

Rhode Island Early Intervention Certification Standards

Policies and Procedures

XV. Geographic Equity, Head Start Collaboration, and Public Hearings for New or Revised Policies and Procedures

Geographic Equity

- In accordance with 34 CFR 303.207, the lead agency ensures that all eligible infants and toddlers and their families are provided equitable access to Early Intervention. All eligible families will have access to at least two certified Early Intervention provider agencies.
- Rhode Island Certified Early Intervention Providers may submit to the lead agency twice annually a list of cities/towns they choose to serve. The lead agency will approve based on the criteria that every city/town must be chosen as an area by at least two certified provider agencies. Providers should consider their capacity to meet all federal and state requirements when considering how many and which cities/towns they can best serve. Providers must accept all referrals within the areas they have chosen and been approved to serve.

Head Start Collaboration

Rhode Island promotes and supports the collaboration of Head Start, Early Head Start, early education and child care programs, and Early Intervention through the Race to the Top strategic plan available at <http://www.earlylearningri.org>

The strategic plan includes goals related to:

- Program standards alignment and measurement
- RI Early Learning and Development Standards for ages birth-five
- Improving the quality of early learning programs
- Improving access to early learning programs, including Head Start, Early Head Start, early education and child care programs, and Early Intervention.
- Improving the knowledge and competencies of the workforce
- Developing and supporting effective early childhood assessment
- Early learning data system

Public Hearings for New or Revised Policies and Procedures

The lead agency will hold public hearings on any new or revised policy or procedure and provide notice of the hearing held in accordance with 34 CFR 303.208(b)(1) at least 30 days before the hearing is conducted in order to enable public participation. The lead agency will also provide opportunities for the general public, including individuals with disabilities, parents of infants and toddlers with disabilities, Early Intervention providers, and members of the Interagency Coordinating Council, to comment for at least 30 days on the new or revised policy or procedure needed to comply with Part C of IDEA.