



# Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor



## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Members of the Healthy Families Oregon State Advisory Committee

**From:** Healthy Families Oregon State Program Manager, Oregon Early Learning Division

**Date:** June 1, 2022

**Re:** **Healthy Families Oregon State Program Updates**

### Legislative Update

In the 2022 legislative short session, Healthy Families Oregon (HFO) received an investment of \$2 million for wage enhancement. In addition to this, HFO received \$122,830 to backfill the loss of Federal MIECHV funding in Tillamook and Jefferson counties.

In 2021, the legislature invested \$68 million for early learning program expansion; of this, \$38 million remained unscheduled in early 2022, until the Early Learning Division (ELD) had the opportunity to demonstrate community capacity for expansion of Preschool Promise, Oregon Prenatal to Kindergarten and HFO. As part of this effort, Heidi Grogger (HFO State Program Manager, ELD) presented to the [Oregon State Legislature Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Education on February 14, 2022](#). She proposed that in order to “expand” programming to 100 new families, the current home visiting workforce would need to be stabilized first. Tying caseload numbers (capacity to serve new families) with home visitor tenure (experience) showed that investment in workforce stabilization would be the fastest, most economical, most responsive way to establish the capacity to serve 100 additional families. The legislature approved the release of the previously unscheduled \$38 million by the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) to ELD. Of this, \$829,388 was awarded to HFO for program expansion.

### Database Update

After a thorough investigation into HIPPA compliance of the HVOL system, it was determined that HVOL does not meet the needs of all HFO program sites. Therefore, ELD’s HFO Database Project Team determined to move forward with a Request for Proposals (RFP). However, a cost estimate was needed to continue with the RFP process and the Project Team was provided with a recommendation to proceed with a Request for Information (RFI) instead (which would inform a future RFP). This same RFI was intended to inform a cost estimate for a Policy Option Package (POP) for the 2023 – 2025 biennium.

At this stage, the Project Team received updated data system guidance and cost information from Healthy Families America (HFA), which was deemed to fulfill cost estimate needs. Ultimately, the Project Team has been permitted to proceed with a RFP. A POP request was submitted to ELD leadership for the purchase of a database using previously acquired knowledge. HFO program sites continue to use the interim CLARA database.



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### HFO Evaluation & CLARA Database Update

Each year, data entered into the CLARA interim database by program sites undergoes review / correction of errors (the “clean-up” process); the corrected data is then extracted for evaluation in partnership with NPC Research. In January 2022, multiple catastrophic issues affecting data collected in 2021 (the data to be evaluated in 2022) were flagged with the HFO Central Administration team (ELD). Due to ongoing limitations with entering, locating, reviewing and/or correcting data being reported by program staff, the Central Admin team determined a deeper dive into possible causes would be needed before the clean-up process could begin.

After many individual and group TA sessions with programs, and internal review of the interim CLARA system, it was determined that the data in CLARA could not go through the traditional clean-up process. Therefore, evaluation of 2021 data is paused until further investigation can be completed to determine which, if any, data can be evaluated and used to develop NPC’s annual report.

Additionally, the State’s contract with NPC Research terminates on June 30, 2022. It is impossible to amend / extend this contract further, as the term (renewal) limit has been met. A RFP will need to be released for future evaluation contracting to occur. A special procurement is being worked on to bridge the gap between the end of this contract and the culmination of the coming RFP process. However, the current timeline for release of the RFP is unknown.

### QA/TA Specialist Update

In January 2022, ELD’s contract with HFO’s interim QA/TA Specialist, Emily Berry, ended. Unfortunately, a new amendment could not be completed before the contract period ended; therefore, HFO Central Admin and HFO program sites have been without QA/TA Specialist services since February 2022.

In order to reinstate QA/TA services for HFO providers as soon as possible, ELD was able to obtain a short-term, temporary, direct-appoint State position to fulfill the HFO QA/TA Specialist role. This solution has been in progress since February; an offer was made to fill this position at the end of May.

This short-term, temporary position is meant to be a bridge toward one of two long-term solutions:

- Continue RFP development / release for QA/TA contractor
- Request State position authority to hire a permanent, full-time HFO QA/TA Specialist at ELD

Both options are currently being pursued. The initial RFP submitted for the QA/TA contractor position could not be located by DAS Procurement; a new request has since been submitted.

### Training Updates

HFA requires all direct service staff to complete two intensive “Core” trainings within six months of hire; one of these Core trainings focuses on parent surveying. As of January 1, 2022, HFA and all affiliated sites transitioned to utilizing a new parent survey tool called the FROG Scale. Transitional self-paced FROG Scale training became available to eligible staff in fall of 2021 at no cost. Staff eligible for this no-



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cost training included only those who had previously completed instructor-led Parent Survey for Community Outreach (PSCO) Core training, which included most tenured HFO staff. However, staff hired after mid-2021 could not utilize this no-cost training in order to perform essential parent survey work, and would instead be required to attend instructor-led FROG Scale Core training in 2022, which is now available directly through HFA and has associated costs for each trainee.

Previously, ELD contracted with HFA-certified PSCO Core Trainer Satya Kline, who initially planned to provide updated FROG Scale training in 2022 under the same contract provisions. However, Satya terminated her contract with ELD early. Currently, no one has yet been identified for certification with HFA to provide in-state FROG Scale Core training.

HFO Central Administration is currently in the process of setting up a mechanism to pay for HFA FROG Scale Core training through a Sole Source request with DAS Procurement. Many HFO staff are still waiting to complete this required training; several are out of compliance with HFA's requirement of completion within six months of hire.

HFA's other required Core training is being consistently provided to program staff on a quarterly basis by Claire Davis, the HFA-certified in-state FFS Core Trainer currently under contract with ELD.

### [HFA 8th Edition Best Practice Standards Implementation Update](#)

After HFA released the 8<sup>th</sup> Edition of the Best Practice Standards (BPS) in fall of 2021, an ad hoc workgroup was established by ELD to begin associated revisions of the HFO Program Policy & Procedure Manual (PP&PM). The workgroup included 14 HFO Program Managers, Supervisors and home visitors, as well as one HFO State Advisory Committee member.

The workgroup provided feedback to the HFO QA/TA Specialist on the new BPS. Draft revisions of the HFO PP&PM were shared with the entire network (in two phases) to elicit feedback. The QA/TA Specialist incorporated the network's feedback in the final version of the HFO PP&PM, which was released to sites in February 2022.

Program sites are now working on crafting their local inserts into the PP&PM. Drafts will be submitted to HFO Central Admin for review at the end of July 2022.

There were many changes in the 8th Edition BPS, but some major highlights include:

- The inclusion of the FROG Scale (Standard 2)
- The inclusion of policies and practices around equity (Standard 5)
- Revised expectation from 'screen prenatally or within two weeks of birth' to 'within three months of the birth of the child'

HFO's next accreditation visit from HFA will require evidence of implementation of these new standards.

Additionally, the new Multi-Site System Central Administration Standards were recently released, following the general BPS. These standards "... establish the expectations for the Central Administration



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in order to receive HFA Multi-Site System accreditation. In addition to the Central Administration adhering to the Multi-Site System standards... the sites located within the system must adhere to the HFA Best Practice Standards” in order for re-accreditation to be achieved.

These new Central Administration Standards include changes to:

- Expectations for state advisory committees
- Expectations for evaluation
- Inclusion of an Equity Plan at the state level

### HFA Re-Accreditation Update

HFO is presently an accredited Multi-Site System with HFA. As such, re-accreditation with the HFA model is required every five years. HFO is imminently due to begin the re-accreditation process, and is currently expecting to be visited by HFA in 2023.

As a centrally administered system, HFO’s re-accreditation would be initiated by Central Administration (ELD) through the submission of an application to HFA. ELD has been working on this application with the assistance of HFA’s Multi-Site QA/TA Specialist. During a recent TA call related to this effort, HFA’s Chief Program Officer and the aforementioned Multi-Site QA/TA Specialist shared the opportunity to pause ELD’s Central Administration status and shift to a more flexible State Lead status. Agencies with State Lead status are not beholden to HFA’s Multi-Site Central Administration Standards, and are therefore not subject to re-accreditation under the same terms.

The HFO State Program Manager was extremely interested in exploring this idea with ELD and the broader HFO network of sites and program staff. The re-accreditation process is currently paused until a decision is reached about whether ELD will maintain Central Administration of the HFO program or move toward an altered State Lead role.

### South Coast RFA Update

In August 2019, a Request for Applications (RFA) was released in the Coos-Curry community. An organization was selected through this process, but the grantee released their grant back to the State in July 2020, shortly after it was awarded.

A new RFA was being finalized for release in July 2021. However, due to changes in software systems and staffing in DAS Procurement, the RFA was not released. The HFO Central Admin team welcomed a new State Program Manager at this time, who immediately received questions from DAS Procurement about the RFA draft. It was determined that RFA language must be updated to correspond with revisions present in HFA’s 8<sup>th</sup> Edition BPS. The redrafted RFA is under final review with the Department of Justice and is expected to be released shortly. The Coos-Curry community is very eager for HFO services to be reinstated.



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### Family Connects and HFO

In February 2022, Oregon Healthy Authority (OHA) staff associated with the rollout of Family Connects in Oregon reached out to the HFO State Program Manager to discuss the dual implementation of Family Connects (FCI) and HFO in two communities, Marion County and High Desert (central Oregon).

Concerns over referrals and screenings between the two programs were shared – chiefly, access to / screening of families in hospitals. Family Connects is the model selected by the legislature to implement universally offered nurse home visits. Though the intention of OHA/FCI is to become a universally offered program, currently Family Connects is only able to serve families insured through the Oregon Health Plan (OHP). This increases the overlap in outreach of the two programs.

A workshop between ELD staff, OHA staff, and Family Connects staff was held and facilitated by the HFO State Program Manager. The outcome of this workshop was a greater alignment of our shared vision for families, as well as the identification of opportunities for improved alignment. A joint communication from ELD and OHA staff was shared with collaborators on May 5, 2022. Additional workshop sessions are scheduled to continue the alignment of our two models. The next workshop will focus on reviewing our statute and rule requirements to map out areas of overlap.