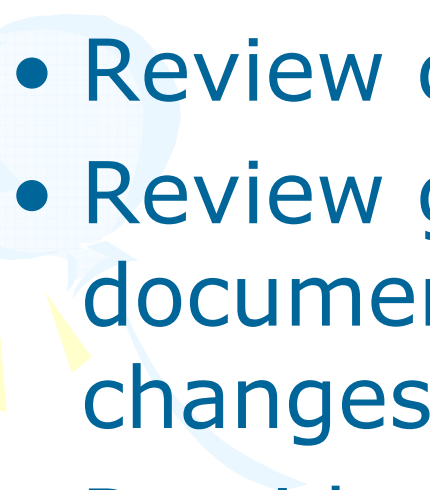





# **Massachusetts Early Intervention Annual Fee Presentation**



# Goal of this presentation

- This is for informational purposes only
  - Review changes to fee system
  - Review guidance documents/materials regarding the changes
  - Provide an opportunity to clarify information
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# Background Information

- The Department of Public Health (DPH) is responsible for the administration of the Early Intervention Program that includes the collection of an Annual Fee. The fee is assessed for all children with a signed Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) and is based on family size and income according to a fee structure developed by the Department of Public Health (DPH). The fee is applied to all IFSP services with the exception of those services, which are exempt from charge per IDEA Sec. 303.520. The Department of Public Health assures that the following services will be carried out at public expense and at no cost to families:
  - Implementing child find requirements
  - Evaluation and assessment including the functions related to evaluation and assessment
  - Service coordination
  - Administration and coordination activities related to the development and review of the IFSP
  - Implementation of procedural safeguards, dispute resolutions and due process

Funds received through collection of fees will be used to support the Massachusetts statewide, comprehensive Part C Early Intervention program.



# Overview Annual Fee Structure

- The fee is assessed for all children with a signed IFSP except those on MassHealth or below 300% of poverty

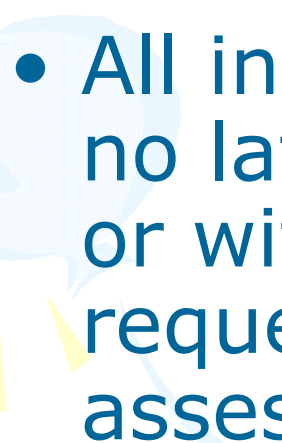
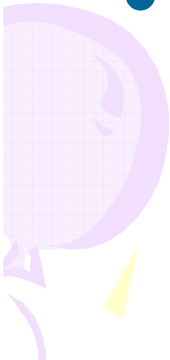
Category	Annual Income	Annual Fee Amount
<300%	\$0 - \$66,150	\$0
301-400%	\$66,151 - \$88,200	\$250
401-550%	\$88,201 - \$121,275	\$500
551-750%	\$121,276 - \$165,375	\$900
>750%	> \$165,375	\$1,500



Please note the "Annual Income" shown in the grid above is for a family of four and the fee amounts noted are an annual cost.





# Family Responsibilities

- Provide accurate documentation of all required financial and insurance information.
  - All income must be verified annually, no later than the time of IFSP signature or within 30 days of when a family requests a redetermination of their fee assessment.
  - Make prompt payment of all fees to EI provider. Suspension of services may occur for any amounts overdue past 60 days until the amount is paid.
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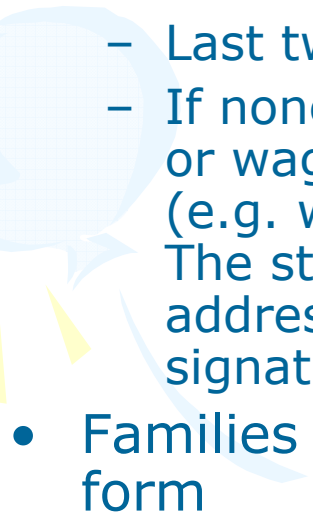



# What you need to know

- **EIP staff will provide written information to families including the following:**
    - Fee structure based on family size and income *(see grid on page 4)*
    - Requirements associated with the verification of income
    - Consequences of failure to pay the fee/suspension of services
    - Process for requesting a re-determination of the fee and/or exemption
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# Verifying Income

- EI programs must verify a family's income by reviewing and completing the Income Attestation Form using one of the following:
    - Most recent tax return or
    - Most recent W2(s) and/or 1099(s), or
    - Last two (2) consecutive pay stubs/advices
    - If none of the above is available, a written statement of salary or wages, documenting the amount and periodicity of payment (e.g. weekly, monthly) from the employer will be permissible. The statement must include company/employer name, address, phone number and supervisor/human resource staff signature.
  - Families receiving MassHealth will not need to complete this form
  - Information collected is confidential. It is not available to any other program (public or private) without your written permission
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# Frequency of Fee

- This is an annual fee. If your child is eligible for 6 months, you will be billed half the fee for the first 6 months. If your child continues to be eligible, you will be billed the other half.

# Consequences for failure to pay

- Families with an outstanding balance of 60 days or more past due may be subject to suspension of services. The EI program will send a letter notifying the family of Pending Suspension of Services for any unpaid balances.

If within 14 calendar days, the family fails to pay the balance in full, make payment arrangements, or request a Family Fee Exemption, services may be suspended. Services will resume once the past due amounts are paid, or payment arrangements have been established.

- Suspension of services also applies to Specialty Services




# Suspension of Services

- Under IDEA, the following are available to families at no cost and will continue despite any suspension of services:
  - Implementation of child find requirements (*outreach to find children who might be eligible for EI*)
  - Evaluation and assessment and the activities related to evaluation and assessment (*to determine if a child is eligible for EI*)
  - Service Coordination (*activities that find resources for families*)
  - Activities related to the development and review of the IFSP
  - Implementation of procedural safeguards



# Requesting Exemption

- Families may request an exemption from the fee by completing a Family Fee Exemption Form. An exemption from the fee is not retroactive. A family may request an exemption under the following circumstances:
    - Out-of-pocket medical expenses during the past twelve (12) months meets or exceeds 15% of the family's gross income
    - Out of pocket losses during the past twelve months due to disaster such as fire, flood or tornado meets or exceeds 15% of their gross income
  - Family Fee Exemption Forms are to be sent to the DPH. The DPH will make every effort to review these forms within 10 business days and will provide a written response to the family and to the EIP.
    - Families are entitled to receive uninterrupted services during this process.
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# Access to information

Families have the option not to have their health insurance accessed and/or the option not to disclose income, **but** that refusal to disclose income or provide consent to allow access to insurance will result in a charge of the maximum level of fee assessment.


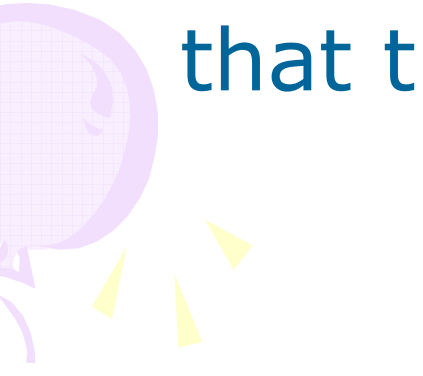


# Review Request

Families may request, in writing a review and adjustment of their fee obligations upon proof of change in income, family size, or other extenuating circumstances.

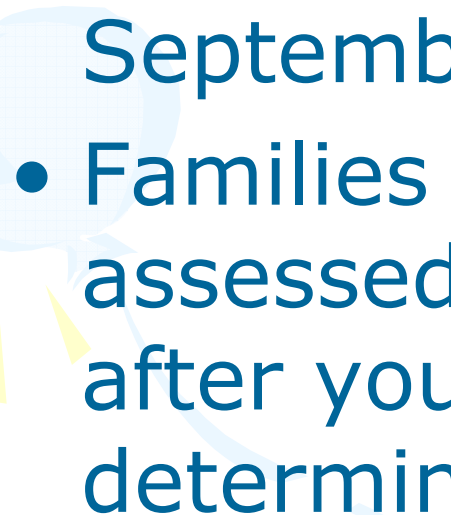
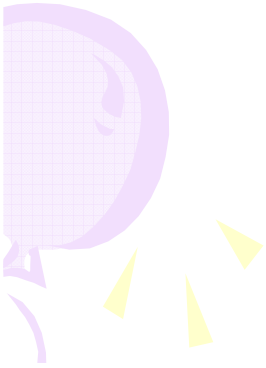


# Moving to another Program

- Families who move or transfer to another Massachusetts Early Intervention program will need to provide information about the family's size, income and insurance to the new program.
  - Families should tell the new program that they have already paid the fee.
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# When does this go into effect?

- These fee requirements go into effect September 15, 2010
  - Families currently enrolled will not be assessed a new fee until one year after your current fee was determined
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# Who to contact with questions


Mary Dennehy-Colorusso

978-851-7261

TTY 978-851-0829



# Where to go for more information

- EI Parent Leadership Project website
    - [www.eiplp.org/familyrights.html](http://www.eiplp.org/familyrights.html)
  - Massachusetts DPH website
    - [www.mass.gov/dph/earlyintervention](http://www.mass.gov/dph/earlyintervention)
      - Letter from Ron Benham
      - Overview of Family Fee “The 5 W’s”
      - Family Fee Brochure
      - Federal Poverty Guidelines
      - Family Fee Exemption Form
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