PARENT HANDBOOK

2026-2027

Teaching Children, Reaching Families

For more information visit our website at:
www.lguhs.org

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Site Administrator: Jagruti Patel
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Geauga Center
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Site Administrator: Jennifer Rodriguez
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WELCOME TO LGUHS

Welcome to Lake Geauga United Head Start, Inc. This handbook contains information about our preschool program. It is very important that you read this handbook and keep it handy while your child is enrolled in our program.

Philosophy and Goals
Lake Geauga United Head Start, Inc. values quality comprehensive early childhood education. We strive to prepare young children for school readiness through research-based curricula, intentional instruction and collaboration with local education agencies. We engage parents, leverage community support to empower families to self-sufficiency and to advocate for their children's life-long learning.

Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting
The State of Ohio requires childcare professionals to report known or suspected incidents of child abuse and/or neglect. Under the law, Lake Geauga United Head Start staff must report suspicions to Job and Family Services or local law enforcement.

Safe Environment
No firearms or weapons of any kind are permitted in any area(s) of the center. The local police department will be called to intervene in any matter where firearms, weapons or any situation that threatens the safety of children, families and staff. Families are asked to be our partners in maintaining a safe environment for children to learn. All facilities are smoke-free.

Enrollment
LGUHS does not discriminate in hiring practices or child enrollment based upon race, color, religion, sex, disability, national origin, sexual orientation or family composition. Head Start is a free program. No payment is necessary for your child to be enrolled. Acceptance into the program is based on the Selection Criteria as outlined in the federal regulations and approved by the LGUHS Policy Council and Board of Trustees.

USDA Nondiscrimination Statement
In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.
To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17FAx2Mail.pdf, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights,1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or fax: (833)256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or email: program.intake@usda.gov.
This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
Lake Geauga United Head Start complies with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA). We ensure that ADA requirements are followed in our procedures for administering medications and care to children with disabilities.

LGUHS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Behavior Management and Discipline
Head Start offers children many opportunities to exercise free choice but there are, of course, boundaries to that freedom. Guidelines are in place to ensure the children's safety and to assist them in learning responsibility and consideration for others.

1. Discipline or behavior management techniques shall not include spanking, hitting, placing the child in restraints or subjecting him/her to profane language or verbal abuse.
2. Discipline or behavior management techniques will not shame, humiliate or frighten a child.
3. Discipline shall not be imposed on a child for failure to eat or sleep or for toileting accidents.
4. Discipline shall not include the withholding of food, physical activity, outdoor activity, rest or toilet use.
5. Children with behavior issues may have to be removed from the classroom setting for a "time out". "Time outs" will be used selectively and will consist of short periods of time not to exceed a few minutes. The purpose of a "time out" is to allow the child to regain control of himself, not to be punitive. Children are never left alone during "time outs".
6. Head Start staff and teachers will make every effort to consult with families in order to assist with recurring behavior problems. In cases of recurring behavior problems, outside resources may be called in to assist staff and parents in developing strategies.
7. Head Start will make every effort to allow each and every child to remain at Head Start for the entire school year despite behavior problems. However, if it is determined that the child is placing other children or staff in harm's way and interventions are not improving the situation, a more appropriate placement may be considered for the child. If this becomes necessary, the family will be called in to discuss placement options for the child after leaving Head Start. Before the child leaves the center, other placement will be identified and Head Start will assist with the transition.
8. All LGUHS staff will adhere to the agency's Child Discipline Policy and the Ohio Administrative Code rule 5101: 2-12-19 or will be subject to disciplinary action.
9. A copy of the Behavior Management & Child Discipline Policy Guide for parents is available on our website, www.lguhs.org.

Suspension and Expulsion
Lake Geauga United Head Start limits the use of suspension due to a child's behavior. In the event that a suspension is deemed necessary, such suspension may only be temporary in nature. A temporary suspension must be used only as a last resort in extraordinary circumstances where there is a serious safety threat that cannot be reduced or eliminated by the provision of reasonable modifications. Before LGUHS determines whether a temporary suspension is necessary, a program must exhaust all resources available to determine whether no other reasonable option is appropriate. If a temporary suspension is deemed necessary, a program must help the child return to full participation in all program activities as quickly as possible while ensuring child safety by:

- Continuing to engage with the parents and continue to utilize appropriate community resources;
- Developing a written plan to document the action and supports needed;
- Providing services that include home visits; and,
- Determining whether a referral to a local agency responsible for implementing IDEA is appropriate.

Lake Geauga United Head Start prohibits the expulsion of a child because of a child's behavior.

Employee Conduct
LGUHS, to the extent possible, will prohibit center employees from exposing children to inappropriate language, media, or behavior per our Employee Conduct Policy.

ATTENDANCE: Build a Habit of Good Attendance Early
School success goes together with good attendance! Start building these habits now so children will learn right away that going to school on time every day is important. Good attendance habits will help children do well in kindergarten and beyond. For a successful school year, parents are asked to follow the attendance and tardy procedure outlined below:

Attendance:
Head Start children are required to maintain 90% attendance every month.

- Parents are required to call the center each time their child is going to be absent.
    - If a child is unexpectedly absent and a parent has not contacted the program within one hour of program start time, the program will attempt to contact the parent to ensure the child's well-being.
- The Family Advocate is required to do a home visit for any child who is out of school for two consecutive days without any contact with the parent or guardian.
- Children who miss 3 or more days during any given month will receive an attendance text via the data entry system.
- Children who miss 4 days for 2 consecutive months will receive an attendance letter. The attendance texts and letters will offer information about the benefits of regular attendance as well as offer support to promote regular attendance of your child.
- Children who miss 5 or more days for 2 or more consecutive months will be placed on an attendance success plan. This plan helps the family identify the barriers that are affecting their regular participation in the classroom and offers resources to improve attendance. The Family Advocate and parent/guardian will work with their Family Advocate on strategies to improve attendance. Parents are required to work towards improving their child's attendance or their child may be withdrawn from the program and put back on the

wait list. Special consideration is given to children with chronic medical conditions that prohibit them from attending school regularly or for prolonged periods of time.

Please note that you will receive an attendance text, letter and/or be asked to participate in an attendance success plan regardless of whether your child's absence was excused or unexcused as Head Start requires that we provide information about the benefits of regular attendance as well as provide support to promote regular attendance.

Tardiness and Leaving Early:
Being on time for school is just as important as attendance. When children arrive late or leave early, they are missing valuable learning time and it disrupts the routine of the classroom. If a child arrives more than 30 minutes after the start of their class, he/she will be sent home unless the child had an appointment or there is a plan in place for the child to arrive late to school. An arrival success plan will be used if tardiness continues for two consecutive months.
While arriving late and leaving early is discouraged, special consideration will be given for specific circumstances when approved by the Site Administrator, Engagement & Enrollment Coordinator and Director.

More information to help your child build the habit of attendance:
https://learn.coxcampus.org/tracks/preschool-and-pre-k/
https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Attendance-Works-Preschool-K_in-person_101321.pdf

Arrival and Departure
Parents must ACCOMPANY their children into the center where they will be met by a staff member. Children should arrive at their scheduled start time and parents must sign in and make the staff member aware of the child's presence.

When picking up, parents must go to the classroom or designated area, sign the child out and notify the teacher or staff member that they are taking the child.

For the protection of the children, every parent/guardian is required to complete and sign a release form giving the names and relationships to the child of any person(s) authorized to pick-up the child from the center and/or receive child off the bus.

The individual picking up the child may be asked to show a valid picture I.D. No child will be released, even in the case of emergency or late pick up, unless the person's name is listed on the emergency pick-up list.

Staff will not release children to anyone, including parents, who appear to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Emergency contacts will be called to transport the child home. Police will be notified if necessary.

Failure to Pick-up Child
If a child is not picked up during the scheduled pick-up time, reasonable attempts will be made to contact the parent and all authorized persons listed on the release form.

If staff is unable to reach the parent or any of the emergency contacts, the local police department and the Department of Job and Family Services will be contacted.

A parent who is continuously late to pick-up his/her child will be required to meet with the Site Administrator to discuss the matter and develop a plan for pick-up that will be more effective.

Custody Agreements
If there are custody issues involved with your child, you must provide the center with court orders indicating who has permission to pick up the child.

Children Arriving from Other Programs
At times it may be necessary for a child to arrive at Head Start from another program. If a child is scheduled to arrive and does not, we will first contact the parent to confirm that the child is scheduled to be at the center that day and then contact the program they were to have arrived from. We will then consult with the parent to determine further action. ***For this reason, it is important that parents contact the center when their child is not going to be attending.***

Up-to-Date Information
All children must have a current Child Enrollment Form (DCY 01234) that is signed by their parent or guardian for the child to attend the program.
In cases of emergency and/or need for immediate child pick-up, staff must be able to contact the parent. It is extremely important that:

- All contact numbers are kept current
- Keep your cell phone and/ or primary contact line open during school hours so that we can reach you if necessary
- Update the names and contact numbers of every person you identify as an emergency contact, in case you cannot be reached

Emergencies and Accidents
In the event of a fire or tornado, staff will follow the written instructions posted in each classroom, describing emergency evacuation routes and the procedures to be followed. In order to prepare the children for the unlikely need to evacuate, regular fire drills are held at the centers along with periodic tornado drills.

In the case of necessary evacuation, a sign will be posted on the front door of the center to let you know that the center has been evacuated and where you can pick up your child. Parents will be contacted as soon as possible to pick up their child. If a parent cannot be reached, we will contact the emergency contacts as listed on your child's enrollment information.

In the unlikely event that there is a threat of violence, the staff will secure the children in the safest location possible and contact the proper authorities. Parents will be contacted as soon as the situation allows. An incident report will be provided to the parents.

In the event of a problem at the Perry Nuclear Power Plant, the staff will follow the protocol established by the Lake County Emergency Management Agency.

All staff members are trained in First Aid and CPR within 90 days of hire. There is always at least one staff member present that is trained in Communicable Disease. All employees are trained to use an AED Device when available. In the case of a minor injury or accident, staff will administer basic first aid and contact parents immediately. If any injury is life-threatening, EMS will be contacted, parents will be notified, and a staff member will accompany the child to the hospital with available health records. Staff may not transport children in their personal vehicles.

In the event of an illness, accident, or mental health incident or injury requiring first aid, a child being transported by emergency squad, mental health emergency or any other unusual event that jeopardizes the safety of the child, an incident/ injury report will be completed and given to the person to whom the child is released to. **All children enrolled in the program must have parental authorization on the Child Enrollment Form for Early Care and Education Programs to be transported by emergency squad to a local hospital in the event of an emergency.**

Please see the Emergency Response Plan in the center office for more information.

Child Supervision

- At no time will a child be left unattended
- Staff will supervise children at all times, including naptime

CHILD HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

Each child enrolled in our program must meet the following health requirements.

- **Physical Examination-** Each child must have a complete physical exam for Head Start. Parents are responsible for ensuring that a licensed physician sees the child and that the appropriate form is completed. A new physical is required each year.
- **Immunizations-** A child's immunizations must be up-to-date and provided prior to program entry, unless the child has a current immunization exemption on file for religious reasons or "good cause". Immunization records must also be updated annually.
    - **Care of Children without immunizations**
        - If any of the following communicable diseases occur at a center, unvaccinated children will not be able to attend school for up to 14 days-Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, Poliomyelitis, Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis A, Chicken Pox, Hemophilus Influenzae Type B, Influenza, Pneumococcal Disease, and Rotavirus. This is to lessen the risk to unvaccinated children and lessen the risk of spreading the communicable disease. Unvaccinated children must have an immunization exemption on file.
- **Dental Examination-** Head Start requires a dental examination every year but recommends that children visit the dentist every six months. Parents are responsible for ensuring that children visit the dentist and that the appropriate dental exam form is completed. If treatment is needed, parents are responsible to make appointments and keep them until all treatment is complete.

- **Blood Pressure Screening-** Lake Geauga United Head Start requires children between the ages of 3-5 have a blood pressure screening with their physical exam each year. If the doctor does not complete this screening during your child's visit, the screening will be completed at your child's center.
    - **Why worry about high blood pressure in children?**
        - High blood pressure in children could put them at risk for stroke, heart failure, kidney disease or diabetes.
- **Lead Screenings-** The Ohio Department of Health and Lake Geauga United Head Start requires children to have a lead test while enrolled in our program if the child has not previously been tested for lead.
    - **Why worry about lead poisoning in children?**
        - High lead levels in children could result in speech delays, hyperactivity, attention deficit disorder (ADD), learning disabilities, neurological and renal disorders, stunted growth, anemia, hearing loss and cognitive damage.
- **Hematocrit/ Hemoglobin Screening-** This screening determines if your child is at risk for anemia. Lake Geauga United Head Start requires this screening for all children unless the doctor indicates that the test is not necessary. If the doctor does not indicate the screening is unnecessary or complete the screening, the screening will be completed at one of our centers using a noninvasive device.
    - **Why worry about anemia in children?**
        - Children that are anemic may become sleepy easily, absorb more lead, develop learning and behavior problems or have developmental delays.
- **Tuberculosis (TB) Screening-**This screening is required for all children at risk or children returning from another country. If your doctor determines your child is not at risk, please have him/her indicate that on the physical form.
    - **Why worry about Tuberculosis in children?**
        - Tuberculosis can invade a child's lungs and/or central nervous system and can be life threatening.
- **Height and Weight-** Each child will be measured and weighed within **45** calendar days of enrollment. Children that are determined at risk will be measured again in the winter. The Health Coordinator will forward reports to the Registered Dietician if the child is determined at risk. The Registered Dietician will attempt to contact the parent The Dietician will identify concerns and provide resources on an individual basis with the family in conjunction with the Health Coordinator and/or the Family Advocate as needed.
    - **Why worry about your child's weight?**
        - Overweight kids and teens can develop weight-related health problems, such as type 2 diabetes, high cholesterol, and high blood pressure and are more likely to be overweight as adults.
- **Follow up Services-** Occasionally, a child will fail a screening and need to receive follow up from a medical professional. Without appropriate screening and follow up, a condition can remain undiagnosed or misdiagnosed. Parents are responsible for ensuring their child receives the follow up services they need. Family Advocates are available to assist in scheduling appointments and making referrals.

PARENT NOTIFICATION of RIGHTS TO PRIVACY

Your child's record here at Lake-Geauga United Head Start contains what we call "Personally Identifiable Information" or PII. Because of that, our child files are kept in the strictest confidentiality. Please read the following information about your rights regarding your child's file.

- Usually, PII will not be released to any party outside of LGUHS without written consent from a parent or guardian. Examples of when we may ask for your permission to release information include a referral to community services or communication with another program you are working with. Parental consent must be in writing and will specify what information we can release and to whom. Parental consent to release information can be revoked at any time during the year.
- When your child leaves our program to move onto kindergarten or into another program, we will forward information about your child to the new program or school as part of your child's transition. Consent for this disclosure is signed by the parent or guardian with enrollment paperwork. If you do not want us to send this information, you can refuse to sign the consent or you can revoke the consent at any time during the year.
- There are some situations in which information may be released without parent written consent. These include:
    - Audits, program reviews or other evaluation of performance,
    - Studies within the program to improve program quality,
    - Emergencies or situations that cause serious health and safety risks,
    - Compliance with a judicial order or subpoena (parent may be notified in this situation, depending on the court order or subpoena),
    - Reporting suspected child abuse or neglect pursuant to mandated reporter laws, or
    - When custody of the child is with an agency or individual other than the parent.
- Parents or legal guardians have the right to request to inspect their child's program record. Requests must be made in writing and the program will schedule an appointment for the record review within five (5) days of receipt of the request.
- Parents or legal guardians have the right to request to amend their child's program record if they feel it contains information that is inaccurate, misleading or violates their child's privacy. Requests must be made in writing and the program will consider such requests. Once a decision has been made, a hearing process may be available if parents are not satisfied with the decision.
- Parents or legal guardians have the right to request copies of documents from their child's file. There is a limit on the number of copies that are available at no cost, but parents may choose to pay for additional copies.
- All child records are maintained for three (3) years after the child exits the program. After that time, files are destroyed and are no longer available for review by any party.
- For more information on the privacy of child records, please see the Protections for the Privacy of Child Records Policy in your center's office.

Social Media Policy/ Photography

LGUHS Social Media Policy prohibits posts or discussions of any information that is considered confidential regarding coworkers or clients, including child and family names, identifying information or pictures.

To protect the privacy of all children and families, parents and visitors should **not take photographs or videos of other children**.
When taking pictures or videos during Head Start events, please make every effort to photograph **your own child only**. Photos or videos that include other children should not be shared on social media or other public platforms.

CENTER INFORMATION

Days and Hours of Operation
The centers and the central office will be open from 8:00am – 4:00pm, Monday through Thursday and from 8:00am – 2:00pm on Fridays. Class times vary depending on your child's teacher. Classes are held Monday through Thursday with Fridays reserved for home visits or meetings. Our centers operate August-May.

Scheduled Days Off
All centers and the central office will be closed in observance of the following holidays:
Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Presidents' Day and Good Friday. Each family will be provided with an at-a-glance calendar which will have important dates for the year.

Staff/ Child Ratios and Maximum Group Size

AGE	STATE STAFF: CHILD RATIO	STATE GROUP SIZE	HEAD START STAFF: CHILD RATIO	HEAD START GROUP SIZE
3	1:12	24	1:10	15-20
4	1:14	24	1:10	15-20

We are a Head Start Program that is rated by Ohio's quality and rating improvement system, Step-up To Quality. As a participant in this program, we are held to meeting their standards for staff/child ratio, which is 1 staff for every 10 children. We pride ourselves on maintaining a higher quality of preschool services and care for your child.

Daily Routines and Sample Daily Activities
The daily routine consists of a balance of quiet and active play. Children are given opportunities to participate in various individual and group activities designed to develop positive feelings toward learning. Classrooms are arranged to support learning progressions. Learning areas may include, but are not limited to dramatic play, blocks, science, math, games and puzzles, books, art, music, writing and computers. Below is a sample of daily activities to give parents a general understanding of the day. Actual classroom schedules and times are posted in all the classrooms.

A typical daily classroom schedule has time for:

- Arrival/ greeting
- Hand washing
- Large group/ circle time
- Free Choice Activity
- Small Group
- Stories/ literacy/ music
- Breakfast/lunch/snack
- Tooth brushing
- Rest/nap time
- Outside or indoor gross motor play (weather permitting)
- Departure/home

Rest/Nap Time
Children attending the extended day sessions will nap in their classroom on an assigned cot, labeled with his/her name.

Children who do not nap will rest and/or do quiet activities on their cots.

School Closings
In the event of bad weather or the immediate threat of severe weather or loss of power, heat or water, schools may be closed. School closings will be announced on local television stations WKYC, WEWS and Fox 8. Please look for your center to be listed individually as one of the following:

Painesville Head Start
West Head Start
Geauga Head Start

**Closings will also be listed on the LGUHS Facebook page and www.lguhs.org. In addition, a message will be sent via the selected communication platform of LGUHS.

Security Cameras
Cameras are utilized to maintain the safety of our children, staff and community members. Cameras are not placed in areas where students, staff or community members have a reasonable expectation for privacy.

Center Access
All LGUHS centers have a buzzer system to limit access to the buildings to parents and guardians of children in care and authorized persons.

Home Visits and Parent Teacher Conferences
According to Head Start guidelines, each family will participate in two home visits and two parent/teacher conferences during the school year to discuss your child's progress and set goals to work on. The first home visit will be completed in the fall and the second during the spring. Conferences will be held twice yearly at your child's center. Your child's teacher will work with you to schedule home visits and parent/teacher conferences. Your Family Advocate will also conduct at least one home visit per year.

Outdoor Play
Outdoor play will be included in the program daily as allowed by weather conditions. Children will not be taken outside when the temperature is below 25 degrees (including wind chill) or above 90 degrees. Time outside may be limited due to temperature. On days that outdoor play is not provided due to rain, temperature or threatening weather, time will be provided for gross motor activities indoors. Please send your child with appropriate clothing for the weather so they can be safe and comfortable outside. This includes coats, mittens, boots and hats if appropriate. Outdoor play areas are arranged to prevent children from leaving the area. Fences or natural barriers are used to ensure safety. Conditions that may be considered when determining if outdoor play is appropriate may include but are not limited to temperature, humidity, wind chill, ozone levels, pollen count, lightning, rain or ice.

Water Play
Children will not engage in any swimming activities. Water play activities will be kept under 18 inches of water.

Breastfeeding Location
Each center will have a predetermined area designated for breastfeeding.

Child Abuse Reporting
Employees of LGUHS are mandated reporters and as required by law, all cases of suspected abuse, sexual abuse, neglect or other maltreatment will be reported to the local Department of Job and Family Services.

Sick Child Management
LGUHS follows the Ohio Department of Health Communicable Disease chart with guidelines for the management of communicable diseases. LGUHS staff are trained to recognize illness and trained in hand washing and disinfection procedures.

An informative flyer will be sent home to parents to inform them of any possible exposure to an illness and/ or communicable disease while at school.

Children should not report to school with the following signs or symptoms present. In addition, a child with any of the following symptoms will be immediately isolated and discharged to the parent or emergency contact:

- Diarrhea (three or more abnormally loose stools within a 24-hour period)
- Severe and/or excessive coughing
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Redness of eye, obvious discharge, matted eyelashes, burning, itching
- Temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher
- Untreated skin patches, spots, rashes (i.e. ringworm)
- Sore throat or difficulty swallowing
- Untreated infected skin patches, unusual spots or rashes

- Unusually dark urine, gray or white stool
- Vomiting more than one time or when accompanied by any other sign or symptom of illness
- Evidence of lice, scabies or other infestation on a case-by-case basis
- Stiff neck
- Open or draining wounds

If a child becomes ill, staff will take the following steps:

1. Isolate the child from the classroom under staff supervision
2. Contact the parent to pick up the child as soon as possible
3. Call the emergency contacts if we are unable to contact the parent

Children will be readmitted to the center after 24 hours of being free of fever or other symptoms. Staff will require written permission from a physician allowing your child to return to school depending on the diagnosis or severity of the communicable disease. Staff will inform the parent what conditions they must meet for the child to return to school.

Medication Administration

Parents are encouraged to schedule medication doses during times when children are under parental supervision. If medication needs to be administered during class time, staff and parents must comply with DCY licensing rules and federal regulations. A Health Care Plan (DCY 01236) must be signed by the parent and medication must be administered as described on the label. If a medication is to be administered differently than described on the label, the Health Care Plan must be completed by the Physician.

The parent must train staff on how to administer the medication to complete the process. Medications cannot be stored in the child's book bag or coat. Medications will be stored in an area that is not accessible to children. Over the counter medications will not be administered at school unless they are part of a Health Care Plan.

Lake Geauga United Head Start staff will use form DCY 01236 and complete a Health Care Plan for children with medical foods and when applying non-prescription topical items such as sunblock, lotion, etc. as long as the product is used as intended.

LGUHS does not serve school age children. Children of any age are not permitted to carry their own medication and ointments while attending Lake Geauga United Head Start.

If a child leaves the program, parents must retrieve his/her medication. If medication is not retrieved, staff will contact parents for pick-up. Unclaimed medications will be discarded after one week.

Mental Health Wellness Program

The Head Start Performance Standards require that all enrolled children be screened by a mental health professional. A mental health consultant will provide mental health services at each Head Start center on a contractual basis throughout the school year.

Responsibilities of the mental health consultant include: observation of each classroom and development of plans with teaching staff to help manage behaviors and work with children on individual social/ emotional needs, assistance in identifying children with special needs; help children learn socialization skills; provide staff and parents with conferences or workshops to develop a better understanding of child growth and development; help in early identification and intervention of problems that interfere with a child's development; and to provide information about community resources.
Permission is needed to allow your child to be involved in the on-going process of classroom observation and any necessary recommendations made by the mental health consultant for the time that your child is enrolled in the Head Start Program. All information concerning your child and family is confidential and will only be shared with others with your written permission. Any questions you may have regarding this process should be directed to the Disabilities/ Mental Health Coordinator at 440-551-9600.

Parent Conduct
At LGUHS, we value the strong partnerships we build with families and welcome parents as vital members of our school community. In order to maintain a safe, respectful, and professional learning environment for all children, families, and staff, we ask that all parents and guardians follow these guidelines when visiting the center:

- **Appearance**
  - Parents and guardians are expected to dress in a way that is appropriate for a child-centered educational setting. Please avoid clothing that is excessively revealing, contains offensive language or images, or promotes alcohol, drugs, or violence.
- **Behavior**
  - All adults on site are expected to:
    - Treat children, staff, and other families with respect and kindness.
    - Always use positive language and behavior.
    - Refrain from using profanity, making threats, or engaging in confrontational behavior.
    - Address concerns calmly and privately with staff or administration.

We reserve the right to ask any visitor who does not follow these guidelines to leave the premises, and repeated violations may affect access to classroom visits or participation in events.
We appreciate your partnership in creating a positive and respectful environment for all.

Parent Concerns
If you have concerns about our program, please do not hesitate to contact us. If the situation allows, please discuss the issue with the person(s) involved. For example, if you feel that something is not right in the classroom, talk to the classroom staff. If they are unable to help you, address the center Site Administrator. Additional steps can be taken by contacting Head Start Management staff if the problem persists. Remember that your opinions and viewpoints are important, and we would like to hear you give suggestions that might be helpful in improving the program.

Parent/ Staff Communication

Communication between LGUHS Staff and parents should be established through our chosen platform/ application. Parents should not expect that they will receive an LGUHS employee's personal contact information.

NUTRITION AND MEAL SERVICES

Lake Geauga United Head Start participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), a federal program that provides healthy meals and snacks to children in preschool/daycare programs. Depending on your child's schedule, breakfast, lunch and/or snack will be provided to the children at no cost to their parents. The CACFP's meal requirements are established by the USDA. LGUHS provides meals that are 1/3 of the recommended daily dietary allowances as specified by the United States Department of Agriculture USDA.

The meal requirements are:

Breakfast:	Low fat milk
	Fresh fruit/fruit cup/ 100% juice
	Grain/ bread product
Lunch:	Low fat milk
	Meat or meat alternative
	Grain or bread product
	2 different servings of fruit/vegetable
Snack:	Any two of the following:
	Milk, meat/meat alternative, grain/bread, fruit/vegetable

All menus are developed by a Registered Dietitian who ensures all nutrition practices are being followed. Copies of the menus are posted at each center, on our website and sent home to parents.

Necessary adaptations will be made for any children with special needs. If a child arrives late to school they will be offered a nutritious breakfast.

Family Style Meals

Mealtimes are a social affair at Head Start. It is an opportunity to engage in meaningful conversation with small groups and teachers will sit with children during mealtimes, model appropriate eating behavior and initiate conversations, similar to a home setting. The children learn table manners and skills used at mealtime, such as passing food, serving themselves and using a napkin and utensils properly. Teachers will also use this time to incorporate nutrition education into the routine of meals. Children are encouraged to taste all foods, but they are never forced to eat anything they do not want. The goal is to introduce children to a wide variety of foods.

Special Diets/ Allergies

All meals served in the program meet USDA guidelines for children. If your child cannot eat certain foods, menu adjustments may be made for any child with special needs. Parents may request a certain food item be restricted for cultural or religious reasons. If a diet must restrict an entire food group, we must have a doctor's note to restrict the food group. If your child has a dietary need, we must have a statement from

your child's health care provider stating the appropriate procedure to be followed. This documentation must be provided to the center before the child can start school.

LGUHS will provide food supplements, as needed, for children on special diets. Parents/guardians should notify the Family Advocate of a child's special dietary needs at enrollment. A form must be completed by the physician if the child has food allergies, a modified diet or needs nutritional supplementation. The child cannot attend school until the paperwork is on file.

Breast milk and Formula
As our program does not serve infants, breast milk and formula are prohibited at our centers unless there is written documentation on file from a physician.

Classroom/ Center Treats and Snacks
It is our policy that no food prepared at home may be served during school hours. Pre-packaged, labeled food may be approved. Please check with your center's Site Administrator before bringing in any treats- all treats must be approved. This is to protect Head start children and parents from illness due to possible food allergies and/or contamination.

TRANSPORTATION

It is the responsibility of the parents to transport their child to and from school.

Field Trips
LGUHS does not participate in field trips that require agency transportation. Occasionally, walking trips that are within a one block radius of the center the child attends may be conducted. If a walking trip is planned, parents will be given notice and appropriate paperwork will be completed with the help of the teacher or family advocate.

PARENT/ FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Parent Rights & Responsibilities
My rights as a parent or guardian in the program include:

- To be recognized as my child's primary educator
- To be treated with respect by the Head Start program
- To be welcomed in my child's classroom
- To receive information and guidance from the Head Start program about my child's progress and development., including regular progress reports from my child's teacher

- To be supported as an advocate for my child. In the event that my child is referred for a concern; I will be involved with the local school district in creating an Individualized Education Plan and will be kept informed on my child's progress in meeting his/her goals
- To take part in decisions regarding my child's center and the Head Start program. My ideas and suggestions will be valued, and I will have opportunities to share them with staff and other parents. Opportunities include Parent Meetings, Policy Council meetings and Advisory Committees
- To be informed about resources within the community related to education, health, social services, employment, etc.
- To review and ask for clarification on policies and procedures
- To submit any concerns regarding the center's alleged violation of the licensing requirements to the state Child Care Licensing office
- To report any concerns about child abuse or neglect occurring at the center to the state Child Care Licensing office

My responsibilities as a parent/guardian in the Head Start program include:

- Ensure my child attends the program consistently and on time to support his/her development
- Participate actively in the program through parent child activities, at-home activities and various committees
- Work with teachers, staff and other families in a cooperative manner
- If transportation is provided, ensure a designated person will be home to accept the child from school and will assist in getting the child on and off the bus
- Ask questions of my child's teachers, our Family Advocate, or other members of the staff
- Ensure that my child is up-to-date on all required medical and dental needs
- Agree to access follow-up care when health concerns are suspected or identified
- Participate in two home visits and two center conferences each year with my child's teacher
- Participate in home visits with the Family Advocate assigned to my family
- Inform the center of any address, telephone number and emergency contact changes

Social Services

The Head Start program serves as a link between families and the community. Every family enrolled in the program is assigned a Family Advocate who will:

- Assist your family in obtaining health requirements for Head Start attendance
- Support your family in setting and reaching goals
- Help you in crisis or emergency situations
- Assist you to identify resources, such as food, clothing, employment, housing assistance, as well as counseling and other referrals as needed.

In Kind Donation

Head Start is a federally funded program. As a condition of funding, the program must generate in-kind dollars. For every dollar received from the funding sources, 25 cents must be generated from in-kind

donations. The list below provides examples of activities or donations that could count toward in-kind match.

How can you help with In-Kind?

♦ Volunteer at the center or during Parent Child Days
♦ Read and do learning activities at home with your children
♦ Get materials ready to use for a project
♦ Share a hobby or talent
♦ Become a member of Policy Council or an Advisory Committee
♦ Attend parent meetings

How Do We Keep Track of In-Kind?

♦ Record all the time spent working with your child at home on the Parent/ Volunteer Monthly Time Sheet
♦ Sign in each time you visit the center for a training, meeting, or parent child event

Volunteering in the Center/Classroom

Parents play an extremely important role in the Head Start program. We believe that children feel valued when their parents or guardians participate in the beginning of their education. There are many opportunities for parents to volunteer in the center or classroom:

- Spend time in your child's classroom assisting the teaching staff with various activities
- Work at home on individualized education activities that have been prepared specifically for your child by your child's teacher
- Attend parent meetings and/or Policy Council meetings on a monthly basis
- Join the Health and Mental Health Service Advisory Committee or Education Advisory Committee
- Attend classroom and center activities
- Encourage other parents to participate in the program

Individuals that wish to volunteer on a regular basis need to comply with DCY licensing requirements, including getting a background check and physical. If you would like to volunteer on a regular basis, please see the center Site Administrator.

LGUHS Policy Council

Parents and guardians of children currently enrolled in Head Start are encouraged to seek election to become a Policy Council Representative.

Policy Council is the shared decision-making body for Head Start, like parent teacher organizations in public schools. The Policy Council works in partnership with key management staff and the agency governing body to develop, review, approve or disapprove certain policies and procedures and serves as a link to the center-based Parent Committees.

Parent representatives and alternates are elected by each center's parent committee. The elected parent representative is expected to attend the monthly Policy Council meeting. Meetings are held via Zoom. The elected parent alternate serves as a substitute should the parent representative be unable to attend a scheduled meeting. Elections for Policy Council Representatives are conducted at each center's September Parent Meeting and the term is October-September. Parents may serve one-year terms for a maximum of 5 terms.

LGUHS Advisory Committees

Health and Mental Health Advisory Committee

Three times each year, parents and community members meet for the Health and Mental Health Advisory Committee. The purpose of this Advisory Committee is to discuss the planning, operation and evaluation of the health/mental health services (nutrition, medical, dental and mental) at Head Start. Health and mental health-related needs, concerns and suggestions are also discussed at these meetings.
All Head Start parents are encouraged to participate, particularly parents of children with medical conditions. These meetings are a joint effort between Early Head Start and Head Start and count toward our in-kind match.

Education Advisory Committee

The Education Advisory Committee meets three times each year and is comprised of parents, community members and Head Start staff. The purpose of this committee is to support, evaluate, plan and oversee the educational processes in the Head Start classrooms. This committee aids the Education Coordinator in making decisions regarding changes resulting from challenges and strengths for the component area. Committee members offer suggestions, support and resources and the meetings allow the Education Coordinator to update community partners, parents and staff on Head Start's program operations.
All Head Start parents are encouraged to participate. These meetings count toward our in-kind match.

Parent Curriculum

LGUHS has partnered with ParentPowered to offer an evidence-based parenting curriculum to families at no cost. Parents will receive text messages each week with fun facts and easy tips to help their children learn and grow. Parents will also receive information on community resources to support you and your family. ParentPowered tips build on your daily routines, like getting dressed, bath time or preparing a meal. You will get messages that match your child's age. You can choose to stop receiving all ParentPowered texts at any time by texting STOP to 70138.

PROGRAM CURRICULA

The Creative Curriculum® for Preschoolers is used in our classrooms. It is based on years of educational research on how children learn best and aligns with the Head Start Child Development Early Learning Outcomes Framework and State Early Learning and Development Standards. The curriculum is play based and hands on and supports good habits and attitudes, particularly a positive sense of self. It also identifies goals in all areas of child development and learning content areas:

1.) Social: To help children feel comfortable in school, trust their new environment, make friends and feel they are a part of the group.
2.) Emotional: To help children experience pride and self-confidence, develop independence and self-control and have a positive attitude toward life.

3.) Cognitive: To help children become confident learners by letting them try out their own ideas and experience success, and be helping them acquire learning skills such as the ability to solve problems, ask questions and use words to describe their ideas, observations and feelings
4.) Physical: To help children increase their large and small muscle skills and feel confident about what their bodies can do.
5.) Language and Literacy: To help children build on their language and literacy skills that will enhance their pre-reading and writing skills through conversations, vocabulary, phonological awareness, letter recognition, books and other forms of literature.

The curriculum also supports school readiness central domains, children with disabilities, including children with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), and children who are dual language learners.

Informal Screening
Our program uses a short screening tool, Brigance Head Start Screen III, that gives a quick overview of your child's current knowledge and gives teachers a basis into planning beginning skills within lessons and play experiences.

Formal Assessments

Our program uses the ***Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP)*** assessment tool. It measures the children's progress in the following areas of development and learning: Approaches to learning-self regulation, social and emotional development, language and literacy development, English language development, cognition including math and science, physical development-health, history-social science, visual and performing arts. Each child has a portfolio that the teacher will record notes and progress in. The teachers will update the children's progress in each of these areas throughout the program year and set goals for each child three times a year. During each of these reporting periods, your child's teacher will schedule a home visit or conference to discuss your child's progress and gain your input in setting goals for your child's learning. Child data is not currently reported to DCY pursuant to Chapter 5101:2-17 of the Administrative Code**.**

Good nutrition today means a stronger tomorrow!

Building for the Future

with

CACFP



This program receives support from the Child and Adult Care Food Program to serve healthy meals to your children.

Meals served here must meet USDA's nutrition standards.

Questions? Concerns?

Lake Geauga United Head Start, Inc. 7757 Auburn Rd. Suite 27, Painesville, Ohio 44077
Phone: 440-551-9600

Learn more about CACFP at USDA's website:

https://www.fns.usda.gov/

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

United States Department of Agriculture

Food and Nutrition Service FNS-317

November 2019

Who is eligible?

Pregnant and breastfeeding women; women who recently had a baby; infants birth through 12 months; children age 1 to 5 years; who are:

- Present at the clinic appointment and provide proof of identity.
- Residents of the State of Ohio.
- Determined by health professionals to be at medical/nutritional risk.
- Meets income guidelines - 185% of Federal Poverty Income Guidelines.

Ohio WIC Program Income Guidelines

In order to be eligible for WIC, the gross countable income of the economic unit, of which the applicant/participant is a member, must be less than or equal to the Ohio WIC program income guidelines for economic unit size provided in the following chart. WIC income guidelines are updated each year.

Economic Unit	Annually	Monthly	Twice Monthly	Biweekly	Weekly
1	$29,526	$2,461	$1,231	$1,136	$568
2	$40,034	$3,337	$1,669	$1,540	$770
3	$50,542	$4,212	$2,106	$1,944	$972
4	$61,050	$5,088	$2,544	$2,349	$1,175
5	$71,558	$5,964	$2,982	$2,753	$1,377
6	$82,066	$6,839	$3,420	$3,157	$1,579
7	$92,574	$7,715	$3,858	$3,561	$1,781
8	$103,082	$8,591	$4,296	$3,965	$1,983

Revised 7/26

How to Apply

WIC clinics are located in all 88 Ohio counties. Applicants can call the Help Me Grow Helpline at **1-800-755-GROW (1-800-755-4769)** for specific clinic locations or call your county WIC clinic (**see** Clinic Directory **for your county WIC clinic phone number**).

You can also apply by printing out a Ohio Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program Application (Solicitud del Programa de Ohio Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)) and mailing it to the WIC clinic in your area. Please note that you must schedule an appointment at the clinic, too.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

Center Parent Information

Note: A copy of this document is required to be given to the parent upon enrollment of their child in the licensed child care center.

The child care center is licensed to operate legally by the Ohio Department of Children and Youth (DCY). This license is posted in a noticeable place for review.

A toll-free phone number is listed on the license and may be used to report a suspected violation of the licensing law or administrative rules. The licensing rules governing child care are available for review-online at https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-administrative-code/chapter-5180:2-12.

Administrators and each employee of the center are required, under Section 2151.421 of the Ohio Revised Code, to report their suspicions of child abuse or child neglect to the local public children's services agency.

Any parent of a child enrolled in the center is permitted unlimited access to the center during all hours of operation for the purpose of contacting their children, evaluating the care provided by the center, or evaluating the premises. Upon entering the premises, the parent or guardian shall is to notify the Administrator of their presence.

Licensing records, including licensing inspection reports, complaint investigation reports, and evaluation forms from the building and fire departments, are available for review upon written request from DCY. Early care and education program information and inspections are also online using the Child Care Search Tool on the DCY website at https://childrenandyouth.ohio.gov/for-families/early-care-education/child-care-search.

It is unlawful for the center to discriminate in the enrollment of children upon the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin or disability in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 104 Stat. 32, 42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq. To file a discrimination complaint, write or call Health and Human Services (HHS) or DCY. HHS and DCY are equal opportunity providers and employers.

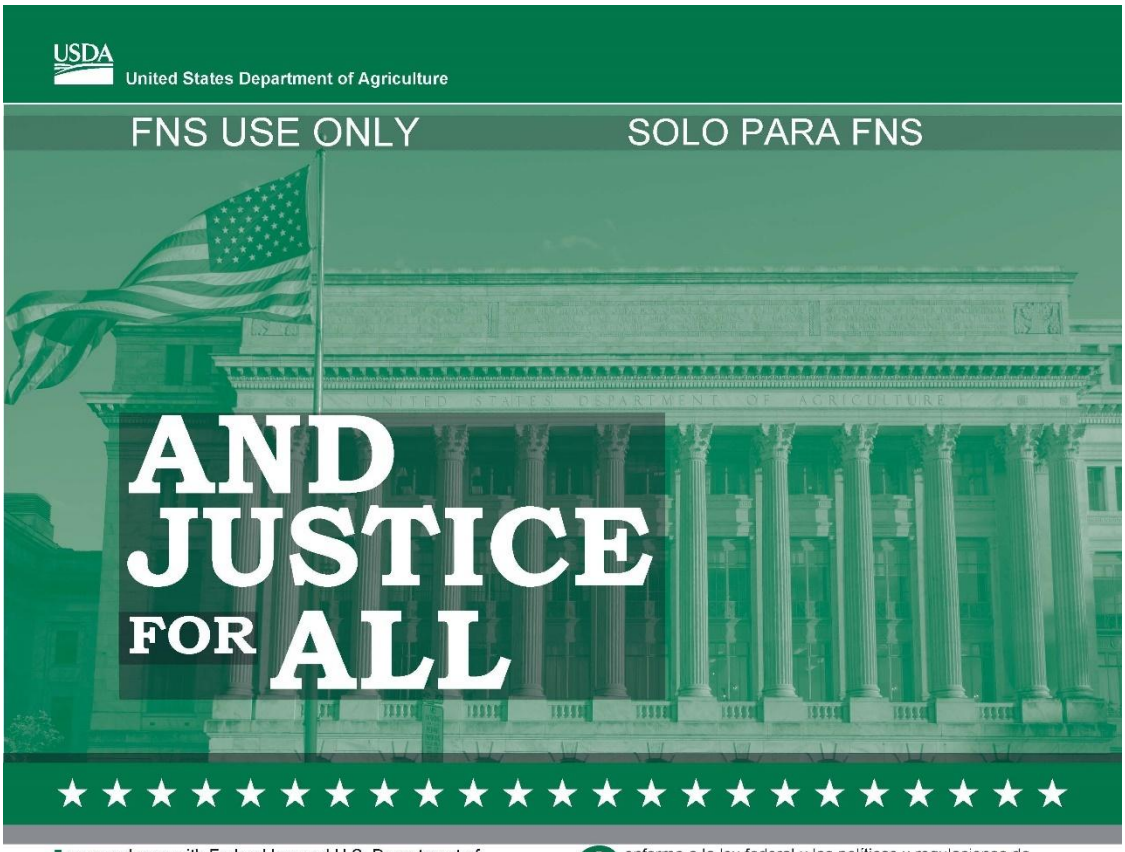
Write or Call:
OCC/ACF/HHS
Southwest Region
1301 Young Street, Suite 958
Dallas, TX 75202
214-767-3849

Write or Call:
ODJFS
Bureau of Civil Rights
30 E. Broad St., 30th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215-3414
(614) 644-2703 (voice)
1-866-277-6353 (toll free)
(614) 752-6381 (fax)
1-866-221-6700 (TTY) or (614) 995-9961
bcr-fax@jfs.ohio.gov (e-fax)
Civil_Rights@jfs.ohio.gov (e-mail)

For more information about child care licensing requirements as well as how to apply for child care assistance, please visit https://childrenandyouth.ohio.gov/for-families.

For more information on Medicaid health screenings and early intervention services for your child, please visit https://medicaid.ohio.gov/families-and-individuals/citizen-programs-and-initiatives/healthchek/ and https://ohioearlyintervention.org.

For information on cash food assistance, please visit https://jfs.ohio.gov/cash-food-assistance.



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Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, and American Sign Language) should contact the responsible State or local Agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at **(202) 720-2600** (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at **(800) 877-8339**.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, which can be obtained online, at https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf, from any USDA office, by calling **(866) 632-9992**, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

mail:
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

fax:
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

email:
program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Conforme a la ley federal y las políticas y regulaciones de derechos civiles del Departamento de Agricultura de los Estados Unidos (USDA), esta institución tiene prohibido discriminar por motivos de raza, color, origen nacional, sexo (incluyendo identidad de genero y orientacion de sexual), edad, discapacidad,venganza o represalia por actividades realizadas en el pasado relacionadas con los derechos civiles.

La información del programa puede estar disponible en otros idiomas además del inglés. Las personas con discapacidades que requieran medios de comunicación alternativos para obtener información sobre el programa (por ejemplo, Braille, letra agrandada, grabación de audio y lenguaje de señas americano) deben comunicarse con la agencia estatal o local responsable que administra el programa o con el TARGET Center del USDA al **(202) 720-2600** (voz y TTY) o comunicarse con el USDA a través del Servicio Federal de Transmisión de Información al **(800) 877-8339**.

Para presentar una queja por discriminación en el programa, el reclamante debe completar un formulario AD-3027, Formulario de queja por discriminación del programa del USDA, que se puede obtener en línea, en https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027s.pdf, en cualquier oficina del USDA, llamando al **(866) 632-9992**, o escribiendo una carta dirigida al USDA. La carta debe contener el nombre, la dirección y el número de teléfono del reclamante, y una descripción escrita de la supuesta acción discriminatoria con suficiente detalle para informar al Subsecretario de Derechos Civiles (ASCR, por sus siglas en inglés) sobre la naturaleza y la fecha de la presunta violación de los derechos civiles. La carta o el formulario AD-3027 completado debe enviarse al USDA por medio de:

correo postal:
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; o´

fax:
(833) 256-1665 o´ (202) 690-7442; o´

correo electrónico:
program.intake@usda.gov.

Esta institución ofrece igualdad de oportunidades.

Form AD-475-A—Assisted Poster/ Revised May 2022 Afiche complementario al Formulario AD-475-A/ Revisado May 2022