



## SCHOOL/SITE MANUAL 2023-2024 School Year

<b>Prepared by Program Director</b>	<b>Signature</b> _____	<b>Date</b> _____
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[www.floridaheiken.org](http://www.floridaheiken.org)





Dear Principal,

The Florida Heiken Children's Vision Program, a division of Miami Lighthouse for the Blind & Visually Impaired, provides underprivileged Pre-K through 12<sup>th</sup> grade students who qualify, with comprehensive, dilated eye examinations and prescription glasses if needed, in all counties in Florida, at no cost to the parent, student or school.

**In response to the COVID-19 increased transmissibility with new variants, we are continuing to implement enhanced safety protocols to minimize the risk of transmission, including mandatory masks that we will provide.**

The Heiken Portal at [www.floridaheiken.org](http://www.floridaheiken.org) enables parents to apply for a NO COST comprehensive eye exam and glasses from the convenience of their smart phone, tablet or computer in English, Spanish, Creole or Portuguese. Not only is this faster, more accurate and secure for parents, it also drastically reduces the effort and time required of school staff, which used to entail handing out, checking for accuracy and legibility, and submitting handwritten consent forms to our program and waiting 9-12 weeks for processing. Simply distribute the Heiken Portal flyer to all Florida low income school students. Within 6-8 weeks of the parent applying through the Heiken Portal, the school will receive a fax copy of the electronic consent for their records, which will include their Heiken account number, followed within a week by a Student Status Letter that will detail the eligibility for the student. Faster processing equates to your students having the benefit of good vision earlier in the school year, which improves their potential for academic and overall success.

Students who meet the eligibility criteria under one of our two programs will receive a free eye exam and glasses, if prescribed. The first is a voucher (In-Office Program), where we will refer the eligible student to a local participating licensed eye doctor, only available in specified counties. We also offer a second program, Mobile eye-care at your school, if a minimum of **30** students are eligible at your school or in collaboration with another school within a 5 mile radius. If prescription glasses are needed, the student is provided with a choice of fashionable frames. You can find all protocol and procedures in the enclosed School Manual (also found on our website: [www.floridaheiken.org](http://www.floridaheiken.org)) in order for your qualified students to take advantage of the program.

**Remember: As 85% of what a child perceives, comprehends and remembers depends on the visual system, it is imperative that all children have the gift of good vision for success in school and their future.**

**Your students may need glasses!** Please forward the attached Heiken Portal flyer to your appointed Heiken liaison to distribute to students in need of Florida Heiken vision services.

We look forward to working with you in the near future. Please call the Heiken office with any questions at 305-856-9830 or 1-888-996-9847.

Sincerely,

The Florida Heiken Team



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## Student Criteria

We have various funding sources with different eligibility criteria that change year to year. Therefore, to determine the best match for each student, please provide all of the following information **(if applicable)**:

- Currently attends a Florida School, includes Head Start, public, private, charter and magnets.
- Student Identification Number, if applicable.
- Insurance status will be determined by Heiken staff after the application is received.
  - We are able to serve some students with accepted Medicaid Managed Care Plans.
    - The parent is required to sign the second signature on the bottom of the consent form authorizing Heiken to utilize their child's insurance benefits for payment. Insured students can only be seen through Heiken on a mobile unit visit.
  - Vouchers are **not** issued for insured students, as network providers must be credentialed for their plan will bill insurance directly. Please call the Heiken office for details in your county.

## School Referral Procedures

- Parents of low-income, Pre-K–12 grade students, ages 3 and up, enrolled in a Florida school, including charter, magnet, Head Start and private (on school of choice vouchers/scholarship), in all counties are all welcome to apply once a school year between July 1<sup>st</sup> and June 30<sup>th</sup>.
- Schools will distribute Heiken Portal Flyers or consent forms to all low income students and encourage the students to have parents use the Heiken Portal to apply or return completed forms signed by their parent/guardian.
  - **ALL Students are encouraged to apply for an annual vision exam to check eye health and identify any conditions that could lead to future vision loss if undetected, which are commonly unrelated to the need for glasses.**
- **Heiken Portal Applications:**
  - The school provides the student with a Heiken Portal flyer. If the parent applies via the Heiken Portal, the school will be faxed the consent form with eligibility status preprinted on it within 6-8 weeks of submission (found on our website: [www.floridaheiken.org](http://www.floridaheiken.org)). The parent can apply via the Heiken Portal using a **smart phone**, tablet, or computer, and need only be connected to Wi-Fi to access the website.
- **Paper Consent Forms:**
  - **Paper consent forms, which take significantly longer to process, must be used strictly as a backup if a parent is unable to apply on the portal.** The school designee is responsible for verifying it is entirely filled out, signed and legible before submitting to Heiken via fax or email.



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- Once completed and signed, fax both the Heiken Fax Cover Sheet and Parent Consent Form to our toll free number provided on the forms.
- To expedite the process, please verify all information is completed on every consent form and specify on the Fax Cover Sheet if you are requesting a **visit from our Mobile Vision Unit (requires 30 or more eligible students)** or a voucher for an in-office appointment.
- We encourage schools/counties outside of South Florida to reserve their dates before the school year begins to provide parents with a deadline to apply at least 4 weeks prior to the scheduled visit. We begin reserving dates for the upcoming school year in the spring.
- **DEADLINES FOR APPLICATIONS:**
  - **3 weeks in advance of a scheduled visit for Heiken Portal applications.**
  - **4 weeks in advance of a scheduled visit for handwritten consent forms.**
  - Applications received after the deadline will be processed, but not included in the scheduled visit.
- **SPECIAL NEEDS** - Please also inform us of any student with special needs requiring any special setup and or auxiliary aids, visual devices, hearing devices, language interpreters, sign language, mobility devices and or any other such items according to the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Department of Health Policy 220-3-00 section 504 to ensure we arrange for needed accommodations.
  - **The mobile units are not wheelchair accessible.** Therefore if any students scheduled for a mobile visit are not able to enter the mobile unit safely on their own, **we will need to reserve a room inside the school/site in which to set up portable equipment.** If a room is not available, we will issue a voucher to a network provider with an accessible location to accommodate those students with mobility requirements and the child resides in a county eligible for vouchers.

### Heiken Procedures

- Upon receiving the faxed or electronically submitted consent form, we will determine eligibility based on program criteria and available funding at the time services can be rendered.
- A Student Status Update Letter is faxed to the school for every child that applies upon completion of the eligibility process. This letter includes the status of the student and a description of all status possibilities in all four languages, English, Spanish, Creole and Portuguese. We recommend that the school provide a copy to the parents, especially if the child is not eligible for the Heiken program.
  - If you do not have a fax, then contact the Heiken office to request the letters via encrypted email. It is not possible for emails to be an automated process at this time.



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- Once it is established that the student is a candidate, a Heiken Program Coordinator will proceed to either issue a voucher, if eligible, or contact the school to schedule a mobile unit visit. Processes listed below:
- **VOUCHER PROCESS:**
  - **Vouchers are only funded and available to eligible students in the following counties:**
    - Brevard, Broward, Citrus, Hernando, Hillsborough, Lake, Martin, Miami-Dade, Monroe, Orange, Osceola, Palm Beach, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, St. Lucie, Seminole, and Sumter.
  - The school nurse or designee will be sent, via fax, a Voucher, which is to be given to the student to take home for the parent/guardian. This form will have all of the Doctor's information, so the parent/guardian can call to schedule an appointment with the assigned optometrist. In addition, the doctor's office will also receive a copy of the voucher via fax.
    - Heiken depends on the school to provide the voucher to the parents when school is in session. **ONLY** in the instance that schools are closed, either for usual vacations (winter/summer breaks) or for an emergency, then Heiken will also mail the voucher to the address provided on the consent form. NOTE: parents frequently provide wrong or incomplete addresses, so mailing them is not as effective as sending them home with the student.
  - If glasses are prescribed, the doctor's office will order the glasses which should arrive within 2 to 4 weeks, at which time the parent/guardian will be notified by the doctor to go back to the office for pick up and adjustments.
  - If remakes or replacement glasses are needed during the same school year, the student would return to the voucher doctor for to process the order for glasses. The voucher should state if the remakes will be at no charge or a \$40 replacement fee, for which the parent would be responsible.
  - The voucher doctor should not charge any additional fees to the parent. If they do, please instruct the parent not to pay and contact our office at 305-856-9830 for assistance.
- **MOBILE VISION PROCESS:**
  - If the Fax Cover Sheet included with the consent forms states that a Mobile Vision Unit is being requested, a Heiken Program Coordinator will call the school to discuss the number of eligible students and coordinate the visit once the required minimum is met. Please note, we will make every attempt to bring the mobile unit to a school with a minimum of 30 eligible students to examine, but we ask that all student forms be submitted by the deadline to expedite

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the process and prevent scheduling delays. In the instance that 2 schools are located within 5 miles of one another, we may be able to coordinate both schools on the same day to total 30+ students. If you know a school nearby is also ready for a mobile visit, please let our coordinator know so they can more quickly attempt to coordinate the visits.

- **VERIFY NO SCHEDULING CONFLICTS:** We ask that the school contact verify that the scheduled date does not conflict with an early release day, testing, or other scheduled school activities, which could prevent the students from receiving Heiken services by obtaining administrator approval for the date.
- **DISTRICT REQUIREMENTS:** If there are any County/District specific requirements for our staff to provide services on the school site, such as fingerprinting or ID badges, please notify the Heiken Program Coordinator or Program Administrator before scheduling, so we have time to be in compliance.
  - All Heiken staff, doctors and opticians have the statewide issued badge to show Level II background check screening clearance.
- **The deadline to fax new consent forms and guarantee that the students will be on the list for the scheduled visit is 4:30pm, on the Friday 3 weeks before the visit for Heiken Portal Applications, and 4 weeks for handwritten consent forms.**
- **7 days before the site visit, Heiken staff will:**
  - Fax or email the final student list to school contact. If you will need this list earlier, please notify the Heiken Coordinator, so they may prepare it sooner, if all consents have been processed. This may require providing the applications before the stated deadlines.
- **1-2 business days before the site visit, Heiken staff will:**
  - Call school's contact to confirm visit start time
  - Verify location: Where to park Mobile Unit and/or room availability for portable equipment or screening (if needed).
  - Please provide special phone numbers if required upon arrival, ex: Security to open a gate or cell phone number if we will not be able to reach anyone at the office number on file.
- **Safety Protocols**
  - **All staff and doctors** will be required to be symptom free prior to entering the mobile unit each day. For the safety of students and school staff, this could result in the need to reschedule a mobile visit if other staff are not available to fill in.
    - All staff and doctors will also be required to:
      - Wear a face mask at all times in the mobile unit and while on the school premises.
      - Use hand sanitizer between every patient or after touching any high touch surfaces.

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- **All students/staff** must do the following before being allowed on a Heiken mobile unit:
  - Students need a 2023-2024 signed Heiken consent with COVID disclaimers.
  - Any student displaying symptoms will not be permitted on the mobile unit.
  - **Have a mask on and keep it on while in the mobile unit or room Heiken is using**
    - If the child does not have a mask on, a disposable mask will be provided.
    - If a student refuses to keep the mask on in the mobile unit, they will not be permitted to participate.
  - Use the touchless hand sanitizer dispenser, prior to entering the mobile unit.
    - Waiting students will be required to stay outside the mobile unit with a school staff person supervising.
- **Disinfection Protocols**
  - The entire inside of the mobile unit will be sanitized every evening.
  - In between patients, all surfaces touched by the Technician, Doctor or student will be wiped down with a solution of 62% alcohol or higher.
  - All equipment will also be sanitized between patients.
  - All frames touched, will be separated and sanitized between students
- **School Arrival Procedures**
  - The Mobile Unit and Heiken Technician or Screener will check in at the main office and ask for the contact person and will be prepared to present Florida badge, a picture ID and any County Required documents requested during scheduling.
  - If you need additional Heiken Portal Flyers, please request them from the Heiken Program Coordinator during the scheduling process. They are available in a 2-page 3-language (English, Spanish, Creole) and Portuguese flyers and can be delivered by the Technician.
  - **The Heiken Technician will:**
    - **Provide a testimonial form and satisfaction survey** for the school contact to complete and submit to the Heiken office. Please obtain testimonials from students, parents, teachers, etc. New and current funders of the Heiken program require testimonials in our requests and reports.
    - **Review the student list** with the contact person
    - **Name tags may be provided by Heiken for every student.** If so, we ask that the school staff person who retrieves the student provides the correct name badge with each student for verification of the student's identity, especially important for young students and those with disabilities.



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- Please note, Heiken staff are focused on performing exams and cannot be responsible for the supervision of students who are waiting. Therefore, **it is mandatory that the school assign a monitor to be present with Heiken staff at all times.** We recommend that you also assign a runner to take students to and from the exam area, so the school monitor doesn't leave the area.
  - The technician will ask that plus or minus 5-10 students at a time (may vary depending on the doctor, age of the students and special needs) are brought to the exam area/mobile unit.
  - Please let the teachers know the student will be with Heiken for 20-40 minutes.
  - If there are students that were not on the list originally, the technician is not authorized to approve eligibility. Please fax the information to the Heiken office and call the Heiken office to check eligibility for current or future date /voucher.
- While the school contact is gathering the students, the Heiken Technician will set up and prepare all equipment.
    - School staff is not allowed to help with set up of equipment due to liability concerns.
    - **If any student is wearing contact lenses we cannot examine them.** We do not perform contact lens exams, and we do not have a means to store them during and after the exam. If the school contact wants to take responsibility to be certain that the student is using hygienic processes in a place where they may wash hands properly within the school to remove the lenses, we will be happy to perform the exam. **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES** is any student allowed to remove contact lenses on the mobile unit, in the examining area where hand washing facilities are not available, or after using hand sanitizer.
- **Exam Procedures**
    - The comprehensive eye exam, administered by an eye doctor, includes a thorough examination of the students' vision and eye health. In order to perform the examination, the use of eye drops to dilate the pupils is used, which allows the doctor to get the most accurate eye health information and prescription for eye glasses. The drops are safe to use, and adverse reactions are extremely rare. Light sensitivity and blurry near vision are normal for up to 4-6 hours following the

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exam. Dilation allows for a more effective examination: [Journal of American Optometric Assoc.](#)

- Once finished the student will be given disposable sun glasses for glare and a dilation note. Then the runner can return them to class as instructed by the school contact.
- If we are unable to perform an exam on a student, the Heiken office will issue a voucher, if eligible and in a funded county, to a local In-Office Provider, which will be faxed to the school contact to deliver to the student at a later date.
  - Insured students are not issued vouchers, and the parent would need to call the number on their insurance card for a participating provider near them.
- The school nurse will be notified immediately of any urgent medical referrals.
- An exam report for each child will be provided to the school contact either at the time of delivery of glasses, or faxed to the school. The report will include the child's prescription as well as any recommended referrals to a specialist for further evaluation of identified conditions.
  - Please note that Florida Heiken Children's Vision Program does not cover visits for further evaluation based on current available funding.
  - It is recommended that the parents seek care from Bascom Palmer Eye Institute locations, if convenient, or any licensed ophthalmologist.
  - If the parent is in need of resources to cover this visit, they can contact their local Lions Club for assistance.
- **EYEGASSES**
  - Glasses will be ordered for those students prescribed.
  - In 3-6 weeks of visit, a licensed Optician will contact the school designee to schedule a date to dispense the glasses directly to the children
  - The Optician will provide a list of the children receiving glasses in advance to expedite the process.
  - Please make arrangements for an area with a table and chairs for the optician to lay out and organize the glasses, and for the students to sign upon receipt of glasses.
  - The optician will adjust the glasses and teach the students about proper care and handling, as well as the importance of using their case when not wearing the glasses to protect them from damage.

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- The student will be provided a case for the glasses and a copy of the exam results, which is also a signed prescription, to provide to their parents.
  - Care instructions are also listed on the bottom of the Exam Results
- Copies of all exam results for all students will also be delivered to the school designee for their records, if not previously faxed or emailed.
- **Please note that according to Florida Statutes, glasses can only be dispensed directly to a student by a licensed Optician to ensure the correct prescription and fit.**
  - Glasses will **NOT** be left with the school staff for delivery to students.
  - If a student is absent on the day the Optician dispenses, the optician will return the glasses to the Heiken office to make arrangements for the parents to pick up the glasses (if in Miami-Dade County) from Miami Lighthouse for the Blind or to be mailed directly to the student's home.

If there are any quality assurance issues or questions you would like to discuss, please contact:

Florida Heiken Children's Vision Program Office and ask for the Director or Consulting Optometrist.



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## **PATIENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The physicians, employees, and staff who are involved in providing vision care services to you, sincerely believe in providing the highest quality of care and services available. We will always try to communicate with our patients, and to address their questions and concerns in a direct, informative way, while offering appropriate explanations and viable choices.

### **Patient Responsibilities**

- Keep all appointments and, when unable to do so for any reason, promptly notify your eye care provider and facility involved
- Provide accurate, complete, and honest information about present vision problems, past illnesses, hospitalizations, medications, and other matters that relate to your eye care needs
- Treat your eye care provider/staff/facility with respect and consideration and conduct yourself with decorum.
- Be considerate of the rights of other patients in the facility and assist in controlling noise and/or other disruptions
- Be respectful of the property of other patients in the facility
- Report any unexpected changes in your condition
- Ask questions if you do not understand your treatment or what is expected of you
- Follow the treatment plan recommended by your eye care provider

### **Patient Rights**

- Receive available vision care services regardless of race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age or disabilities
- Always be treated with courtesy and respect, dignity and regard
- Know what benefits you are due and what your responsibilities are for those benefits
- Know who is providing your vision care services
- Expect reasonable confidence, comfort, and safety in your environment
- Receive full information concerning the evaluation of your vision care needs
- Receive Auxiliary Aids when needed
- Receive prompt answers to your questions and/or requests
- Refuse any treatment, except as otherwise provided by law
- Receive an explanation if there is a need for referral to another vision care provider or medical care provider
- Report any complaints you may have about the quality of vision care you receive
- Request privacy information regarding your personal and vision care information within the normal guidelines of the law
- Have your records released to the professional person of your choice for any appropriate continuing care
- All patients must be given services, scheduling of appointments and accuracy of record keeping without regard to race, sex, color, national origin, religion, age or disability.

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## **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy**

The Florida Heiken Children's Vision Program is committed to complying with all applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). It is the policy of the Heiken Program to ensure equal opportunity for qualified individuals with disabilities for those enrolled in its program. Qualifications to be a provider will be based on the applicants ability to perform the essential function of the job. The Heiken Program will not discriminate against otherwise-qualified applicants in any of its contracted activities.

The Heiken Program will provide any reasonable accommodations to qualified enrolled applicants with a disability, as defined by the ADA, who have made the Heiken Program aware of their disability, provided that the accommodation does not impose an undue hardship on the Heiken Program.

The Heiken Program is also committed to not discriminate against any applicant because a family member or friend is covered under the protection of the ADA. The Heiken Program will follow any state or local law that provides individuals with disabilities greater protection.

This policy is neither exhaustive nor exclusive. The Heiken Program is committed to taking all other actions necessary to ensure equal opportunity for persons with disabilities in accordance with the ADA and all other applicable federal, state and local laws.

## **Equal Employment Opportunity Policy**

It is the policy of the Florida Heiken Children's Vision Program to provide equal rights to our providers based on qualifications (licensure, in compliance with state optometry practices and procedures, mal-practice insurance, of good moral character, disability and self evaluation protocols), job performance and abilities. The Heiken Program does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, pregnancy, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation or any other characteristic protected by applicable federal, state or local laws.

This policy governs all aspects of becoming part of the Heiken Program, but not limited to compensation, benefits, promotions, trainings, discipline and termination.

Contracted doctors and school officials with questions or concerns about any type of discrimination are encouraged to bring these issues to the attention of the Heiken program director.



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## PRIVACY PRACTICES

The Florida Heiken Children's Vision Program respects the privacy of protected health information and understands the importance of keeping this information confidential and secure. This policy describes how we protect the confidentiality of the protected health information we receive.

### Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA)

- The Florida Heiken Children's Vision Program maintains a comprehensive system to ensure compliance with applicable provisions of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). Since our goal is to provide the highest level of service to your County Public School Students, we want you to know that the Florida Heiken Children's Vision Program complies with the HIPAA directives. Our HIPAA privacy Policy contains procedures addressing the protection, use and disclosure of protected health information ("PHI"), accounting of disclosures, access by individuals and third parties to PHI, protection of PHI by contractors, business associate agreements and training of employees.

### How We Protect Personal Information

- We treat personal information securely and confidentially. We limit access to personal information to only those persons who need to know that information to provide support services to Heiken students. These persons are trained on the importance of safeguarding this information and must comply with our procedures and applicable laws. We employ strict physical, electronic and procedural security standards to protect personal information and maintain internal procedures to promote the integrity and accuracy of that information.
- All personal information and examination reports are kept in a HIPAA compliant cloud based electronic medical record health software. Any printed documents checked out by staff with access to these files and are returned prior to the close of each business day and shredded after all data is entered into the database. All files are digital and stored on a secure server to which only designated staff have password protected access. During normal business hours, staff will close and lock the door to the file storage area when it is not in use. Documentation of all staff members with access keys to this room will remain on file.
- Staff of the Florida Heiken Children's Vision Program will restrict conversations involving personal information to offices or closed general meetings of the staff. If visitors are present during general meetings the information will be held for a later meeting or the visitors may be excused so as not to disclose confidential information. Staff will not engage in confidential discussions in the hallways, restrooms, lunchrooms, classrooms, gardens or other public, common areas. Staff violating this policy will be disciplined up to and including termination.

### Disclosure of Personal Information

- We may use or disclose protected health information to the Public Schools Programs and medical professionals involved in our referral procedures. We may use or disclose protected health information when reporting to other



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agencies/organizations. Disclosure of protected health information to other medical professionals is done on a “need to know” basis for the sole purpose of referring for specialized treatment. Disclosure to other agencies/organizations is done following recommended reporting requirements. At no time will the Florida Heiken Children’s Vision Program disclose any personal information to the general public or any other entity. We may also disclose information as required by law.

- The Florida Heiken Children’s Vision Program will not permit staff to disclose personal information via the Internet, e-mail, or other electronic forms that are not guaranteed secure. The Agency will permit the use of facsimile machines to transmit information as well as regular mail services via the U.S. Postal Service or other carrier that may be engaged.

### **Individual Rights to Access and Correct Personal Information**

- We have procedures in place for individuals to have access to protected health information, and procedures in place to ensure the integrity of our information and for the timely correction of incorrect information.

### **Further Information**

- The Florida Heiken Children’s Vision Program may find it necessary to revise and update its HIPAA Privacy Policy from time to time as changes to the privacy regulations emerge, and will communicate any such changes to the County Public School System and our partnered agencies.
- The Florida Heiken Children’s Vision Program is an equal opportunity organization and does not discriminate against otherwise qualified persons on the basis of race, color, religion, ancestry, age, sex, marital status, national origin, disability or veteran status.

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