# JOB DESCRIPTION

PROGRAM: **Head Start Program**

JOB TITLE: **Teacher Assistant**

CLASSIFICATION: **Classroom Assistant II**

PAY GRADE: **6**

## JOB SUMMARY

Under the supervision of the teacher, provide a safe and nurturing environment, responsive care, and high-quality individualized learning experiences to a group of young children. Use age-appropriate materials and evidence-based best practices to support children's growing social, emotional, intellectual, language, motor, and cognitive competencies. Establish and maintain positive and productive partnerships with the children's families, community partners, and Head Start staff. Comply with Head Start Performance Standards, the Head Start Act, and other applicable regulations and laws. Adhere to early learning and family support principles.

## SUPERVISORY RELATIONSHIPS

**REPORTS TO:** Head Start Teacher
**SUPERVISES:** In Teacher's absence, Classroom Aide, Substitutes

## ESSENTIAL QUALIFICATIONS

- ❒ High School Diploma or GED certificate and willingness to obtain Child Development Associate Credential (CDA) in the Center-based Setting within two (2) years of hire; Associate degree preferred;
- ❒ Minimum of one year of experience working with young children; and,
- ❒ Bilingual English–Spanish desirable.

## GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- ❒ Current Pennsylvania State Police Criminal History Clearance, Child Abuse Clearance, FBI Clearance, and National Sex Offender Registry check prior to hire;
- ❒ Fully vaccinated against COVID-19 (two doses of Pfizer or Moderna, or one dose of Johnson & Johnson) and provide proof of vaccination status, unless there is an approved medical or religious exemption
- ❒ Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse training completed within 90 days of hire;
- ❒ Physical ability to perform essential job functions without any health restrictions, including the ability to sit for long periods of time; stand, lift, and carry up to thirty pounds; have unrestricted use of the upper body, corrected or uncorrected hearing and vision within normal range and a clear speaking voice; and, other abilities necessary to ensure child safety in the classroom, other group areas and when in the community, such as but not limited to the following:
  - Ability to bend, squat, reach, kneel, and climb stairs;
  - Ability to move from a sitting to standing position quickly, safely, and without difficulty;
  - Ability to chase an eloping child;
  - Ability to join the children's active play including jumping and running indoors and outdoors;
  - Ability to assist children with diapering, toileting, and change of clothing requiring lifting, bending, and squatting;
- ❒ Physical examination prior to employment;

- ❒ Tuberculosis test prior to employment;
- ❒ Current PedFACTS (Pediatric First Aid) and CPR certification;
- ❒ Ability to assume all teacher job responsibilities in teacher's absence;
- ❒ Nontraditional work hours as required, including but not limited to evenings and weekends; and,
- ❒ Job-related training, as assigned.

**SPECIFIC DUTIES:**

❖ **Curriculum and Environment**

- Support social and emotional development of children by building trusting relationships with each child, fostering independence and self-control;
- Involve children in all phases of self-care (dressing, eating, toileting, etc.);
- Utilize appropriate group management techniques;
- Eat with children, model proper table manners, encourage conversation, and share the same menu;
- Exercise authority without undermining child's self-worth;
- Use nonpunitive ways of dealing with inappropriate behavior;
- Maintain a safe, attractive, multisensory, well-organized classroom that reflects each child's developmental level and learning style;
- Keep materials sanitized, in good repair, and stored in a safe, orderly fashion;
- Assist with implementation of developmentally and culturally appropriate, child-focused curricula and activities to meet children's individual cognitive, physical, social–emotional, language, and learning style;
- Use space, materials, and routine as resources to encourage active exploration and physical, cognitive, and social–emotional development;
- Assist in implementation of flexible daily schedule based on routine care and the developmental needs of each child;
- Plan and implement balanced health and nutrition program;
- Establish and maintain daily health routines with children, including toileting, diapering (if applicable) toothbrushing and handwashing;
- Adapt the classroom environment and curriculum to meet the individual needs of all children, including children with disabilities;
- Provide constant supervision, ensuring the safety of every child;
- Encourage children to follow safety rules;
- Assist in maintaining emergency information and initiate emergency action when necessary; and,
- Help prepare materials, bulletin boards and learning activities.

❖ **Family Engagement**

- Initiate and maintain collaborative partnerships with parents based on mutual trust and respect;
- Promote parent engagement in program planning, implementation of services, and individualization of services for their children;
- Encourage and support parent participation in parent meetings, Policy Council, and other parent decision-making and governance functions;
- Make periodic home visits with the Teacher; and,
- Maintain regular communication with parents during daily drop-off and pickup.

❖ **Program Operations**

- Assure consistent implementation of program policies, procedures, and practices;
- Report suspected child abuse or neglect; and,
- Document daily observations.

❖ **Staff Development**

- Assume responsibility for ongoing personal professional growth and development;
- Attend meetings, trainings and conferences as required; and,
- Perform all other tasks as assigned.

## REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, & ABILITIES

❖ Knowledge of the following:

- Head Start Performance Standards, the Head Start Act, and other applicable regulations and laws;
- Knowledge of growth and development of preschool children;
- Relevant Pennsylvania regulations and their application, especially child abuse and neglect requirements for mandated reporters;
- Issues facing low-income families with special appreciation for the demands placed on young children and their families; and,
- Early childhood safety standards, areas of potential concern and their resolution.

❖ Skill in the following:

- Working collaboratively with other members of the team;
- Building positive relationships with children, parents, families and guardians, community partners, and colleagues;
- Use of tracking and reporting systems;
- Oral communication such as speaking, listening, and interviewing;
- Written communication, including knowledge of English grammar, spelling, and punctuation;
- Use of a keyboard and personal computer; and,
- Using the Microsoft Office Suite, including but not limited to Microsoft Word, Excel, Access, Power Point, and Publisher components.

❖ Ability to do the following:

- Develop consistent, stable, and supportive relationships with young children, including those with disabilities;
- Support parents as the child's first and most important nurturer and teacher;
- Work cooperatively with others;
- Understand and follow oral and/or written instructions, some of which may include multifaceted procedures;
- Collect, organize, record, and process information quickly and efficiently;
- Prepare and maintain written records;
- Be creative, resourceful, and flexible;
- Recognize emergencies and take action if necessary;
- Be sensitive to the needs and concerns of low-income families;
- Demonstrate respect for individuals and groups with varied cultural, racial, ethnic, religious, and linguistic identities or backgrounds;
- Project a positive image of the program and the agency;
- Work independently of direct supervision;
- Maintain confidentiality and a professional demeanor at all times; and,

- Follow Head Start Code of Conduct.