



Position Description: Early Head Start – Child Care Partnership Director

Organization

Created by the SC General Assembly in 1999, South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness is the state’s comprehensive early childhood education agency and a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. SC First Steps (SCFS) takes a holistic approach to accomplishing our mission of preparing all kids for success in school, work and life, offering services that improve children’s health, strengthen families, expand access to quality child care, increase participation in four-year-old kindergarten (4K) programs and help transition rising kindergartners into school. Through a network of 46 affiliates, called “local partners,” SCFS reaches children 0-5 and their families in every county of the state. SCFS runs one of the largest Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership programs in the country with a presence in 14 counties. With funding from the state, annually, SCFS provides over 2200 four-year-olds with access to Pre-K 4 across 64 school districts. The diverse workforce that makes up the 70+ member team at SCFS includes salaried, hourly, and grant-funded positions and is governed by a State Board of Trustees. Our office is in downtown Columbia, SC. As SCFS is a state-wide organization, some positions are remote, and some require travel.

Team: Early Head Start – Child Care Partnership (EHS-CCP)

SC First Steps operates one of the nation’s largest and most complex Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership programs. This federal initiative was created to expand Early Head Start services in partnership with community-based child care settings. First Steps contracts with child care providers across a fourteen county service area to provide both classroom-based early childhood education and comprehensive services to the families of 416 low-income infants and toddlers. The program operates year-round and full-day in more than 50 private preschool classrooms. The SC First Steps Early Head Start–CCP team includes over 30 team members based both in Columbia and across the state.

Position Description:

Reporting to the agency’s Deputy Director, the EHS-CCP Director is responsible for the management and strategic implementation of all aspects of the agency’s Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships grant, to include supervision of 30+ key staff and designation as our agency’s primary point of contact and accountability with the federal Office of Head Start. The EHS-CCP Director must have excellent supervisory, management, and communication skills; an understanding of nonprofit practices; and the ability to navigate local, state, and federally-funded grant programs. This position is located in Columbia, SC.

Responsibilities and Duties:

- Provides leadership, management and oversight of the Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership grant including the leadership and supervision of staff, fiscal oversight including project expenditures, and oversight of local childcare partners.

- Develops and maintains excellence and innovation in programs that meet the needs of children zero to three and their parents in domains including family services, education, health and disability.
- Monitors grant performance and serves as primary internal liaison to Federal Office of Head Start – keeping Head Start Performance Standards and pertinent regulation requirements satisfied and ensuring timely submission of all required reports including the program self-assessment and community assessment.
- Ensures the program, its policies, practices and personnel promote inclusivity and cross-cultural competence.
- Is responsible for the development of system-wide policies, procedures, reporting measures, and evaluations to ensure full compliance with federal, state, and local law as well as the Head Start Performance Standards.
- Serves as the primary link between Early Head Start (EHS) and First Steps’ state and local programming - integrating EHS with First Steps’ work with local partnerships, 4K Programs, and evidence-based home visiting models including Nurse-Family Partnership, Parents as Teachers and others.
- Acts as the primary staff support to project Policy Council in the areas of policy formulation and approval and the development of organizational planning, programming, and bylaws.
- Provides staffing to the SC First Steps Board of Trustees as assigned, including preparation of materials and the interpretation of policy and rules of agency administered programs.
- Maintains a positive and productive working environment and relationship between all members of the EHS staff.
- Supports communications, community relations, and public affairs related to the EHS-CCP program at SC First Steps.

Qualifications and Skills:

Required:

- Must have at least a bachelor’s degree from an accredited university (graduate degree preferred)
- Must have experience in human services program management, including program planning, operations, and evaluation. Experience using a management information system is preferred.
- Must have at least 5 years in a supervisory role
- Must demonstrate prior success in the supervision of staff, fiscal management, and other aspects of public, nonprofit or business administration
- Must possess leadership ability and organizational skills
- Must have good interpersonal and communication skills, including the ability to work as part of a team, communicate effectively both orally and in writing, receive and provide feedback, and manage dynamic interchanges in meetings
- Must possess Initiative and problem-solving capabilities
- Must be able to work well with people
- Must be able to demonstrate and promote inclusivity and cross-cultural competence.

Preferred:

- Head Start or Early Head Start experience is preferred (at least 5 years)
- Experience evaluating programs and implementing new practices
- Grants management experience
- Grants management experience

Other Requirements:

- Valid South Carolina Driver Class “D” Driver’s License and ability to travel in-state and out of state
- Maintain and show proof of personal auto insurance
- Ability to lift up to 45 pounds
- Must be able to accept some exposure to communicable diseases (i.e. childcare setting)
- Must be able to work in an environment that may be moderate to loud (i.e. childcare setting)

Benefits:

This position is eligible for a variety of benefits from a comprehensive health and dental insurance program and generous annual and sick leave policies, to a solid and secure retirement system. The State of South Carolina offers a competitive benefits program for state employees.

To apply, submit your cover letter and resume to Samantha Ingram at singram@scfirststeps.org.