Iowa Department of Human Services
CHILD CARE CENTER EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE

Name of Center: HACAP Head Start-Marion **Enrollment:** 20 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 25053

Street: 3405 7th Ave Ste 100 **City:** Marion Iowa **Zip** 52302 **County:** Linn

Mailing Address: 3405 7th Ave Ste 100, Marion, IA, 52302

Director's Name: Jaina Brandstetter **Phone Number:** 319-447-5816

On-Site Supervisor(s): Jaina Brandstetter **E-Mail:** jbrandstetter@hacap.org

Date(s) of Visit:

X **Licensing Visit** X **Unannounced Visit** **Off Year Visit** **Administrative Change**

LICENSING VISITS

New Application **Re-Application** X **NA**

Signed Application (470-0722) Received **Yes** **No** X **NA** **Date Signed:**

FIRE INSPECTION **State** X **Local** **NA** **Is Fire Inspection Approved?** X **Yes** **No** **NA**

Date Inspected: 03-17-2023

Comments :

LICENSE TYPE: X **Child Care** **Preschool (ages 3-5 meets three hours or less per day)**

Financial Type: Profit X Non-Profit NA

Accredition: Accredited NAEYC NSACA Other X NA

Program Serves: X Infants (0-23 mo.) X 2 Years X Preschool-Age School-Age

Get-Well Evening Care Special Needs

SCHEDULE: X Year-round School-Year Summer Only

HOURS:	*Year-round*	*School-Year*	*Summer Only*

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Age	Capacity
General	10		48		58
Summer					0

QRS Rating: 3

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 12-01-2023 to 12-01-2025
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Amy Lyons **Date:** 09-01-2023

I. IF CURRENT LICENSE IS PROVISIONAL, IDENTIFY THE CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

Not applicable.

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

Since the last monitoring visit, HACAP Head Start (HHS) - Marion relocated to a completely refurbished building and property commencing operations at the new location on 3/27/2023. This program operates year-round and includes an early head start classroom as well as head start classrooms. The program serves older infants through preschool-age. Current enrollment is 20.

The combined director/on-site supervisor of HHS - Marion is Jaina Brandstetter. Ms. Brandstetter has been the combined director/on-site supervisor of this site since July, 2014. Ms. Brandstetter has a degree in education, has several years of experience working with children, and continues to participate in much child development related training.

On 7/25/2023, program space was observed.

III. IDENTIFY THE OBSERVED STRENGTHS OF THE CENTER:

HACAP is a community action agency currently providing head start services throughout 9 Iowa counties. HACAP began in 1968 serving families in Johnson, Jones, and Linn Counties. From 1973-1981, HACAP expanded to provide services in Benton, Iowa, and Washington Counties. Then, in fall of 2020, HACAP again expanded to provide services in Delaware, Dubuque, and Jackson Counties. Specifically, HHS- Marion continues to be located in a predominantly urban area and has been in operation for several years.

HACAP's mission and goal is "...helping people develop skills to become successful and build strong communities..." and "...to bring about a greater degree of social competence in the young children..."

HACAP has community support and operates under a Board of Directors. HACAP has the following website for families and the community to learn more about their programs including early learning programs: http://www.hacap.org.

HHS - Marion continues to participate in quality initiatives including local quality initiatives as well as QRS. The program has achieved QRS 3 star. In fall 2017, HACAP Head Start - Marion was featured in the National Head Start Magazine "Sandbox". An article entitled "The Story of Otis" shared the children's experiences related to the program's main area of study "Monarch Butterflies" throughout late summer/early fall.

Executive management of HHS has remained consistent as well as site specific management. Ms. Branstetter is currently celebrating her 9th year as combined director/on-site supervisor! This program's management team (e.g. Ms. Regan, Ms. Branstetter) has systems of organization in place to help ensure administrative items are completed as required and maintained in a confidential manner. Management is knowledgeable of licensing guidelines as well as their own program's policies and procedures.

HHS - Marion continues to retain seasoned employees. Staff reported celebrating 23 years, 22 years and 4 years with HHS. The program's chef Penny reported celebrating 9 years of providing culinary delights to the children. Staff longevity at this

site is impressive! All staff have at least a CDA and/or are working towards a CDA. Many staff have advanced degrees in education and early childhood development. Documentation indicates that employees often complete annual professional growth training that exceeds Iowa Code requirements.

HHS has a Parent Committee, Policy Council, and bilingual family support workers. There are parent boards with required postings, community resources, and program reminders. There are additional posting areas for community resources in the area of nutrition, upcoming area events, skill building, and community involvement opportunities. Family involvement is highly encouraged including participation in the HHS Parent Committee, home-conference visits and family events including a summer butterfly release event. Ms. Brandstetter discussed the positive family feedback the program continues to receive including about the recent program relocation.

Since the last review, HHS - Marion relocated to a completely refurbished building and property. The parking lot for families and visitors is more friendly. The building is secure, inviting, and aesthetically pleasing both inside and outside. Classroom furnishings (e.g. cabinets, shelves, tables with chairs) and materials were all updated. Some new features this program now has access to includes a resource-work area and staff breakroom. HHS - Marion has an on-site kitchen with many upgrades to help prepare healthy meals and store foods. HHS has a maintenance team which will continue to help ensure the building and property remains sanitary and hazard free each day. A monthly facility checklist is completed. Children's accomplishments (e.g. artwork) were observed to be displayed in several areas of the building. Ms. Brandstetter discussed how the program relocated from their former site at end of day on 3/10/2023 only to commence operations again at a new location on 3/27/2023. Ms. Brandstetter talked about how their team of staff "...worked really hard during the move to get everything up and going...to help ensure the children would arrive for the first day in the new building feeling comfortable..." Future goals include installing areas of shade on both outdoor playgrounds as well as possibly adding a place for some outdoor gardening and a convex mirror to a classroom nook.

HHS does participate in an annual shutdown week in order to prepare for each new academic year. Creative Curriculum is the primary curriculum with goals to move online for enhancing teaching strategies and project approach.

HHS - Marion collaborates well with many community partners including local area access, local school districts, local businesses, CCR&R and health professionals.

HHS - Marion has emergency plans, policies, and procedures in place which are annually reviewed and updated as needed. The program has successfully navigated through the 2008 Linn County flood, 2019 Polar Vortex, 8/10/2020 Derecho Storm event, 2019 (health) pandemic and 2023 noted air quality.

Each child is engaged in a daily health check upon arrival for early detection of apparent illness, communicable disease, or unusual condition or behavior which may adversely affect the child or the group. HHS has policies and procedures in place for hand washing, cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting. Staff were able to verbalize and engage in these processes. Cleaning checklists and daily sanitation reminders were observed to be posted in various areas of the center.

On the day of the monitoring visit, staff warmly greeted families and children as they arrived for the day. Instrumental, classical music could be heard quietly playing throughout the EHS room while breakfast routines were happening. Areas of study throughout the program included jungle and insects. Children had access to an array of materials (e.g. books, imaginative play options, building materials, water colors/crafts) that encouraged innovative play. A clever camping play experience was observed to be established in Room 1! Activities observed were many (e.g. outdoor large gross motor play, group discussion with toothbrushing and journaling). A very spirited discussion was overheard between staff and children whom were periodically observing a large grasshopper, in the class's bug catcher, that had been discovered for a short-term study the day before! Staff provided nurturance and a companionable presence allowing children to have many choices in their play experiences. Routine transitions (e.g. food service routines) worked smoothly into the program's welcoming and cooperative play environment. Staff were overheard providing children with many words of encouragement and utilizing PBIS techniques when needed. Staff were observed communicating with children verbally, using picture cues, and through sign language. Children responded well to staff and appeared to be truly enjoying their day.

IV. IDENTIFY THE ASPECTS OF OPERATION THAT FALL BELOW THE STANDARDS REVIEWED:

None noted.

V. SPECIAL NOTES/RECOMMENDATIONS:

Please note - Within one year of being issued an initial or renewal license, centers operating in facilities that are at ground level, use a basement area as program space, or have a basement beneath the program area shall have radon testing performed as outlined in a nationally recognized radon measurement protocol. If testing determines confirmed radon gas

levels in excess of 4.0 picocurie per liter, radon mitigation procedures shall be developed. Ensure radon testing is completed with documentation of results within this first year of relocation.

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A full license is issued. Thank you for the visit.

*Note: If you are the Child Care Center Director and you feel something is unclear or unjustly cited, please contact your DHS Licensing Consultant to discuss the issue. The child care director may also send a response which will be placed in the licensing file.

*Note: If you are a member of the general public, there may be additional information contained in the public file. You may contact the DHS Licensing Consultant to inquire.