

XII. Program Administration

- A. Early Intervention programs must have a full-time primary program administrator. A primary program administrator may be a Program Director or Program Coordinator and must meet the credentialing requirements for one of the disciplines listed in Section V. of these standards. If the administrative responsibilities are shared within an agency, a written administrative plan is developed, designating specific roles and responsibilities to named individuals. The primary program administrator is required to apply for Early Intervention Program Director Certification within three years of assuming that position.
- B. Each Early Intervention program has an organizational plan and written policies addressing processes and procedures that are readily available.
1. A written administrative organizational plan that designates the person/persons responsible for:
 - a. Administrative oversight
 - b. Program development
 - c. Budget development and oversight
 - d. Program evaluation
 - e. Staff development
 - f. Hiring, review and termination of staff
 - g. Clinical program supervision
 - h. Linkage to vendor agency
 - i. Linkage to lead agency
 - j. Designation of administrative coverage during hours of operation
 - k. Facilitation of family involvement and linkage between staff and parents
 - l. Approval and assistance in developing health care policies for the program (either a physician or registered nurse)
 - m. Coordination of transportation issues and the processing of transportation forms and reports

2. Policies addressing staff rights and responsibilities including:
 - a. Salary
 - b. Basis for evaluating performance
 - c. Benefits
 - d. Scheduled holidays/vacations
 - e. Conditions for immediate discharge
 - f. Grievance procedure
 - g. Resignation procedure
 - h. Job responsibilities as per individual program job description or contractual arrangements
 - i. Professional development
 - j. Program hours of operation
3. Personnel records for each staff member, which includes but are not limited to:
 - a. Employee's resume or job application
 - b. Documentation that the employee has met the credentialing requirements
 - c. Record of reference verification
 - d. Documentation of completed CORI evaluation
 - e. Health records as required in Section XI, C of these standards
 - f. Documentation of training required to meet core competencies
 - g. Annual performance evaluations
 - h. Documentation of EI certification status
4. The following written procedures are available to any interested party on request:
 - a. Referral
 - b. Intake
 - c. Determination of eligibility (evaluation)
 - d. Assessment
 - e. IFSP development
 - f. Service delivery modes
 - g. Transition
 - h. Discharge

- i. Maintenance, management and preservation of client records in accordance with the due process procedures found in Appendix B of these standards.
- j. Release of record with written parental consent
- k. Guidelines for referral to specialty providers and services

The record kept on each individual child contains the following:

- a. Access sheet for recording those authorized persons who have reviewed a record
- b. Signed parental consent forms
- c. Documentation of referral
- d. Completed DPH EIIS (Early Intervention Information System) Forms – Referral, Eligibility Evaluation, IFSP, Discharge
- e. Intake and background information
- f. Medical information
- g. Reports from other agencies and professionals, as applicable
- h. Results of evaluations and assessments
- i. IFSPs
- j. Documentation of contacts with child and family including date, service type, duration and content of contact, and the legible signature and discipline of the staff person signing the note

- C. Program staff members are available by phone during regular business hours. Telephone answering machines or voice mail do not satisfy this requirement.

Early Intervention Program Core Team

- 1. An Early Intervention Program has a minimum of three core team members, each of whom must work at least 30 hours per week. The core team is comprised of a Developmental Specialist (a through c) and two other professionals representing different disciplines as defined in Section V., B, 2 – 7

of these standards. In addition to the core team, an Early Intervention program will have a full time director/coordinator.

If at any time following the initial program certification, the staffing of the program does not meet the requirements for a core team, the program director will notify the Regional Early Intervention Specialist in writing of the absence of a core team. The program will be given sixty days from the first day of noncompliance to regain compliance of this requirement. Families enrolled in the program will be notified in writing of the absence of a core team for the timeframe this situation exists and of the options available to them for comprehensive Early Intervention services. Families will also be given a copy of Family Rights in Early Intervention at this time. A copy of the written notice to families will be submitted to the Regional Early Intervention Specialist for review before distribution and a copy of the notification filed in each child's record. If a core team is not in place at the end of the sixty-day period, a program certification review will take place.

Early Intervention programs are grounded in child development and serve young children and their families within the context of understanding the full spectrum of child development. Therefore the Developmental Specialist serves a critical function within the EI core team. Early Intervention programs must employ at least one Developmental Specialist (a, b or c) [who works at least 30 hours per week] for the first 75 enrolled children. For each additional 75 enrolled children, an additional 30 hours per week of Developmental Specialist (a, b or c) time is required. These additional hours of Developmental Specialist time may be a combination of part-time staff.

- E. Early Intervention programs are expected to comply with the submission of data requested by the Department of Public Health within the timelines established. Timelines for Early Intervention EIIS Forms:

Referral Form –

Within 10 days of the first face-to-face meeting with the family.

Eligibility Evaluation Form –

- Within 10 days of a completed eligibility evaluation if the child is deemed ineligible.
- Within 10 days of the IFSP signature if the child has an IFSP.

IFSP Form –

Within 10 days of IFSP signature

Discharge Form –

- a. Child receives intake visit only; family declines eligibility evaluation or program loses contact with family following the intake visit – Discharge Form – within 10 days of inactive date or date of intake visit.
- b. Child receives a completed eligibility evaluation and is deemed ineligible. – Discharge Form within 10 days of date of eligibility evaluation.
- c. Child has received a completed eligibility evaluation but family declines services or program loses contact with family – Discharge Form within 10 days of inactive date or date of eligibility evaluation.
- d. Client has received ongoing IFSP services – Discharge Form within 10 days after the inactive date or last date of active service. (Eligible children may receive services up to but not on their third birthday).

F. Each program conducts an annual self-evaluation. Programs encourage families to participate in this self-evaluation that should include areas such as:

1. Feedback on staff performance
2. Evaluation of program services
3. Review of IFSP process
4. Review of transition procedures
5. Approaches to family participation
6. Review of health and safety procedures
7. Review of interagency agreements and service contracts

G. Each program develops a written procedure for the internal resolution of complaints. Any family with a complaint must be informed again (as they were at intake, see Section VI.B. 2) of procedural safeguards and family rights. Families must also be informed of their option to speak to Department of Public Health personnel and/or file a formal written complaint. At the time of the family's complaint, a copy of the Family Rights and Early Intervention Services brochure is given to the family. Due process procedures for families enrolled in Early Intervention are outlined in Appendix B of these standards.

H. Fees

1. Department of Public Health policies call for the collection of an Annual Fee. The fee is assessed for all children with a signed IFSP based on family size and annual income according to the current fee structure.

This fee is applied to all IFSP services with the exception of those services that are exempt from charge per IDEA, Secs. 303.520 and 303.521.

2. The services to be rendered and the corresponding costs for such services are referenced in the Department of Public Health Early Intervention Billing Instructions and payable according to the rate structure defined by the Massachusetts Division of Health Care Finance and Policy (formerly known as the Massachusetts Rate Setting Commission.) Services, as appropriate, may be billed to the Department of Public Health, the Division of Medical Assistance, and other third party payers.

3. Each program must assure that no fees are charged for the services that a child is otherwise entitled to receive at no cost to parents. Programs must also assure that the inability of parents of an eligible child to pay for services will not result in the denial of services to the child or the child's family.

4. Each program must assure that services will not be delayed or denied to any child because of disputes between agencies regarding financial or other responsibilities.

5. The Department of Public Health hereby assures that the following services will be carried out at public expense and for which there will be no fees charged to parents:

- Implementing the child find requirements
- Evaluation and assessment including the functions related to evaluation and assessment
- service coordination
- Administrative and coordinating activities related to the development, review, and evaluation of IFSPs
- Implementation of the procedural safeguards, dispute resolution and due process