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

Name of Center: HACAP Head Start-Urban **Enrollment:** 15 **License ID No. (Reapplications)** 25056

Street: 1328 2nd Ave SE **City:** Cedar Rapids Iowa **Zip** 52403 **County:** Linn

Mailing Address: 1328 2nd Ave SE, Cedar Rapids, IA, 52403

Director's Name: Lacy Blackhawk **Phone Number:** 319-366-7632

On-Site Supervisor(s): Lisa Nagel **E-Mail:** DBenser@hacap.org cregan@HACAP.ORG

Date(s) of Visit: 07-21-2025

Licensing Visit X **Unannounced Visit** X **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: 01-05-2024

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 X NAEYC NSACA Other NA

Program Serves: 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*	*Summary Only*

LICENSE CAPACITY	Infants	2 Years	Preschool	School-Age	Capacity
General	4	16	20		40
Summer					0

QRS Rating: N/A

RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSE:	
X	**FULL** license from 09-01-2024 to 09-01-2026
	PROVISIONAL license from
	DENIAL of initial application
	SUSPENSION of license
	REVOCATION of license

Licensing Consultant: Amy Lyons **Date:** 08-04-2025

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

Not applicable.

II. IDENTIFY THE AREAS OBSERVED ON THE VISIT:

HACAP Head Start (HHS) - Urban is located inside a building which also provides community services. This program operates year-round offering an early head start (EHS) classroom as well as a head start (HS) classroom. The program serves older infants through preschool-age children. Current enrollment is 15.

Multi-site HHS early childhood program executive director is Christi Regan. Ms. Regan has a BA degree in elementary education with early childhood reading, has been employed with head start for over 20 years, and continues to participate in much child development related training. HHS - Urban's site-specific director is Lacy Blackhawk. Ms. Blackhawk has been in a director position since December 2020. Ms. Blackhawk has a BA degree in early childhood education, has over 20 years of experience working with children at head start, and continues to participate in much child development related training. The program's on-site supervisor Lisa Nagel has a BA degree in elementary education, has 26 years of experience working with head start children and continues to participate in much child development related training.

On 7/21/2025, 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- Urban is 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..."

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

HHS has a history of participation in quality initiatives including QRS/IQ4K, national accreditation, and local quality initiatives.

Executive management of HHS has remained consistent. This program's management team (e.g. Ms. Regan, Ms. Blackhawk, Ms. Nagel) 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.

Since the last monitoring visit, HHS - Urban has retained seasoned staff as well as hired a few new one. Staff reported celebrating 26 years, 4 years and 2 years of employment with HHS. Staff longevity continues to be inspiring! 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. Ms. Blackhawk described the HHS - Urban team as a "good team...reliable staff...Lisa Nagel has been with us for 26 years...constantly working hard to build and maintain relationships with the children, families and community..."

HHS has a Parent Committee, Policy Council, and family support workers. There is a parent board with required postings and program reminders located in a primary area frequented by all families. There is an additional posting area 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, family/program conferences and family events.

HHS - Urban is located in a building with agencies that provide various community services. Building and grounds are maintained. Since the last review, under the sink kitchen cabinets were repaired as well as the dishwasher elevated to help resolve issues with dampness. A monthly facility checklist is completed. HHS does have a maintenance team which assists with building projects and repairs as well as helps ensure program space is sanitary and hazard free each day. HHS - Urban has access to the on-site kitchen to dish wash and keep food warm. This program receives food service from Meals on Wheels.

HHS participates in an annual all site shutdown week in order to prepare for each new academic year. Classrooms continued to be arranged in a thoughtful manner with learning at the forefront. Furnishings and materials are child friendly and in good repair. There are areas to display children's accomplishments (e.g. artwork). Outdoor gardening areas were observed to include some beautiful flowers! Creative Curriculum is the primary curriculum with goals to move online for enhancing teaching strategies and project approach. Curriculum also incorporates guest speaker events (e.g. community guest readers, police pal).

HHS programs have emergency plans, policies, and procedures in place which are annually reviewed and updated as needed. HHS sites have successfully navigated through flooding events, 2019 winter Polar Vortex, 2019 health (covid-19) pandemic, 8/10/20 Derecho Storm, 2021 food supply issues, 2022 infant formula shortages, air quality alerts (2023, 2025) and 7/19/24 global technology outage.

HHS - Urban collaborates well with many community partners including local area access, local school districts, local businesses, Meals on Wheels, CCR&R and health professionals. There is also a partnership among all HHS sites that allows for the sharing of staff training, ideas and resources.

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. The program has policies and procedures in place for hand washing, diapering, cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting.

On the day of the monitoring visit, staff were nurturing and attentive to the children's needs. Activities observed were many including play experiences with small group book reading and outdoor large gross motor events. Children had access to an array of materials (e.g. imaginative play options, building materials, sensory, books) that encouraged innovative play. Staff provided a companionable presence allowing children to have many choices in their play experiences. Staff communicated well with children verbally, with picture cues and through modeling. Routine transitions (e.g. clean-up, classroom to outdoors) worked smoothly into the program's welcoming and cooperative play environment. Staff were overheard engaging the children in meaningful discussion, utilizing positive redirection when needed and encouraging the use of social graces. 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:

The classroom flooring is showing much ware. Remedy.

The program's license remains in full force. 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.