



FOCUS AREA 1:

Understanding Grantee's Approach to Program Design and Services

At-A-Glance

OVERVIEW

Focus Area 1 is an opportunity for grantees to discuss their program design, management, and governance structure. This focus area is designed to develop our understanding of each grantee's foundation for program services. Grantees will describe approaches to staffing structure, program design, health, family, fiscal infrastructure, and program governance.

APPROACH

Focus Area 1 is an off-site conversation with program leadership to understand the grantee's approach for designing its program and services. The process begins with the Reviewer's review of data and reports from the Head Start Enterprise System. This review helps the monitoring team understand the needs of the children and families served in the grantee's community and to learn about the grantee's program design.

Following the document review, the Reviewer will conduct a series of conference calls to engage in discussions with the grantee's director, governing body, Policy Council, and management team over a week's period of time.

METHODOLOGY

Document Review

Grant Application/Goals – Program Information Report Data – Community Needs Assessment – Past Monitoring Data – Self-Assessment Data – Annual Report – Audits

Off-Site Discussions

The Reviewer will work with the grantee to identify the appropriate staff to participate in off-site conversations (e.g., governing body, Policy Council, managers).

Discussions and Analysis Will Focus on Grantee's Approach to:

PROGRAM DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT

Grantees demonstrate the intentionality of program design and their ability to address the characteristics, strengths, and needs of children and families in the community.

DESIGNING QUALITY EDUCATION AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM SERVICES

Grantees show how they approach providing high-quality early education and child development services that promote children's cognitive, social, and emotional growth for later success in school, including children with disabilities. The grantee will have the opportunity to describe the program's strategy for designing and implementing effective teaching practices and implementing safe, well-organized learning environments (and group socializations, for home-based programs) that meet each individual child's needs, including children who are dual language learners and children with disabilities.

DESIGNING QUALITY HEALTH PROGRAM SERVICES

Grantees highlight their strategy for delivering high-quality health, oral health, mental health, and nutrition services that are developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate and that will support each child's growth and school readiness. This section also focuses on the grantee's approach for maintaining a system of health and safety practices that ensures children's safety at all times.

DESIGNING QUALITY FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SERVICES

Grantees showcase their strategy for integrating high-quality family engagement services into all areas of programming that are responsive to the needs of families. Grantees will have the opportunity to discuss goals and expected outcomes for families throughout the next 5 years and how the program design will support their achievement. Additionally, Reviewers will learn how family services goals align with the Parent, Family, and Community Engagement (PFCE) framework.

DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE RECRUITMENT ERSEA STRATEGIES AND FISCAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Grantees will describe how the program's recruitment and selection strategies are responsive to the needs of the community's eligible children and families, and the strategy for maintaining its funded enrollment level. Additionally, grantees provide information about the program's fiscal capacity and financial infrastructure.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

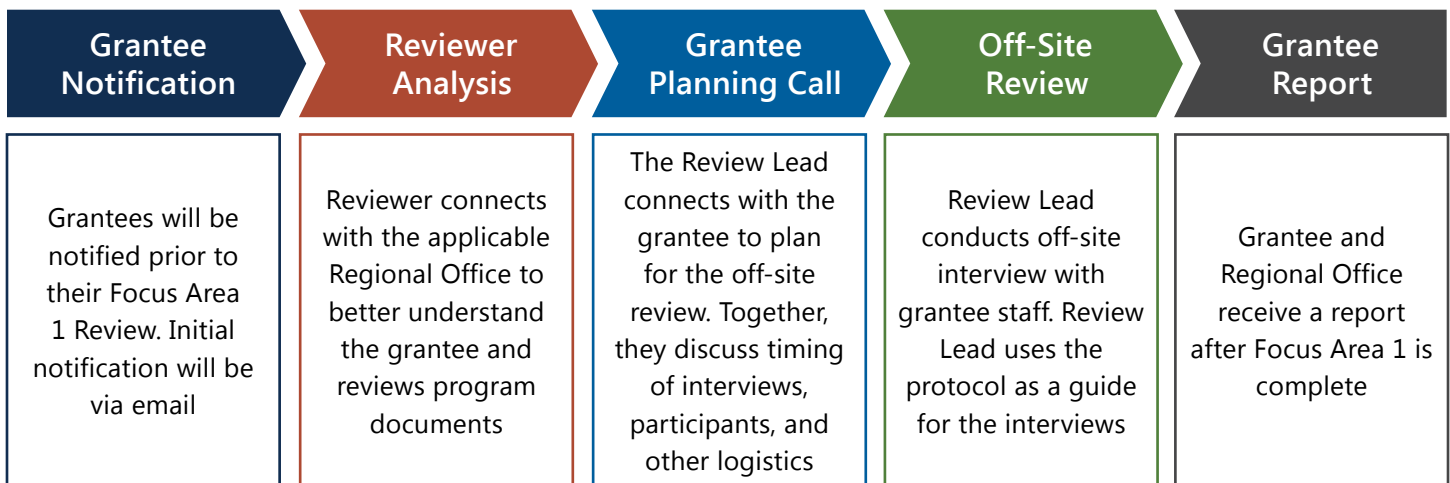
1. WHAT IS THE GOAL OF FOCUS AREA 1?

During the Focus Area 1 Review, grantees will highlight the strength of their program design, explain how the community assessment has informed their program design, and detail how their program goals will positively impact the community they serve. Grantees will also demonstrate how they have aligned their budget to support program design and goals. By understanding the foundation for a program's services, management systems, and governance, Focus Area 1 sets the stage for interpreting a program's performance over time. Reviewers will learn about the goals a grantee has identified for their program, and how the grantee has set up the infrastructure of the program to support progress toward these goals. The OHS will determine how well grantees have done this work and provide grantees with feedback on how to improve their program's design moving forward.

2. WHEN WILL FOCUS AREA 1 REVIEWS OCCUR?

Most grantees will experience Focus Area 1 Reviews within the first year of their 5-year grant cycle. The timing of Focus Area 1 is intended to ensure grantees can immediately incorporate any necessary improvements. The OHS' goal is to provide grantees with useful feedback upfront, which grantees can then use to ensure the successful implementation of the grant.

3. WHAT IS THE FOCUS AREA 1 REVIEW PROCESS?



4. HOW DOES FOCUS AREA 1 RELATE TO FOCUS AREA 2?

Focus Area 1 sets the stage for an aligned monitoring process by giving the OHS the opportunity to understand how grantees have designed their programs. Focus Area 2 follows the Focus Area 1 Review to measure how well grantees have been able to implement their program and examine how practice and data are driving program improvements and progress toward goals. Focus Area 2 does not exist to validate what was learned in previous reviews, but instead helps to integrate all the information the OHS has learned about a program to create a customized monitoring experience.