

Animals at Head Start Sites

Procedure:

- Before allowing an animal into a classroom, permission from parents will be obtained.
- Any animal to which a child has an allergy will not be allowed in the classroom.
- Animals not allowed in Head Start classrooms, either as resident or visitor, include ferrets, reptiles (turtles, snakes, and lizards), amphibians (frogs, toads, salamanders, and newts), and live poultry (chicks, ducklings, and goslings).
- Visiting animals must appear healthy and have documentation from a veterinarian showing the animal is fully immunized. Stray animals with no vaccine history and/or unknown health will not be allowed.
- Staff will supervise children closely to be sure they act safely around animals.
- Anyone having contact with an animal, its food or habitat (cage, feeding bowls or toys) should immediately wash their hands with soap and water.
- A specific area of the classroom will be designated for contact with animals. This area must be away from space used to prepare or eat food.
- All tables, floors, and other surfaces will be properly disinfected after coming into contact with any animal.
- Food for classroom pets will be kept out of reach of children. If students are allowed to help feed or care for the pets, they should be directly supervised by staff and wash their hands immediately thereafter.