



# BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS STANDARDS OF PRACTICE FOR INDEPENDENT AGENCIES

**Effective February 1, 2023**

**Standard 9.3.6 effective May 1, 2023**

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## BOARD/GOVERNANCE STANDARDS 1-5

### PREAMBLE

Standards 1 through 5 of the Standards of Practice (“Standards”) establish minimum governance standards for each Big Brothers Big Sisters (“BBBS”) agency’s board of directors (the “board”). Board members are fiduciaries who have a legal responsibility to represent the best interests of the organization and those it serves by ensuring that the agency’s mission is executed through ethical and legal governance and management policies, and ensuring the agency has adequate resources to advance its mission. An effective, decision-making board can strengthen an agency in many ways.

These Standards address some of the governance roles and responsibilities of these mission-critical leaders, as well as of agency leaders. These include, but are not limited to:

- Carrying out the agency’s mission, vision, and accountability statement;
- Governance, which includes adopting and enforcing agency bylaws; ensuring compliance with local, state, and federal laws as well as with performance expectations, the Standards, and the Membership Affiliation Agreement; overseeing the Chief Executive Officer/Executive Director; and ongoing board member recruitment and retention, engagement, and development;
- Strategic planning and fund development;
- Governance and financial policies; and
- Finance procedures.

In addition to complying with these Standards, agencies must ensure that they remain familiar with and are following state and local laws and requirements, developments in federal laws, and any provisions required by grants.

### REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

The Standards provide more detail and guidance on the required policies and procedures. Sample documents are available on BBBS intranet. In summary, Standards 1-5 require the following plans, policies, and procedures:

- Bylaws (S.2.2)
- Board development (S.2.5)
- Board-approved strategy with accompanying written annual plan to achieve programmatic, financial, and fund development goals (S.3)
- Board-approved governance and finance policies (S.4):
  - Governance policies, including succession plan and code of conduct (S.4.1)
  - Executive limitations policies (S.4.2)
  - Finance policies (S.4.3)
  - Risk management policies (S.4.4)
- Finance committee-approved (and/or board-approved) finance procedures (S.5)

## STANDARD 1.

### **Vision, Mission, and Accountability**

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- S.1 Each agency must have the same mission, vision, and accountability statement as that set by the Nationwide Leadership Council (“NLC”) and the Big Brothers Big Sisters of America (“BBBSA”) board.
- **Mission:** Create and support one-to-one mentoring relationships that ignite the power and promise of youth.
  - **Vision:** All youth achieve their full potential.
  - **Accountability:** By partnering with parents/guardians, volunteers, and others in the community we are accountable for each child in our program achieving:
    - Higher aspirations, greater confidence, and better relationships
    - Avoidance of risky behaviors
    - Educational success

## STANDARD 2.

### **Board of Directors’ Roles and Responsibilities**

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- S.2.1 Governance: Each agency must have a board that is charged with governance of the agency
- S.2.2 Bylaws: Each board must develop, approve, and operate in accordance with written bylaws that comply with state nonprofit corporate laws. Bylaws should include, at a minimum:

[\[Sample Bylaws Document\]](#)

1. Purpose, BBBSA-approved name, and agency service area
2. Governing authority of the board
  - Function, roles, and responsibilities
  - Definition of fiduciary duties
  - Authority to manage corporation and its finances
  - Process for oversight of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) / Executive Director (ED) and provisions for delegated powers
3. Meetings
  - Number per year
  - Attendance expectations for members (including whether members may participate electronically or telephonically)
  - Provision to call an emergency board meeting
  - Parliamentary procedure (rules to govern meetings)

4. Board membership
  - Qualifications
  - Number (minimum-maximum range) of board members
  - Terms and term limits (if any)
  - Process for board member election
  - Procedure for resignation or removal of a board member or officer
  - Procedure for filling vacancies
5. Non-discrimination provision
6. Provisions for the existence of other advisory boards, if applicable (e.g., honorary trustees, satellite advisory boards), and what requirements/ authority these ancillary groups have
7. Voting
  - Define quorum
  - Whether ex-officio members are permitted, and any authority
  - Electronic voting provision (whether votes may be conducted electronically)
  - Hung board decisions
8. Officers
  - Officer titles, qualifications, and description of roles
  - Terms of office and number of consecutive terms permitted (term limits)
  - Process for selecting officers
9. Committees
  - Standing committees—description of authority and roles
  - Ad hoc committees—how they are determined and a provision for them to exist, if desired
  - How a committee may be created or dissolved
10. Indemnification
11. Process for amending bylaws
12. Books and records
  - Requirement that books, records, and minutes are kept, and where
13. Procedure for corporate dissolution and distribution of assets
14. Finances
  - Fiscal year
  - Contractual and loan authority



S.2.3 Compliance: Each board must certify, in writing through the self-assessment verification letter, to BBBSA on an annual basis that the agency is:

1. Incorporated and in good standing as a not-for-profit entity in the state in which the agency's corporate office is located and (if applicable) qualified to do business as a foreign corporation in any other state(s) within its service community area;
2. Operating in compliance with applicable federal, state, and local laws, including those of the municipalities, counties, or states in which the agency's operations exist, including operating in compliance with applicable federal, state, and local charitable registration requirements and fundraising ordinances;
3. Retaining its not-for-profit tax-exempt status with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) as a 501(c)(3) entity;
4. Developing, reviewing, and updating (as necessary) all written plans, policies, and procedures that require board approval, including, but not limited to, those required in these Standards; and
5. Operating in compliance with the terms of the Membership Affiliation Agreement with BBBSA and the Standards.

S.2.4 Chief Executive Officer/Executive Director oversight: The board is responsible for CEO/ED oversight and executive leadership succession, as specified in the agency's bylaws. This includes, at a minimum:

1. Maintaining an up-to-date, written job description for the CEO/ED that clearly defines the CEO/ED's authority, role, and responsibilities
  - Effective with the implementation of this Standard, the job description must include the requirement that the CEO/ED have, at least, a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university
    - The Board must ensure that the CEO/ED has, at least, a bachelor's degree as set forth above. Under extenuating circumstances, the board may submit a candidate who does not have a bachelor's degree to BBBSA for an exemption approval; in those rare situations, however, the CEO/ED candidate must have at least 10 years of relevant work experience.
  - The CEO/ED must be a full-time employee of the agency, based on the number of hours identified by the agency as constituting full-time status. Other than in the case of an interim CEO/ED, the CEO/ED cannot be an independent contractor.
    - Pursuant to Standard 2.4.3, an interim CEO/ED cannot serve for more than 90 days without BBBSA's approval
2. Evaluating the CEO/ED's compensation (per S.6.3.3) and the CEO/ED's job performance through a regularly scheduled, annual, written performance review process against agreed-upon performance goals that include, at a minimum:
  - Compliance with the Membership Affiliation Agreement and the Standards

- Metrics based on the agency’s written, board-approved strategy and annual plan required in Standard 3
3. Implementing the following in the event of a change of executive leadership:
    - Notifying BBBSA in writing within 10 business days of a vacancy in executive leadership, the naming of an interim CEO/ED, or the hiring of a new CEO/ED;
    - Ensuring the CEO/ED position is not vacant for more than 90 days without notification being provided to BBBSA;
    - Confirming that the new CEO/ED completes BBBSA’s online orientation curriculum for new CEOs/EDs within the first 90 days of employment.
- S.2.5 Board development: Each agency must have a board-approved, multi-year, written board development plan that is implemented by the board and designated agency staff and that addresses, at a minimum:
1. Clarity of roles and responsibilities relative to the implementation of the board development plan;
  2. Practices for the identification and recruitment of potential new board members that include using sources and strategies that yield qualified, diverse board candidates in the selection pool;
  3. Orientation process for new board members;
  4. Board training plan including BBBSA’s cultural humility and youth protection courses or equivalent as outlined in Standard 9.3
  5. Succession plan for rotation or resignation of officers; and
  6. Annual written evaluation of individual and collective board performance, with summary results presented to the board.

## STANDARD 3.

### **Strategic and Annual Planning**

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- S.3 Each agency must have a written, board-approved strategy (which may take the form of a strategic plan, framework, or other similar structure) and a written annual plan to achieve programmatic, financial, and fund development goals. Strategies may be localized, but should not contradict with national BBBSA strategies and direction. The fund development component of the annual plan must identify board and agency staff roles and responsibilities and include measurable fundraising goals that are applied to multiple revenue sources to sustain a diversified funding base.

## STANDARD 4.

### **Board-Approved Governance and Finance Policies**

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Each agency must have board-approved, written policies that are reviewed by the board at least every three years, or as policies are revised. The policies must include the following components, at minimum:

#### S.4.1 Governance policies

1. Written succession plan
  - Set forth a plan in the event of CEO/ED resignation, termination, or leave of absence
2. Code of ethics/Code of conduct [[Sample Code of Ethics/Code of Conduct](#)]
3. Code of ethics may encompass other policies noted below in S.4.3 to S.4.8.
4. Whistleblower and disposition of complaints
  - Purpose: Form 990 & Sarbanes-Oxley
  - May be two separate policies. Whistleblower policy must include nonretaliation provisions and/or a reference to the retaliation policy in the employee handbook
5. Conflict of interest
  - Purpose: Form 990 and state nonprofit statutes
6. Record integrity, retention, and destruction
  - Purpose: Form 990 & Sarbanes-Oxley
  - Must include record retention and destruction schedules in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws
  - Must include document litigation hold procedure and employees' obligation to abide by such a request
7. Lobbying and political activity
  - Purpose: Form 990 & IRS Code 501(c)(3)
  - Policy must include prohibition of campaign activities (e.g., candidate support, electioneering)
8. Board members and agency staff serving as volunteer Bigs
9. See Standard 9.9
10. Fund development
  - Must include guidelines concerning solicitations and use of funds

#### S.4.2 Executive limitations policies

1. Expenditure approval authority
  - Must include thresholds for multiple signatures and board approval
2. Lending and lines of credit

- Must address who has the authority to commit the agency to loans or take out lines of credit on behalf of the agency

#### S.4.3 Finance policies

1. Role of the board and/or board finance or finance related committees
  - Must include the role of an appropriate board committee (e.g., finance or audit) or the board where such committee is not practical, and a high-level process regarding the committee's (or board's) review of agency financials, auditor selection and audit review, and Form 990 review. The policy must provide that the Form 990 be approved by the full board.
2. Audit
  - All BBBSA agencies (of which the minimum operating threshold is an annual budget of \$200,000) are required to have an annual financial statement audit complete and submitted to BBBSA within nine months of the agency's close of corporate fiscal year. The policy should address that a minimum of every five years some form of rotation (personnel or firm) should be considered.
3. Liquidity policy
  - Must include reserves policy, line of credit policy (if applicable), approach to cash flow management, etc.
4. Gift acceptance/donations policy
  - Must include:
    - Types of gifts the organization will and will not accept
    - Process for valuing and recognizing in-kind donations in accounting records
    - Requirement that contributions comply with donor intent
    - Acknowledgement of contributions per applicable tax code requirements
    - Decision-making process when acceptance of a gift is not otherwise covered in the policy
5. Investment policy
  - Must be in alignment with state Uniform Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act (UPMIFA) laws. Should also address endowed funds, if applicable.
6. Capital expenditure policy
  - Must include threshold for capitalization
7. Procurement policy
  - Must include process for purchasing at various thresholds. If the organization receives federal funding, this should align with the Uniform Guidance procurement rules (Uniform Guidance 2 CFR 200)
8. Notification to BBBSA regarding financial standing
  - Policy addressing who within the organization is responsible for notifying BBBSA in the event of insolvency, intent to file bankruptcy, etc.



9. Credit card policy

- Must outline which levels of staff have corporate cards, receipt policy, and review of CEO/ED expenses

10. Board expense reimbursement policy

- Must indicate the types of expenses eligible for reimbursement and the process/required documentation

S.4.4 Risk management policies

1. Technology security policies and workplace practices on data privacy, confidentiality, and security

- Confidentiality and privacy/security (including cyber security) of personnel, donor, financial, and program participant data

2. Insurance coverage

- Insurance plan specifies all insurance coverage secured, including accident, agency auto, directors and officers, errors and omissions, sexual abuse and molestation, general liability, property, and worker's compensation
- There may be other insurance policies that are appropriate for the board to consider. At a minimum, agencies must have \$1,000,000 of sexual abuse and molestation coverage, which may be included in the agency's errors and omissions form. This may not be sufficient for some agencies, however, and boards are strongly encouraged to consult with insurance brokers on appropriate coverage levels. Boards are also strongly encouraged to consider umbrella insurance policies.

3. Crisis management policy

- Must include practices to address likely situations based on BBBS operations. Must include crisis communication procedures.

4. Child protection policies and procedures

- Must include local child protection policies and procedures that reflect the Standards, including immediate reporting of any critical child safety incident, as required in S.9.8. The document may be in the agency's program manual.

5. Continuity of operations plan

- Must include resources, actions, and procedures for use in the event of a major disruption of services

## STANDARD 5.

### Finance Procedures

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Each agency should have a financial procedures manual that is reviewed by the board finance committee, or if no such committee exists, by an appropriate board committee or by the full board annually. At a minimum, the manual should encompass the topics below.

S.5.1 Practice for maintaining compliance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP)

Note: the organization may operate on a cash or modified accrual basis throughout the year, but year-end audited financial statements must be on an accrual basis in alignment with GAAP

S.5.2 Practices for separation of duties for internal controls

Must outline how separation/segregation of duties is addressed and indicate mitigating controls where segregation of duties is not available

S.5.3 Practice for budget development and approval

Must note the timing and roles of the budget process, and indicate that the budget should be approved before the start of the fiscal year

S.5.4 Practice for monthly review of financial statements

- Must include review of month-end financials by management monthly and by member(s) of governance at least quarterly
- Suggested month-end financials include a statement of activities with budget to actual, statement of financial position, and a cash management tool or report

S.5.5 Processes for key finance functions (optional)

May include processes for recording and managing revenues, expenses, cash management, fixed assets, and month-end close

## HUMAN RESOURCES STANDARD 6

### PREAMBLE

The requirements in Standard 6 are based on federal employment laws, as well as on best practices that are expected of best-in-class nonprofit organizations such as Big Brothers Big Sisters. Agencies must ensure that they remain familiar with and are following state and local laws and requirements, developments in federal laws and best practices, and any employment-related provisions required by grants (e.g., a prohibition on distracted driving, seatbelt use).

### REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

Standard 6 provides more detail on the required HR documents. There are sample documents available on BBBS intranet. To summarize, Standard 6 requires the following documents:

- Board-approved employee handbook (Standard 6.1)
- Written diversity and inclusion recruitment plan (Standard 6.2.2)
- Job descriptions (Standard 6.2.3)
- Onboarding schedule (Standard 6.2.5)
- Written compensation and benefits philosophy statement (Standard 6.3.1)

## STANDARD 6.

### **Human Resources**

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Each agency must develop policies and processes, as set forth in this Standard, that support attracting, training, assessing, and retaining agency staff.

#### S.6.1 Board-approved employee handbook:

[\[Sample Employee Handbook\]](#)

Each agency must have a board-approved employee handbook that is reviewed by the board at least every three years or as the handbook is revised. The employee handbook must include, at a minimum, each of the following policies and procedures, as customized for the agency:

1. Commitment to diversity and inclusion statement
  - A statement of your agency's strong commitment to valuing diversity and inclusiveness in your workplace, including with respect to the agency board, staff, volunteers, youth, and families.
2. ADA compliance policy
  - This includes a reasonable accommodations procedure and interactive process (discussion with the affected employee) if an accommodation is requested
3. Non-discrimination policy
  - A declaration that the agency will not engage in or tolerate unlawful discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, pregnancy, or any other

federal, state, or local protected class, which may include gender identity or expression, marital status, sexual orientation, veteran status, disability, and/or genetic information

- The policy must apply to decisions including recruitment, screening and hiring, compensation and administration of benefits, training, development, promotions, terminations, layoffs, and all other terms and conditions of employment or board membership
4. Non-harassment policy (including sexual harassment)
    - A prohibition on harassment, including sexual harassment; examples of harassment; and an explanation of how to report policy violations
  5. Policy prohibiting retaliation
    - A policy that prohibits unlawful retaliation against any person who makes a complaint of unlawful discrimination, harassment, or retaliation; raises a work-related concern or complaint of illegal or unethical conduct; or serves as a witness or participates in an investigatory process
  6. Safe and secure workplace
    - Provisions that outline the agency's procedures for protecting the safety of the workplace
  7. Nepotism policy
    - Policy that covers: (1) whether family members may simultaneously work for the agency, and if so, whether one family member may supervise another; and (2) whether a family member may serve on the board while another family member works for the agency at the same time
  8. Social media and communications policy
    - An internal social media and communications policy that addresses the following: a policy on the use of agency electronic communications systems, including computer and other electronic devices, the Internet, and e-mail systems; the handling of confidential information on electronic communications systems; and social networking guidelines
  9. Confidentiality policy
    - Must address staff members' responsibility to maintain confidential agency, client, donor, employee, volunteer, financial, or business information. Should reference the data privacy, confidentiality, and security risk management policy (S.4.4.1)
    - Must specifically provide that employees are required to maintain confidentiality of such data after their employment ends
  10. Criminal background screening policy
    - An explanation of your agency's background check process for pre- and post-employment checks, including whether you will perform layered checks
  11. Record retention and destruction policy
    - A document retention policy that incorporates the record integrity, retention, and destruction governance policy (S4.1.5)

- Must outline an employee's obligation to maintain documents in accordance with the agency's document retention schedule
12. Optional sections. You may wish to include some or all of the following provisions in the employee handbook, as well as other provisions and policies not listed below; however, these are not required:
- Introduction: BBBS history, mission and vision, and governance structure
  - Training: The Learning Exchange
  - Job performance and reviews
  - Workplace attendance and hours
  - Remote work
  - Time off
  - Leaves of absence
  - Pay
  - Benefits and insurance (if applicable to your agency)
  - Frequency used acronyms
  - Handbook/policy attestation section

#### S.6.2 Recruitment and hiring standards

1. Personnel records and Form I-9
  - Agencies must maintain all employee personnel files in a confidential, secured location, including the following:
    - Personnel files include all pre- and post-employment related paperwork and information. This paperwork must be maintained in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws.
    - Form I-9 must be maintained in accordance with all federal, state, and local laws; kept separate and secure from personnel files; and the information therein kept confidential. Agencies must abide by retention and destruction rules specific to Form I-9.
    - Employee medical information (including records related to FMLA, ADA, HIPAA requests, etc.) must be maintained separately from the personnel file and Form I-9.
2. Diversity and inclusion recruitment plan
  - A written plan to address and document your recruitment strategy and outreach process to ensure that, whenever possible, you are reaching and hiring qualified, diverse candidates (including for the CEO/ED and board)
3. Job descriptions
  - Job descriptions that clearly state employees' duties, qualifications, essential job functions, physical requirements, competencies, and Fair Labor Standards Act ("FLSA") status and include the following requirements:

- As set forth in Standard 2.4.1, the CEO/ED must have, at least, a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university (unless the requirements of Standard 2.4-01 are met)
- Staff members who are taking on roles in enrollment/matching and/or match support ("professional program agency staff") must have a high school diploma/GED equivalent and meet one of the following criteria:
  - A documented bachelor's degree, from an accredited college or university, in a field that is determined by the agency to be appropriate for the position(s), or candidates shall be within six months of degree completion;
  - A documented associate degree or two years of higher education experience, from an accredited college or university in a field that is determined by the agency to be appropriate for the position(s) and two years of relevant work experience in related fields, such as social work, counseling, social services, child development, or other related fields as defined by the agency; or
  - Four years of relevant work experience in related fields, such as social work, counseling, social services, child development, or other related fields as defined by the agency.

#### 4. Background checks

- A criminal history record check is required of all agency staff and board members. The policy should include, at minimum:
  - All applicable federal, state, and local laws regulating the use of criminal history records should be followed
  - Agencies must assess whether a layered check is necessary for board members and agency staff
  - The background check will be repeated at least every three years during the staff or board member's tenure
  - Agency staff and board members will be disqualified for:
    - Failure to complete the application and screening process;
    - History of sexual abuse of children;
    - Conviction for any crime in which children were involved;
    - History of any sexually exploitive behavior;
    - Termination from a paid or volunteer position caused by misconduct with a child; or
    - Conviction of a crime including fraud or financial misconduct

#### 5. Onboarding schedule

- All agency staff must have a written employee onboarding schedule that must be maintained in the employee personnel file and that must include, at minimum:
  - Overview of the employee handbook

- Training schedule
- Local agency policies and procedures upon hire [[Sample Onboarding Checklist](#)]

### S.6.3 Compensation and benefits standards

1. A written compensation and benefits philosophy statement
  - This commitment statement summarizes the way your agency compensates staff monetarily and through agency benefits
2. Competitive salary ranges
  - Competitive salary ranges for all paid agency staff. Ranges should be based on regional/local and industry ranges for compensation and benefits of comparable positions.
  - It is a best practice that, at least once every three years, the CEO/ED review salary data for all other agency staff in comparison to the regional/local market
3. Salary information for CEOs/EDs and key employees (Form 990)
  - Annually, pursuant to IRS Form 990 Section B-15, agencies must compile and review salary data from similar nonprofits in their service area for the CEO/ED and any other officers or key employees of the agency
  - CEO/ED: The board must conduct an annual review and approval of the CEO/ED's salary. To satisfy the Form 990 requirements, this must include a review of the market salary data, consideration by the board, and a vote by that board that is captured in the board minutes.
  - Key employees: The board must conduct an annual review of key employees' compensation and review of market data, although the CEO/ED, rather than the board, may approve that compensation

### S.6.4 Performance management and training

1. Performance reviews
  - All paid agency staff must have an annual, written evaluation of their job performance that includes one or more of the following metrics: goals, objectives, and/or core competencies
    - [\[Sample Document for Exempt Positions\]](#)
    - [\[Sample Document for Non-Exempt Positions\]](#)
    - [\[Sample Goal-Setting Document\]](#)
2. Staff training [[Link to Training Reference Chart](#)]
  - All required training completions must be documented in the personnel file either electronically or with hard copies.
  - All agency staff, both paid and unpaid, including interns, must successfully complete any required, assigned training including, but not limited to:
    - BBBSA's online cultural humility training, or a course with the same objectives, within 30 days of hire or placement with the agency.



- The youth protection training requirements outlined in Standard 9.
- All agency staff responsible for managing the program function, supervising program staff, and/or conducting quality assurance reviews must complete all BBBS' Program Manager Certification online courses within 90 days of hire/placement.



## PROGRAM STANDARDS 7-22

### PREAMBLE

For the purposes of these Program Standards (S.7-S.22), a match is defined as a one-to-one mentoring relationship between a youth and an older mentor, through which the matched parties spend consistent, significant time together, and which is monitored and supported by professional program agency staff (as defined in S.6.2.3). The following Standards are intended for programs that serve youth under 18 years of age.

A match may be carried out in different settings.

1. **Community-Based ("CB")** – Matches meet in the community and/or interact within any video conferencing platform that is not observable by BBBS.
2. **Site-Based ("SB")** – Matches only meet at a designated site (e.g., school, workplace, agency-approved video conference platform, or other site) that is observable (in real time or in review) by BBBS.
3. **Site-Based Facilitated ("SBF")** – Matches only meet at a designated site (e.g., school, workplace, or other site) or within an agency-approved video conferencing platform AND a BBBS staff member is present AND the match interaction<sup>1</sup> is observable and interruptible by BBBS.
4. **Site-Based Plus ("SB+")** - A hybrid program where matches meet in both CB and SB settings. Any match that will be permitted to meet outside of a designated site must follow all CB enrollment and match support guidelines, even if the primary meeting location will be the designated site.

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<sup>1</sup> Match interaction is referring to the match meeting at a designated site.

## STANDARD 7.

### **Federation-Wide Information Management System**

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- S.7 Agencies must use the BBBS federation-wide information management system for all program and quality assurance functions.

## STANDARD 8.

### **Program Manual**

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- S.8.1 Each agency must have a written program manual (that is available to all agency staff and annually reviewed by agency staff) that contains the policies and procedures to be used for implementing all one-to-one services. At a minimum, the program manual must contain written procedures that address Program Standards 7-22, document retention and confidentiality, as it pertains to program related records.
1. Federation-wide Information Management System (Standard 7);
  2. Child Safety and Youth Protection Policies (Standard 9);
  3. Non-Discrimination (Standard 10);
  4. Inquiry and Orientation (Standard 11);
  5. Child Enrollment (Standard 12)
  6. Volunteer Enrollment (Standard 13);
  7. Pre-match Training (Standard 14);
  8. Pre-matching and Matching Process (Standard 15);
  9. Big Brothers Big Sisters Outcomes System (Standard 16);
  10. The Youth Outcomes Development Plan (Standard 17);
  11. Match Support and Match Supervisory Schedule (Standard 18);
  12. Quality assurance (Standard 19);
  13. Match Closure (Standard 20);
  14. Volunteer and Youth Reenrollment (Standard 21);
  15. Innovation (Standard 22); and
  16. Document Retention and Confidentiality
- S.8.2 When applicable, each agency shall have written policies and procedures that address non-one-to-one programmatic services. Policies and procedures on child safety and youth protection for non-one-to one services are required.

## STANDARD 9.

### **Child Safety and Youth Protection Policies**

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The agency's program manual and risk management plan contain written, board-approved policies and procedures that address, at a minimum, the following:

S.9.1 Policy on obtaining a criminal history record check. A criminal history record check is required of all volunteer Bigs, board members, agency staff, and non-mentoring volunteers who come into meaningful contact with children

1. Volunteer Bigs. Record checks are required:

- At time of initial enrollment (S.13);
- While an active Big: updated, layered criminal history check at least every three years; and
- At time of reenrollment (S.21)

2. Adherence to all applicable federal, state, and local laws regarding the use of criminal history records; and that

3. Potential volunteer Bigs and volunteers who have been accepted as volunteer Bigs will be disqualified for:

- Failure to complete the application and screening process;
- Past history of sexual abuse of children;
- Conviction for any crime in which children were involved;
- History of any sexually exploitative behavior, and
- Termination from a paid or volunteer position caused by misconduct with a child

S.9.2 Policy on transporting children. The policy must include, at a minimum:

1. Agency staff document in the volunteer's file verification of appropriate licensure and insurance held by the volunteer, if they will be transporting the child;
2. Documentation of verification of appropriate licensure and insurance held by agency staff if they will be transporting children; and
3. Safety requirements in accordance with state laws (e.g., seatbelt use, car seat use, prohibitions on the use of cell phones, use of alcohol or other drugs prior to driving a child)

S.9.3 Policy outlining mandatory requirements surrounding child safety and youth protection training and documentation for volunteers, parents/guardians, and all BBBS staff and board members. [\[Link to Training Reference Chart\]](#)

The policy must include, at a minimum:

1. All training completions must be documented in the appropriate constituent file either electronically or with hard copies.
2. All agency staff, both paid and unpaid, including interns, must successfully complete BBBSA's *Fundamentals of Youth Protection* online training within 30 days of hire.

- Program staff and program supervisors must complete *Fundamentals of Youth Protection* within 30 days of hire and prior to carrying out work that requires independent, professional decision-making in service delivery, such as interviewing or conducting match support, whichever comes first.
- 3. Program staff, including program supervisors, and CEOs/EDs that perform program supervisory functions must complete BBBSA's online parent education, *Your Child's Personal Safety*, within 30 days of hire.
- 4. Program staff, including program supervisors, and CEOs/EDs that perform program supervisory functions must complete *BBBSA's Introduction to Trauma-Informed Care for Program Staff* within 30 days of hire.
- 5. All program staff must continually build their knowledge and understanding of youth protection and must at a minimum complete at least one new youth protection training annually. Recommended youth protection trainings will be available on BBBSA's learning management system, and agencies can refer to the BBBS intranet for resources outside of BBBSA.
- 6. All parents/guardians must be provided youth protection educational materials and be provided log in access to the BBBS learning management system to access youth protection training<sup>2</sup>. Parents/guardians with youth enrolling in Community-Based or Site-Based Plus programs must complete BBBSA's child sexual abuse prevention training for parents, *Your Child's Personal Safety*, or equivalent prior to their child being matched with a volunteer.
- 7. Volunteers, Parent/Guardians, youth, and children must be informed about the organization's Ground Rules/Program Rules and Volunteer Code of Conduct as outlined in Standard 14.
- 8. Volunteer Bigs must receive child safety and youth protection training as outlined in Standard 14 prior to matching.
- 9. All children and youth enrolling in a Big Brothers Big Sisters program must receive personal safety materials, *You Have a Right to Feel Safe and/or Healthy Relationships for Teens*, or equivalent prior to matching.
- 10. Board members must complete BBBSA's *Fundamentals of Youth Protection* online training, or equivalent within 60 days of initial date of service or prior to having interaction with children, whichever comes first.

**The following will be used to determine if a course is equivalent:**

**Topics Covered in Fundamentals of Youth Protection**

1. Defining Types of Child Abuse
2. The Dynamics of Child Sexual Abuse
3. Disclosures of Child Abuse and Why Children and Youth May Not Disclose
4. Historical Declines in the US.
5. Roles and Responsibilities
6. Reporting Suspected Abuse
7. The Critical Roles of Caring Adults in Preventing Violence and Healing Trauma

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<sup>2</sup> Parents oriented prior to implementation date must be offered trainings

**Topics Covered in Your Child's Personal Safety**

1. Definition of child sexual abuse
2. The Importance of Personal Boundaries
3. The Grooming Process
4. Responding to Disclosures of Child Sexual Abuse (including reporting abuse)
5. How to Reduce the Risk of Abuse Occurring
6. Big Brothers Big Sisters Child Protection System

**Topics Covered in Youth Protection Booklets for Youth**

**For Kids ages 5-10**

1. The Role of Adults in Keeping Children Safe
  - a. Defining and Identifying Trusted Adults
2. The Difference Between Surprises and Secrets
3. Rules for Online Safety
4. Rules for Real-World Safety
5. Sample Situations to Discuss with an Adult
6. Who to Contact at BBBS

**For Youth Ages 11+**

1. Big Brothers Big Sisters Role in Healthy Relationships
2. Qualities of Healthy Relationships
  - a. Respect
  - b. Boundaries (defining and how to set them)
  - c. Letting Youth Be Themselves and Act Their Age
  - d. Listening without Judgement
  - e. Understanding Consent
  - f. Handling Disagreements without Hurting Anyone
  - g. Feeling Safe from Harm
3. Relationships Online and In Real Life
4. Responding to Unhealthy Relationships
5. Sample Situations to Discuss with an Adult
6. Internet Tips for Teens
7. Who to Contact at BBBS

S.9.4 Policy on children visiting volunteer's home.

If deemed mission-critical programmatically, the affiliate policy must include the following written requirements at a minimum:

- A waiting period of a minimum of 3 months before a child is allowed to visit a volunteer's home;
- Documented pre-approval by parents/guardians and professional staff prior to allowing the child/youth visiting a volunteer's home to begin occurring;
- A documented professional assessment of healthy relationship development between a match before a child is allowed to visit a volunteer's home;
- Procedures for regular professional staff monitoring of safety levels and frequency concerning children visiting volunteers' homes throughout the life of the match.



S.9.5 Policy on overnight visits. BBBSA agencies must have a policy that prohibits overnight visits generally. Exceptions to this policy are permitted in cases where one of the following specific criteria have been met AND the required authorizations have been documented:

- There is genuine concern for the safety of a child returning to their own home (emergency circumstances)
- OR
- An event is formally designated by the agency as one that (1) is of a nature to provide an exceptionally significant developmental or educational benefit to a child or youth, and (2) that the event would not be possible without the Big accompanying the Little (a college visit for example)

Authorization of an exception to the policy prohibiting overnight visits may be made by the agency's CEO/Executive Director or designee after the following steps have been taken:

- Documented confirmation that the Big/Little relationship has been in place for at least one year
- Documented professional assessment of healthy relationship development between match parties with no violations of agency policy including code of conduct
- Documented pre-approval by parents/guardian, youth, and professional staff with the exception of an emergent circumstance (see above)
- Documented plans for privacy in: sleeping, changing clothes, bathing/showering
- Documented consideration of reasonable alternatives
- Documented professional staff monitoring for any safety concerns following the event

S.9.6 Policy on firearms and weapons. The policy must include, at a minimum:

1. Guidelines which will be reviewed with and agreed upon by the volunteer Big and the parent(s)/guardian(s), and documented in the match file covering, at a minimum:
  - Weapons, firearms, and ammunition will be made inaccessible at all times to a child while in the volunteer Big's care, unless participating in specific, approved activity(ies) which the parent/guardian and volunteer Big have approved in advance, and such approval is documented in the match file (e.g., hunter safety courses)
  - In the case where a law enforcement official is required to carry a weapon at all times as a condition of their employment, agency professionals must document the weapon related job requirements as well as parent notification of the requirements and their approval of the condition prior to match.
2. Requirements that any firearms and/or weapons ownership by the volunteer Big applicant be:
  - Disclosed to BBBS agency staff at enrollment and throughout the life of the match;
  - Disclosed to the child's parent/guardian by agency staff; and

- The volunteer Big must attest to the fact that any weapons, firearms or ammunition ownership are licensed, permitted, registered, and handled in accordance with all applicable state and federal laws.

S.9.7 Policy on digital technology and social networking. The policy must address, at a minimum:

1. Confidentiality regarding personal and identifying information about the Little and their family.
2. Privacy controls and settings to restrict accessibility of the Little to only age-appropriate content when using volunteer's device and recommended privacy settings for volunteers.
3. Child safety including processes for reporting social media misuse or content that may endanger the Little's health, safety or well-being.
4. Approved communication methods (MatchConnect, email, text, phone, mail, video conferencing, social media) between matches within varying program types.

S.9.8 Policy on mandatory child abuse and exploitation reporting. The policy must include, at a minimum:

1. All employees, volunteers, and board members of a BBBSA agency are required to report any suspected or reported incident of child abuse, neglect or exploitation. Agencies must have a policy regarding the reporting protocols for volunteer Bigs, board members, staff, and non-mentoring volunteers for mandatory reporting of all suspected child abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
2. Within 24 hours of initial notification, BBBS agencies are required to report to BBBSA and to law enforcement or child protection authorities any **reported** (including reports received by anonymous or third-party sources) or **suspected** incident, allegation, investigation, or civil proceeding that may constitute abuse or exploitation committed against a child under 18, or a vulnerable adult as defined by state or federal laws, where the misconduct of any of the following individuals is involved:
  - Current or former volunteer Big;
  - Current or former board member;
  - Current or former staff person; or
  - Current or former other adult associated with Big Brothers Big Sisters (other than the parent/guardian)
3. Mandatory critical incident reporting to BBBSA includes information obtained from third parties or anonymous sources. Required reports include the following, at a minimum:
  - Sexual misconduct against a child or in the presence of a child that may include contact or non-contact behaviors of a criminal nature;
  - Physical violence against a child, or in the presence of a child;
  - Behavior that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child;
  - Neglect of a child; or
  - Any other incident the agency deems critical

4. Agency policies address protocols for mandatory reporting to law enforcement or child protective services in instances where the alleged perpetrator of abuse is not associated with Big Brothers Big Sisters (i.e. suspected abuse of a Little or other child where the alleged abuser may be a family member, friend, stranger). **Reports of this nature are not required to be reported to BBBSA.**
- S.9.9 Policy on board members and staff serving as volunteer Bigs. The policy must include, at a minimum:
1. Whether current board members and agency staff are allowed to serve as volunteer Bigs, and if allowed, establishes procedures to provide for agency staff to remain objective in decision-making, in the best interests of the child served
- S.9.10 Policy on the use of alcohol, tobacco products, and illicit and legal drugs or substances. The policy must include, at a minimum:
1. A prohibition on volunteer Bigs being under the influence of, or using, any substance (including alcohol, illicit drugs, and legal drugs, including medical marijuana, “legalized” marijuana, and prescription medications) that could potentially affect their judgment, driving, reaction time, or otherwise jeopardize a child’s safety and wellbeing while the Little is in the volunteer Big’s care or company

## STANDARD 10.

### **Non-Discrimination**

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- S.10 All BBBS participants, including youth, families, volunteers, board and staff serving as volunteer Bigs are not excluded on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, color, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, citizenship status, veteran status, or disability.

## STANDARD 11.

### **Inquiry and Orientation**

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Effective inquiry process and orientation for volunteer Bigs, children, and parents or guardians are critical steps in building and sustaining enduring match relationships. Orientation provides an opportunity to share basic program information, determine levels of interest, and assess the appropriateness of involvement of all potential participants. This information can be provided in-person, electronically, virtually and/or via mail.

- S.11.1 For **volunteers**, orientation includes:
- Description of BBBS/agency’s mission, programs, benefits, and purpose of the program
  - Description of the organization’s dedication to child well-being and safety as its paramount goal and prevailing culture





- Demographics of the children served by the agency.
- Volunteer eligibility criteria and commitment expectations
- Review of the enrollment process steps, including the agency’s right to accept or deny participants, or close a match at any time

S.11.2 For **parents/guardians**, orientation includes:

- Description of BBBS/agency’s mission, programs, benefits, and purpose of the program
- Description of the organization’s dedication to child well-being and safety as its paramount goal and prevailing culture
- Child eligibility criteria and commitment expectations, emphasizing the importance of parental involvement
- Review of the enrollment process steps, including the agency’s right to accept or deny participants, or close a match at any time

## STANDARD 12.

### Child Enrollment

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The child enrollment process helps to determine the eligibility and suitability of the child for the agency’s programs. The process gathers the necessary information to enable professional agency staff to prepare recommendations based upon the child’s strengths, interests, and needs; the ability of the child to form a committed relationship with a volunteer Big; and the parent/guardian’s ability to partner with a volunteer Big and the agency.

Parent and child interviews can be conducted in-person or virtually. Criteria for virtual interviews include the ability for agency staff to both see and hear applicants during the interview process. Agencies should use their professional judgement to determine if they were adequately able to observe verbal and nonverbal cues during the video conferencing interview, and assess if an in-person meeting to gather more information is needed. Agencies must allow for reasonable accommodations for applicants and staff in alignment with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

	<b>Child Enrollment Process</b>	<b>Community-Based/Site-Based Plus</b>	<b>School/Site-Based</b>
S.12.1	Child meets the agency’s written eligibility requirements	Required	Required
S.12.2	Application with electronic or written consent from parent(s)/guardian(s) for the child to participate in a Big Brothers Big Sisters program including appropriate releases (e.g., media, confidentiality,	Required	Required

	MatchConnect)		
S.12.3	Conduct an in-person or virtual interview with child	Required	Required
S.12.4	Conduct an in-person or virtual interview with parent/guardian	Required	Not required The parent(s)/guardian(s) and school must be given the opportunity to provide information about the social, educational, behavioral, and developmental strengths and needs of the child
S.12.5	Parents must be provided youth protection educational materials and be provided log in access to the BBBS learning management system to access youth protection training	Required	Required
S.12.6	Gather, evaluate, and document information to gain an understanding of the child's home, neighborhood, and environments where matches may regularly meet. Information should be used to assess safety risks for all parties involved, and provide opportunities for staff to properly prepare and coach a Big to have successful match outings in the Little's home and neighborhood.	Required	Not Required The parent/guardian and the school will be given the opportunity to provide this information
S.12.7	Request collateral from a therapist or counselor	As part of the assessment during the enrollment process, BBBS professional staff will make a determination on the need to seek collateral information from a therapist and/or counselor in order to evaluate a child or youth's ability to form a healthy and safe, one-to-one relationship with a volunteer.	As part of the assessment during the enrollment process, BBBS professional staff will make a determination on the need to seek collateral information from a therapist and/or counselor in order to evaluate a child or youth's ability to form a healthy and safe, one-to-one relationship with a volunteer.
S.12.8	Written, professional assessment and matching recommendation based on a holistic assessment of information gathered during	Required	Required

	the inquiry and enrollment processes		
S.12.9	Reevaluation: Ready-to-be-matched (RTBM) children must be reevaluated every 12 months if they have been placed on the wait list and are not matched. All information about the child, the family, and the home environment should be updated. Reevaluations can be conducted by phone, virtually or in-person. A home visit is optional.	Required	Required

## STANDARD 13.

### Volunteer Enrollment

The volunteer Big enrollment process is a comprehensive process to determine the eligibility and suitability of the volunteer Big applicant. Through the process, professional agency staff gather the information needed to prepare recommendations for matching based on the volunteer Big applicant's ability to help meet the needs of a child, form a committed relationship with a child, and to work with both the parent/guardian (except in School/Site-Based matches) and the agency.

Volunteer interviews can be conducted in-person or virtually. Criteria for virtual interviews include the ability for agency staff to both see and hear applicants during the interview process. Agencies should use their professional judgement to determine if they were adequately able to observe verbal and nonverbal cues during the video conferencing interview and assess if an in-person meeting to gather more information is needed prior to the match introduction meeting. Agencies must allow for reasonable accommodations for applicants and staff in alignment with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

	<b>Volunteer Big Enrollment Process</b>	<b>Community-Based/Site-Based Plus</b>	<b>School/Site-Based</b>
S.13.1	Volunteer Big applicant meets the agency's written eligibility requirements	Required	Required
S.13.2	Volunteer submits an application with electronic or written consent	Required	Required  High school volunteer Bigs require electronic or written parental permission
S.13.3	ALL references must be obtained by agency staff trained in obtaining references and in child	Required <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One positive reference from the volunteer Big applicant's spouse/spousal equivalent or</li> </ul>	Required <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One positive reference from the volunteer Big applicant's spouse/spousal</li> </ul>

	<p>safety/youth protection. References may be completed by mail, email, phone, or in-person.</p>	<p>family members (biological or chosen), if no spouse/spousal equivalent is available. Reference must assess the applicant's qualifications and appropriateness to serve as a Big.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two positive references from work, school, or personal references.</li> <li>• If applicant has disclosed relevant volunteer or paid experience with youth within the last five years, reference(s) are required from each youth-serving organization(s) where the applicant had such experience. If a youth-serving organization is not responsive, all attempts to obtain each reference must be made and documented.</li> <li>• If a negative reference is obtained, staff must consult with a supervisor. In addition, where there is a negative reference, the decision on the applicant and accompanying justification must be documented in the file. If the applicant is approved, an additional positive reference must be obtained.</li> <li>• If a neutral reference (i.e., a reference that only gives factual information about dates of employment or service, but not other information) is obtained, staff must obtain an additional positive reference.</li> </ul>	<p>equivalent or family members (biological or chosen), if no spouse/spousal equivalent is available. Reference must assess the applicant's qualifications and appropriateness to serve as a Big.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One positive reference from work, school, or personal references.</li> <li>• If applicant has disclosed relevant volunteer or paid experience with youth within the last five years, reference(s) are required from each youth-serving organization(s) where the applicant had such experience. If a youth-serving organization is not responsive, all attempts to obtain each reference must be made and documented.</li> <li>• If a negative reference is obtained, staff must consult with a supervisor. In addition, where there is a negative reference, the decision on the applicant and accompanying justification must be documented in the file. If the applicant is approved, an additional positive reference must be obtained.</li> <li>• If a neutral reference (i.e., a reference that only gives factual information about dates of employment or service, but not other information) is obtained, staff must obtain an additional positive reference.</li> </ul>
S.13.4	<p>Conduct background checks, including criminal history record checks</p>	<p>Required</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirmation of a person's identity by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fingerprint, or</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Required</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirmation of a person's identity by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fingerprint, or</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government-issued photo ID, or</li> <li>• Social security verification</li> <li>• DMV check</li> <li>• Criminal history record checks that are layered at the local, state, and national levels</li> <li>• Public domain search<sup>3</sup></li> <li>• As applicable, and where available based on applicable state law: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International check (if in the U.S. less than two years);</li> <li>• Juvenile records check;</li> <li>• Child abuse registry check; and/or</li> <li>• Military service checks</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government-issued photo ID, or</li> <li>• Social security verification or</li> <li>• School ID (high school students)</li> <li>• Criminal history record checks that are layered at the local, state, and national levels</li> <li>• Public domain search<sup>4</sup></li> <li>• As applicable, and where available based on applicable state law: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International check (if in the U.S. less than two years);</li> <li>• Juvenile records check;</li> <li>• Child abuse registry check; and/or</li> <li>• Military service checks</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
S.13.5	In-person or virtual interview	Required	Required
S.13.6	Assessment of home environment ( <i>definition: a documented, professional evaluation that can be done through a series of targeted questions relative to the physical surroundings, neighborhood, and the residents of the home</i> )	Required; home visit optional	Required
S.13.7	Request collateral from a therapist or counselor	As part of the assessment during the enrollment process, BBBS professional staff will make a determination on the need to seek collateral information from a therapist and/or counselor in order to evaluate a volunteer's ability to form a healthy and safe, one-to-one relationship with a child or youth.	As part of the assessment during the enrollment process, BBBS professional staff will make a determination on the need to seek collateral information from a therapist and/or counselor in order to evaluate a volunteer's ability to form a healthy and safe, one-to-one relationship with a child or youth.
S.13.8	Written, professional assessment and	Required	Required

<sup>3</sup> Sources may include an internet search and review of the applicant's social media

<sup>4</sup> Sources may include an internet search and review of the applicant's social media

	matching recommendation based on a holistic assessment of information gathered during the inquiry and enrollment processes		
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## STANDARD 14.

### Pre-Match Training

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Training must be conducted prior to match activation and provide participants (volunteer Big, child, and parent/guardian) the information needed to begin a match, develop, and sustain effective and enduring match relationships.

- S.14.1 Pre-match training must be interactive and documented. It can be provided in-person or online with interaction, individually or in group sessions, or a combination thereof. School/Site-Based parent(s)/guardian(s) may receive the training in writing or electronically.
- S.14.2 Pre-match training for the **volunteer** must cover, at a minimum:
- Ground rules/program rules and Volunteer Code of Conduct
  - Volunteer Big's obligations and appropriate roles
  - Expectations for the match relationship and relationship development styles
  - What match support is and why we do it
  - Child safety/youth protection
  - Expectations of survey participation/completion
  - Ages and stages of child development
  - The match closure process
- S.14.3 Pre-match training for the **parent/guardian** must cover, at a minimum:
- Ground rules/program rules and Volunteer Code of Conduct
  - Expectations for the match relationship and relationship development cycles
  - What a Big is and is not
  - Expectations for parent partnership (why the parent/guardian is important to this experience)
  - What match support is and why we do it
  - Child safety/youth protection
  - Expectations of survey participation/completion
  - The match closure process

- For School/Site-Based parents this information may be sent electronically or through the mail

S.14.4 Pre-match training for the **child** must include, at a minimum:

- What a Big is
- Ground rules/program rules and Volunteer Code of Conduct
- Expectations for the match relationship
- What match support is and why we do it
- Expectations of survey participation/completion
- Personal safety
- The match closure process

## STANDARD 15.

### **Pre-Matching and Matching Process**

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- S.15.1 Agency staff will assess all information gathered through inquiry and enrollment, applications, references, and interviews of all parties (including taking into consideration the preferences of the parent(s)/guardian(s), volunteer Big, and child) in order to make a thoughtful match selection, with a documented match selection rationale.
- S.15.2 The pre-match presentation must be interactive, done in-person, virtually, by email or by phone, and must ensure that each party has the chance to ask questions, voice concerns and obtains a clean understanding of agency's matching rationale (including the needs of the child and what the volunteer Big brings to the match). Agency staff will act in accordance with the agency's policy on confidentiality. Agency staff will document match selection rationale, reactions from parties (denials and acceptances) and all approval dates.
- S.15.3 The volunteer Big must approve the match before the match introduction meeting for all programs.
- S.15.4 The parent/guardian must approve the match before the match introduction meeting for Community-Based and Site-Based Plus matches.
- S.15.5 The match introduction meeting can be conducted in-person or virtually and must be facilitated by agency staff in order to properly introduce all match parties and review critical information that will build the longest, strongest, safest match possible. Criteria for virtual match introductions must include the ability for agency staff to both see and hear applicants during the meeting. Agencies must allow for reasonable accommodations for applicants and staff in alignment with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). For TEM programs, the match introduction may occur through a structured email prompt delivered by staff that guides the volunteer Big and Little to introduce themselves to each other. Staff must also review the first email exchange between the volunteer Big and Little to ensure that appropriate introductions took place. Involvement of the parent/guardian is mandatory for Community-Based and Site-Based Plus matches.



- S.15.6 Written documentation in the Federation Wide Information Management System of completed match introductions for all programs must include, at minimum:
1. How the match introductions were conducted (virtually or in-person)
  2. An electronic or hard copy signed match agreement form that contains knowledge and receipt of ground rules/program rules and outlines roles, responsibilities, and expectations for each match participant
  3. A post-match meeting assessment by agency staff that reviews the overall reaction from participants to the match meeting or email introduction prompts and identifies areas for future match support. Agencies should have written procedures for when and how matches that are conducted virtually begin meeting in-person.

## STANDARD 16.

### **Outcomes System**

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- S.16 Agencies must use the Big Brothers Big Sisters Outcomes System, which currently includes collection, reporting, and analysis of data on the length, strength, and quality of matches; individual child outcomes; and the Strength of Relationship (SOR) survey, the Youth Outcomes Survey (YOS), and the Child Outcomes Survey (COS).

## STANDARD 17.

### **The Youth Outcomes Development Plan**

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- S.17.1 Agency staff will partner with the youth, parent/guardian and volunteer to create a Youth Outcomes Development Plan (YODP) to be used in match support to encourage and coach the match toward desired outcomes. Staff must review the plan annually with match participants to assess progress made and make any necessary adjustments. Agencies must have a written YODP development and coaching procedure.

## STANDARD 18.

### **Match Support and Match Supervisory Schedule**

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Agency staff ensure regular and ongoing contact with each match by conducting private, one-to one, and interactive match support contacts. The purpose of match support is to monitor, coach, and guide the match in order to promote the development of the match relationship, match longevity, child safety/youth protection, and positive youth development.

- S.18.1 All match support contacts must be documented by agency staff





S.18.2 Match support contacts must regularly assess:

1. Child safety/youth protection;
2. Relationship development, including activities and communications between the match participants;
3. Youth development;
4. Agency engagement and training opportunities; and
5. Additional needs or concerns

S.18.3 Match support contacts may be conducted in-person, over the phone, or via written or electronic means (email, text, social media), provided the contact involves substantive, two-way communication directly with the match parties and an opportunity for the staff and match parties to engage in follow-up questions or discussions. As an added safeguard, agency staff will also monitor, review and document a selection of electronic messaging, if available, on any agency provided platform to assess the match relationship and identify potentially inappropriate discussions.

1. An attempted contact (leaving a message or voicemail) or sending a contact request electronically does not count as a match support contact
2. In-person or virtual match support contacts can satisfy two months of contacts within the first year of the match for both Community-Based, Site-Based and Site-Based Plus matches after the first two week contact is completed.
3. Programs that feature monthly direct interactions with BBBS staff in a classroom or digital platform with matches who exclusively communicate via an agency monitored messaging platform can waive two-way communication once a quarter within the first year of the match if:
  - a. Agency staff review a collection of electronic messaging exchanges between a match within each month to gain an understanding of match dynamics, youth protection and progress toward goals.
  - b. Staff documentation must demonstrate an understanding of the strengths and challenges of each match, as informed by a combination of match support contacts and reviews of electronic exchanges.
  - c. If a full understanding of the match dynamics cannot be understood by reviewing electronic exchanges within any month, staff must complete substantive two-way communication directly with the match parties to engage in follow-up.

S.18.4 Required contact schedule:

1. Community-Based/Site-Based Plus

	<b>Parent/Guardian</b>	<b>Child</b>	<b>Volunteer Big</b>
<b>Within first two weeks</b>	Required	Required	Required
<b>During first year</b>	Monthly, may alternate with child contact	Monthly, may alternate with parent/guardian contact	Monthly
<b>Greater than one year</b>	Every three months	Every three months	Every three months

2. Site-Based

	<b>Parent/Guardian</b>	<b>Child</b>	<b>Volunteer Big</b>
<b>Within first two weeks</b>	Required communication notifying parent/guardian of the match relationship and the agency's ground rules (written, phone, or in-person)	Required	Required
<b>During first year</b>	Communication twice a year (written, phone, or in-person)	Every month during the school year and at least one summer communication	Every month during the school year and at least one summer communication
<b>Greater than one year</b>	Communication twice a year (written, phone, or in-person)	Every three months during the school year and at least one summer communication	Every three months during the school year and at least one summer communication

3. Site-Based Facilitated

	<b>Parent/Guardian</b>	<b>Child</b>	<b>Volunteer Big</b>
<b>Within first two weeks</b>	Required communication notifying parent/guardian of the match relationship and the agency's ground rules (written, phone, or in-person)	Required	Required
<b>During first year</b>	Communication twice a year (written, phone, or in-person)	Every two months during the school year and at least one summer communication	Every two months during the school year and at least one summer communication
<b>Greater than one year</b>	Communication twice a year (written, phone, or in-person)	Every three months during the school year and at least one summer communication	Every three months during the school year and at least one summer communication

## STANDARD 19.

### **Quality Assurance**

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- S.19 Quality assurance reviews will be a thorough review of all program functions, including, but not limited to, enrollment and match support. Each individual staff member performing programmatic functions must receive feedback on the quality of their work at a minimum on a quarterly basis. The reviewer is required to document the quality assurance review in the Federation Wide Information Management System. The agency must have policies and procedures outlining their Quality Assurance process including the frequency and percentage of files reviewed and a process for addressing agency staff work that does not meet quality standards.

## STANDARD 20.

### **Match Closure**

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The match closure process must include, at a minimum:

- S.20.1 The match support record must show that agency staff made reasonable attempts to contact the parent/guardian, child, and the volunteer Big (individually) to thoroughly explore the reasons for closure, safety levels, satisfaction levels, and youth outcomes associated with the match
- S.20.2 When no child safety issues are present and the parties are available and agree, every effort will be made and documented to have a facilitated final communication or visit with the volunteer Big and the child (preferably in-person or via video conferencing) that provides for:
1. An explanation for the reason(s) for match closure (as appropriate);
  2. An opportunity to reduce any adverse effects from the match closure for the child; and
  3. An assessment of the accomplishments of the match in delivering positive outcomes
- S.20.3 The agency staff who had oversight of the match must provide a written assessment and recommendation of the appropriateness for rematch and re-engagement of the parent/guardian, child, and/or volunteer Big, either as a volunteer Big, Little, donor, board member or other volunteer, based on their successful past service; any need for additional support or training in future match consideration; and to determine further involvement and ongoing communication with the agency, regardless of participant interest of reengagement or rematch.
- S.20.4 Written notification of match closure to all parties, including, when necessary, clarification of the risks assumed by match parties in continuing a relationship outside of the agency's supervision.

## STANDARD 21.

### **Volunteer and Youth Reenrollment**

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- S.21.1 When program participants are re-enrolling, agency staff must take a purposeful, fresh look at the individual requesting to be matched to determine the eligibility and suitability of the participant’s ability to make a safe, effective match. This process must include a comprehensive review and assessment of the agency’s prior experience with the participant, including, at a minimum, the following components:
1. Initial enrollment information (assessment, background check);
  2. Experience, motivation, training, and support needs;
  3. Adherence to the BBBS safety guidelines;
  4. Previous match relationship;
  5. Reasons for previous match/file closures; and
  6. Meaningful life changes that have occurred since the participant’s initial enrollment (e.g., divorce, significant loss, unemployment, change in home environment, personality/interests, family information, physical and mental health, family life, school or work, and match preferences).
- S.21.2 Based on the review and assessment, staff must determine whether additional collateral information is required. Additionally, based on the timeline below, staff must comply with the following steps from the volunteer enrollment process:

	<b>Less Than One Year from Closure*</b>	<b>More Than One Year from Closure</b>
Updated volunteer interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reenrollment Volunteer Interview</li> <li>• Via phone, in-person or virtual</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteer Interview</li> <li>• Via in-person or virtual</li> </ul>
Updated background check	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the background check was run within the last three years, then only one layer of the background check is required</li> <li>• If a layered background check was run more than three years ago, a full background check is required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A layered background check is required</li> </ul>

References	<p>Obtain updated, in-depth references from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any new spouse/spousal equivalent or family (biological or chosen)</li> <li>All youth-serving organization(s) through which the volunteer did any new, relevant, volunteer or paid experience with youth within the last five years. If a youth-serving organization(s) is not responsive, all attempts to obtain each reference must be made and documented</li> <li>Additional references may be warranted based on agency assessment</li> </ul>	<p>Obtain updated, in-depth references from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any new spouse/spousal equivalent or family (biological or chosen)</li> <li>All youth-serving organization(s) through which the volunteer did any new, relevant, volunteer or paid experience with youth within the last five years. If a youth-serving organization(s) is not responsive, all attempts to obtain each reference must be made and documented</li> <li>Additional references may be warranted based on agency assessment</li> </ul>
Completion of updated/current agency forms and orientation to any new agency policies or procedures, including ground rules.	Required	Required
Training, per the recommendations made in the match closure meeting (or for new assessments, from the assessment interview), and any new required trainings since previous enrollment	Required	Required

\*Closure refers to both file closure and match closure.

S.21.3 Based on the review and assessment, staff must determine whether additional collateral information is required. Additionally, based on the timeline below, staff must comply with the following steps from the parent/guardian and child enrollment process:

	<b>Less Than One Year from Closure*</b>	<b>More Than One Year from Closure</b>
Conduct Child Re-Enrollment Interview	Required Via phone, in-person or virtual	Required Via in-person or virtual

Conduct Parent/Guardian Re-Enrollment Interview for Community - Based	Required Via phone, in-person or virtual	Required Via in-person or virtual
Parent/Guardian Re-Enrollment Interview for School/Site-Based	The parent(s)/guardians and school must be given the opportunity to provide updated information about the social, educational, behavioral, and developmental strengths and needs of the child.	The parent(s)/guardians and school must be given the opportunity to provide updated information about the social, educational, behavioral, and developmental strengths and needs of the child.
Parent/Guardian training that includes any new required trainings since previous enrollment.	Required	Required

\*Closure refers to both file closure and match closure.

## STANDARD 22.

### Innovation

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S.22 BBBSA values learning and innovation. Innovation, with careful consideration of associated risks, is critical to deepening the outcomes we seek for children. To allow our work to evolve, and to ensure we are striving to improve, it is important to provide a balance of structure and freedom for agency innovation.

Agencies that apply to innovate outside of the Program Standards may be permitted to enter into a pilot program with BBBSA. Pilot programs must be developed so that specific data can be collected to evaluate innovative approaches and to ensure positive outcomes for children as well as child safety. A Standards Committee of the Nationwide Leadership Council will review each pilot program request for possible approval and will evaluate the data from approved pilot programs.

In a pilot program, temporary variance from one or more standards may be given to an agency pursuant to the following approval process:

- Phase 1 – Research and design
- Phase 2 – Application and approval process
- Phase 3 – Conduct pilot
- Phase 4 – Report outcomes

## Training Quick Reference Guide

Training Requirement	All Agency Staff	CEO/ED	All Program Staff	Staff responsible for managing the program function, supervising program staff, and/or conducting quality assurance	Agency Board	Parent/Guardian	Youth or Child	Volunteers
<b>BBBSA CEO Orientation/Training Curriculum</b>		Within 90 days of hire						
<b>BBBSA's Fundamentals of Youth Protection, (or equivalent for Agency Board Members)</b>	Within 30 days of hire	Within 30 days of hire	Within 30 days of hire or prior to carrying out work that requires independent, professional decision making in service delivery, such as interview or conducting match support, whichever comes first	Within 30 days of hire	Within 60 days of initial date of service or prior to having interaction with children, whichever comes first			
<b>BBBSA's online parent education, Your Child's Personal Safety, or equivalent</b>		Within 30 days of hire if performing program supervisory functions	Within 30 days of hire	Within 30 days of hire		Community-Based or Site-Based Plus parents must complete prior to their child being matched with a volunteer		
<b>BBBSA's Introduction to Trauma-Informed Care for Program Staff</b>		Within 30 days of hire if performing program supervisory functions	Within 30 days of hire	Within 30 days of hire				
<b>Annual Youth Protection Training</b>			Required	Required				
<b>Personal safety materials for children and youth</b>							Required prior to match	
<b>BBBSA's online cultural humility training, or equivalent</b>	Within 30 days of hire	Within 30 days of hire	Within 30 days of hire	Within 30 days of hire	As listed in the agencies board development plan to meet Standard 2.5			
<b>BBBS' Program Manager Certification online courses</b>				Within 90 days of hire				
<b>Pre-match training</b>						Required	Required	Required