A. BRIEF OVERVIEW OF AGENCY SETTING

Missoula Early Head Start is a program that was created by the U.S. Congress as an extension of the Head Start Act. Early Head Start serves pregnant women and children up to the age of three. The goals of Early Head Start are to focus on the healthy, cognitive, physical, social and emotional development of infants and toddlers. Research on early brain development has demonstrated that to thrive, children from birth to age three need a variety of positive learning experiences provided in a secure and loving environment. Early Head Start works with families to ensure the developmental needs of each child is met. Missoula Early Head Start is funded for 72 pregnant mothers and families with children birth to three. 56 enrollment spaces are reserved for children and pregnant mothers in the Home-based option and 16 spaces for children in the Center-based option.

*Home-Based Option: The home-based option includes a weekly visit by case manager (focused on child development) and a parent-child interaction group that meets twice a month. At the parent-child interaction group, families come together to play with their children, discuss child development issues and share a meal.

*Center-Based Option: The center-based option provides full-day childcare services and parent involvement for sixteen children and their families. Center-based families have two home visits and two information-sharing meetings with their infant/toddler teacher each year.

B. DESCRIPTION OF CLIENT GROUP

Families that are eligible for Early Head Start Services are at the 100% poverty level. Ninety percent of the families must meet income eligibility and 10 percent can be over income. Ten percent of the enrollment must be with children with disabilities.

C. LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Students placed at Missoula Early Head Start will have the opportunity to work with parent groups, case managers and teachers with resource coordination for families, learn about other agencies that partner with Missoula Early Head Start, learn about federal regulations and child development.

D. EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS

Students are expected to set a schedule of days and times they plan to complete their hours. Students are expected to have excellent reading, writing and communication skills. Students should dress, speak, and conduct themselves professionally while at Early Head Start or representing Early Head Start in the community. Students will receive training almost identical to training we provide for new hires, being fully immersed into job duties and expectations that employees have. Students will be paired with a mentor teacher or case manager to guide them in their learning, in addition to supervision from the Education Manager. With this training, we expect students to complete all assignments, projects, and duties they are assigned. Consistency and reliability are very important to the children and families that we work with. All students must pass state criminal history, driver’s history, and Adult/Child Protective service background
checks. Students who have lived out of state in the past 5 years must pass an FBI fingerprint background check. Students must also turn in all paperwork and meet requirements for state Child Care Licensing to ensure the safety of our children and families.

Health Requirements:
- Have MMR and current Tetanus immunization
- Complete TB (tuberculosis) questionnaire and possibly complete TB test, if at risk
- Complete a Statement of Health form (disclosing health and mental health restrictions to working with children).