

Department: Safe Environments and ERSEA	Approval Date: 3/14/22	Policy Number: 9090
Regulation Number: 1302.21 Center-based option	Regulation Topic: Environmental Health & Safety and ERSEA	Policy Title: Staff-child ratios and group sizes

Policy: To ensure center-based classrooms are set up to meet requirements based upon age of children and staff to child ratios, all center-based classrooms must meet the following:

- 1) Staff-child ratios and group size maximums must be determined by the age of the majority of children and the needs of children present. A program must determine the age of the majority of children in a class at the start of the year and may adjust this determination during the program year, if necessary. Where state or local licensing requirements are more stringent than the teacher-child ratios and group size specifications in this section, a program must meet the stricter requirements. A program must maintain appropriate ratios during all hours of program operation, except:
 - a) For brief absences of a teaching staff member for no more than five minutes; and,
 - b) During nap time, one teaching staff member may be replaced by one staff member or volunteer who does not meet the teaching education qualifications required for the age.
- 2) Early Head Start classes that serves children under 36 months old must have two qualified teachers regardless of the group size with no more than eight children.
 - a) Each teacher must be assigned consistent, primary responsibility for no more than four children to promote continuity of care for individual children.
 - b) A program must minimize teacher changes throughout a child’s enrollment.
- 3) Head Start classes have two qualified teaching staff assigned to each group of children regardless of the group size to ensure high quality and safe environments for children.
 - a) A class that serves a majority of children who are three years old must have no more than 17 children with a teacher and teaching assistant or two teachers. A double session class that serves a majority of children who are three years old must have no more than 15 children with a teacher and teaching assistant or two teachers.
 - b) A class that serves a majority of children who are four and five years old must have no more than 20 children with a teacher and a teaching assistant or two teachers. A double session class that serves a majority of children who are four and five years old must have no more than 17 children with a teacher and a teaching assistant or two teachers.