver implements daily pre-trip vehicle inspections.

(f) *New vehicle inspection.* A program must ensure bid announcements for school buses and allowable alternate vehicles to transport children in its program include correct specifications and a clear statement of the vehicle's intended use. The program must ensure vehicles are examined at delivery to ensure they are equipped in accordance with the bid specifications and that the manufacturer's certification of compliance with the applicable FMVSS is included with the vehicle.



### *1303.72 Vehicle operation.*

(a) *Safety.* A program must ensure:

- (1) Each child is seated in a [child restraint system](#) appropriate to the child's age, height, and weight;
- (2) Baggage and other items transported in the passenger compartment are properly stored and secured, and the aisles remain clear and the doors and emergency exits remain unobstructed at all times;
- (3) Up-to-date child rosters and lists of the adults each child is authorized to be released to, including alternates in case of emergency, are maintained and no child is left behind, either at the classroom or on the vehicle at the end of the route; and,
- (4) With the exception of [transportation services](#) to children served under a home-based option, there is at least one bus monitor on board at all times, with additional bus monitors provided as necessary.

(b) *Driver qualifications.* A program, with the exception of transportation services to children served under a home-based option, must ensure drivers, at a minimum:

- (1) In states where such licenses are granted, have a valid Commercial Driver's License (CDL) for vehicles in the same class as the vehicle the driver will operating; and,
- (2) Meet any physical, mental, and other requirements as necessary to perform job-related functions with any necessary reasonable accommodations.

(c) *Driver application review.* In addition to the applicant review process prescribed § [1302.90\(b\)](#) of this chapter, a program, with the exception of transportation services to children served under a home-based option, must ensure the applicant review process for drivers includes, at minimum:

- (1) [Disclosure](#) by the applicant of all moving traffic violations, regardless of penalty;
- (2) A check of the applicant's driving record through the appropriate state agency, including a check of the applicant's record through the [National Driver Register](#), if available;
- (3) A check that drivers qualify under the applicable driver training requirements in the state or tribal jurisdiction; and,
- (4) After a conditional employment offer to the applicant and before the applicant begins work as a driver, a medical examination, performed by a licensed doctor of medicine or osteopathy, establishing that the individual possesses the physical ability to perform any job-related functions with any necessary accommodations.

(d) *Driver training.* (1) A program must ensure any person employed as a driver receives training prior to transporting any enrolled child and receives refresher training each year.

(2) Training must include:

(i) Classroom instruction and behind-the-wheel instruction sufficient to enable the driver to operate the vehicle in a safe and efficient manner, to safely run a [fixed route](#), to administer basic first aid in case of injury, and to handle emergency situations, including vehicle evacuation, operate any special equipment, such as wheelchair lifts, assistance devices or special occupant restraints, conduct routine maintenance and safety checks of the vehicle, and maintain accurate records as necessary; and,

(ii) Instruction on the topics listed in [§1303.75](#) related to transportation services for children with disabilities.

(3) A program must ensure the annual evaluation of each driver of a vehicle used to provide such services includes an on-board observation of road performance.

(e) *Bus monitor training.* A program must train each bus monitor before the monitor begins work, on child boarding and exiting procedures, how to use child restraint systems, completing any required paperwork, how to respond to emergencies and emergency evacuation procedures, how to use special equipment, child pick-up and release procedures, how to conduct and pre- and post-trip vehicle checks. Bus monitors are also subject to staff safety training requirements in [§1302.47\(b\)\(4\)](#) of this chapter including Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and first aid.



### *1303.73 Trip routing.*

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- (a) A program must consider safety of the children it transports when it plans fixed routes.
- (b) A program must also ensure:
  - (1) The time a child is in transit to and from the program must not exceed one hour unless there is no shorter route available or any alternative shorter route is either unsafe or impractical;
  - (2) Vehicles are not loaded beyond maximum passenger capacity at any time;
  - (3) Drivers do not back up or make U-turns, except when necessary for safety reasons or because of physical barriers;
  - (4) Stops are located to minimize traffic disruptions and to afford the driver a good field of view in front of and behind the vehicle;
  - (5) When possible, stops are located to eliminate the need for children to cross the street or highway to board or leave the vehicle;
  - (6) Either a bus monitor or another adult escorts children across the street to board or leave the vehicle if curbside pick-up or drop off is impossible; and,
  - (7) Drivers use alternate routes in the case of hazardous conditions that could affect the safety of the children who are being transported, such as ice or water build up, natural gas line breaks, or emergency road closing.



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### *1303.74 Safety procedures.*

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- (a) A program must ensure children who receive [transportation services](#) are taught safe riding practices, safety procedures for boarding and leaving the vehicle and for crossing the street to and from the vehicle at stops, recognition of the danger zones around the vehicle, and emergency evacuation procedures, including participating in an emergency evacuation drill conducted on the vehicle the child will be riding.
- (b) A program that provides transportation services must ensure at least two bus evacuation drills in addition to the one required under paragraph (a) of this section are conducted during the program year.



*Head Start Transportation Services and Vehicles During the COVID-19 Pandemic*  
*ACF-IM-HS-22-01*

U.S. DEPARTMENT  
OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
ACF  
Administration for Children and Families

1. Log Number: ACF-IM-HS-22-01
2. Issuance Date: 02/01/2022
3. Originating Office: Office of Head Start
4. Key Words: Transportation Services; Vehicles; COVID-19 Pandemic

***INFORMATION MEMORANDUM***

**TO:** All Head Start and Early Head Start Agencies and Delegate Agencies

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

**INFORMATION:**

School buses and allowable alternate vehicles ([Terms, 45 CFR §1305.2](#)) are generally the safest mode of transportation for children. They are also necessary for many children and families to participate in Head Start programs. Implementing safe practices is essential when providing transportation services during the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

When making decisions about transporting children, programs should consult local health officials and other state and local authorities, to the extent feasible. These authorities can assess the current level of mitigation needed based on levels of COVID-19 community transmission and the capacities of local public health care systems. Staff should take steps to ensure they mitigate the risk with respect to school buses and allowable alternate vehicles. The steps Head Start programs take to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 should be the same whether the program is providing its own transportation or relying on contracted or school district-provided transportation.

Explore strategies below for keeping children and staff safe from COVID-19 in vehicles.

*Support Transportation Staff Safety*

Encourage these strategies to keep transportation staff and children safe.

**1. Require staff members who are sick to stay home**, particularly those who have tested positive or are showing COVID-19 [symptoms](#). Sick staff members should not return to work until [the criteria to discontinue home isolation are met](#), in consultation with health care providers and state and local health departments. Staff who have recently had [close contact](#) with a person with COVID-19 should also stay home and monitor their health. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has [recommendations sick people should follow](#).

**2. Send sick staff home.** Send home staff experiencing symptoms during work hours.

**3. Wear masks.** Make [masks](#) available and ensure their use. The CDC requires the use of masks by passengers over 2 years of age on public transport, including school buses, except for stated

exemptions and exclusions. Vehicle operators and bus monitors must wear a mask unless they cannot safely wear one because of a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or when they are either eating or drinking.

Masks [should not be placed on](#) young children under age 2 or anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance. Children age 2 and up must wear a mask unless they are either eating or drinking; napping; cannot safely wear a mask because of a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act; or when a child's health care provider advises an alternative face covering to accommodate the child's special health care needs ([Safety practices, 45 CFR §1302.47](#)).

**4. Keep hands clean.** Make available and ensure the use of hand hygiene supplies, per CDC recommendations. Proper [hand hygiene](#) is an important infection control measure. Staff and children should wash their hands regularly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol. Supervise children when they use hand sanitizer to prevent ingestion.

- Key times to clean hands include:
  - Before, during, and after preparing food or drinks
  - Before and after eating or handling food
  - After using the toilet
  - After coming in contact with bodily fluid
  - After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
  - After handling garbage
  -
- Additional times to clean hands include:
  - Before and after work shifts
  - Before and after work breaks
  - After touching frequently touched surfaces, such as handrails
  - After putting on, touching, or removing masks

#### *Use of Head Start Vehicles to Provide Transportation Services for Children*

Encourage these strategies to ensure Head Start vehicles are safe places for transportation staff and children.

**1. Follow transportation strategies.** As described in the section above, make masks and hand washing supplies available. Encourage their use.

**2. Improve ventilation.** Keep vehicle windows open as much as is safe and weather and air quality allow.

**3. Conduct health checks.** Conduct a health check of all children and staff before they board the vehicle. Do not transport individuals with a fever of 100.4 F (38 C) or above or who show other signs of illness. Do not transport individuals who have been in close contact (within 6 feet) of someone who has tested positive for, or is showing symptoms of, COVID-19. Consider training and equipping bus monitors to use a non-contact thermometer.

**4. Distance children from each other.** The following suggestions will help reduce the amount of contact that children have with each other when riding in Head Start vehicles:

- Load children into the back of the bus first to reduce contact.
- Position children as far apart as possible with one child per bench. If children are coming from the same home, they may sit together. Reroute or stagger bus runs, as needed, to keep group size small and minimize potential exposure between children.
- If possible, keep class groups together on bus runs to minimize potential exposure between different groups of children.

**5. Help children understand physical distancing.** Use visible cues, such as stickers on the floors, to guide children and offer gentle prompts to help them understand the new protocols. Remember that some young children may not understand the need for physical distancing. They rely on adults for their safety and care.

**6. Wear gloves.** Staff should use gloves if touching surfaces contaminated by body fluids.

*Clean Vehicles Between Each Use*

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

- For hard and non-porous surfaces inside the vehicle (e.g., hard seats, arm rests, door handles, light and air controls, doors, windows), clean with detergent or soap and water if the surfaces are visibly dirty.
- For seatbelts and other child safety restraints, programs must employ methods and products that are effective on COVID-19 and safe for use with the restraint system, particularly seatbelt webbing. Chlorine or ammonia-based solutions may cause deterioration of safety restraint components and cannot be used. For cleaning guidelines, consult the vehicle or restraint system manufacturer.
- For soft or porous surfaces (e.g., fabric seats), remove any visible contamination and clean with appropriate cleaners indicated for use on these surfaces.