

Rhode Island Early Intervention Certification Standards

Policies and Procedures

VI. Individualized Family Service Plan

Certified EI providers are required to develop policies and procedures to assure the development of Individualized Family Service Plans for eligible children by a multidisciplinary team, including the parents. Requirements related to the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) and IFSP Meetings include:

IFSP Meeting

IFSP Meeting Requirements

• *Meeting arrangements must be made with written notice provided to the family and other participants early enough before the meeting date to ensure they will be able to attend.*

• *The meeting must occur in a time and place convenient for the family.*

• *The meeting must be in the native language of the family (or any other mode of communication used by the family) unless it is clearly not feasible to do so.*

• *Participants must include: i) the parent(s); ii) others as requested by the parent if feasible to do so (parents may include other family members, persons outside the family, etc.); iii) EI service coordinator, iv) a person or persons directly involved in conducting the evaluation of the child and assessment of the child and family (if necessary that person's involvement through other means is acceptable such as making pertinent records available at the meeting, an authorized representative or by conference call); v) and as appropriate, person(s) who will be providing early intervention services to the child/family person(s).*

Eligibility /IFSP Meeting

- An Eligibility/IFSP Meeting which meets regulatory requirements (left) must be convened with the family within 45 days of the referral. An Eligibility/IFSP Meeting occurs for all children.
- The child's present levels of development are discussed with the parent and how the child's functioning compares to peers, using the framework of the three global child outcomes (i.e., (Demonstrating positive social emotional skills (including positive social relationships); Acquiring and using knowledge and skills including early language/communication and early literacy skills; and Using appropriate actions to meet needs).
- Prior Written Notice is provided to the parent(s) to inform them of their child's eligibility status.
- Procedural Safeguards are provided to the parent which include the parent's right to dispute the eligibility determination and information regarding the right to appeal.

When a child is determined not eligible the parent must be:

- Provided with a summary of the evaluation results;
- Provided with community resources if appropriate.

When a child is determined eligible and family agrees to move forward with the IFSP, the following occurs and is documented:

- A discussion regarding the concerns, priorities and resources of the parent.
- A Physician's Authorization form is sent and obtained

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IFSP Development

IFSP development following an IFSP/Eligibility meeting begins with the completion of a Routines Based Assessment to further explore the family's concerns and priorities. Once this is completed, an IFSP Meeting, which meets regulatory requirements, must be convened.

At this meeting the IFSP team, which includes the family, completes the IFSP by developing IFSP outcomes based on the concerns and priorities of the family and designating IFSP services to support identified outcomes. EI providers must document the IFSP process by completing the most recent IFSP issued by EOHHS and by data entry of the IFSP in the EI data system. The most recent IFSP can be found at: [Sherlock Center on Disabilities at Rhode Island College](#)

The IFSP must be in writing and developed in accordance with the Mission and Key Principles of Early Intervention Services in Natural Environments (*See Rhode Island Principles and Practices*) and must include:

- A statement of the infant or toddler's present level of development in all developmental domains (physical, cognitive, communication, social/emotional, and adaptive development) based on objective criteria within the context of the three global child outcomes.
- A statement of the family's resources, priorities and concerns related to enhancing the development of their infant or toddler with a disability;
- A statement of the family owned, functional and measurable outcomes or results expected to be achieved for the infant or toddler and family, (including pre-literacy and language skills, as developmentally appropriate for the child),
- The criteria, procedures, and timelines used to determine the degree to which progress toward achieving the results or outcomes is being made and whether modifications or revisions of the results or outcomes or services are necessary;
- A statement of specific early intervention services based on peer-reviewed research, to the extent practicable, necessary to meet the unique needs of the infant or toddler and family to achieve the results or outcomes identified on the IFSP;
- A statement including the frequency, intensity, and method

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IFSP Development (continued)

of delivering services (These services are further defined in *Services Provided on the IFSP*);

- A statement of the natural environments in which early intervention services will be provided, including a justification of the extent, if any, to which the services will not be provided in a natural environment. The decision to provide a service in a non-natural environment must be:
 - Made by the IFSP Team (including the parent and other team members);
 - Based on the child's outcomes as identified by the IFSP team.
- The projected dates for initiation of services and the anticipated length, duration, and frequency of services;
- The identification of the service coordinator from the profession most immediately relevant to the infant's or toddler's or family's needs (or who is otherwise qualified to carry out all applicable responsibilities) who will be responsible for the implementation of the plan and coordination with other agencies and persons, including transition services and;
- The steps and services to be taken to support the transition of the toddler with a disability to preschool or other appropriate services.
- Medical and other services may be identified that the child or family needs or is receiving through other sources, but that are neither required nor funded under Part C; and If those services are not currently being provided, the EI provider should include an outcome in the IFSP describing the steps the service coordinator or family may take to assist the child or family in securing those other services
- The contents of the IFSP must be fully explained to the family.
- The parent must be provided with Prior Written Notice and Procedural Safeguards before initiating early intervention services described in the IFSP.
- Informed written consent must be obtained prior to the provision of early intervention services described in the IFSP.

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IFSP Development (continued)

- The parent may determine whether the family will accept or decline any early intervention service written into the IFSP without jeopardizing the right to receive other early intervention services. If the parent does not provide consent for the services, or some part of the services, only the services to which consent has been obtained must be provided.
- Each early intervention service must be provided as soon as possible after the parent provides consent for that service and no longer than 30 days from the date of consent.
- A Physician's Authorization documenting the medical necessity of Early Intervention is sent for all eligible infants and toddlers within 45 days of referral. A Physicians Authorization signed by the child's pediatrician is required for all eligible infants and toddlers.

Interim IFSP

In Rhode Island, an interim IFSP should be used in rare instances when eligibility is presumed and there is an immediate need for services. Early intervention services for an eligible child and the child's family may commence before the completion of the multidisciplinary evaluation /assessment. An Interim IFSP Meeting which meets regulatory requirements must be convened with the family to develop an interim IFSP which includes:

- The name of the service coordinator who will be responsible for implementing the interim IFSP;
- Documentation of the immediate need for Early Intervention services;
- Outcome(s) developed by the IFSP team;
- The services that have been determined to be needed immediately by the child and the child's family based on the outcomes developed;
- The parent must be provided with Prior Written Notice and Procedural Safeguards before initiating early intervention services described in the IFSP.
- Written parental consent is obtained prior to the provision of early intervention services described in the IFSP.
- Evaluations and assessments must be completed within 45 days.

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Periodic Review

An IFSP Periodic Review which meets regulatory requirements of an IFSP meeting must be convened with the family every 6 months to review the IFSP or more frequently if conditions warrant, or if the family requests such a review.

- The purpose of the periodic review is to determine: the degree to which progress toward achieving the results or outcomes identified in the IFSP is being made; and whether modifications or revisions of the results, outcomes, or early intervention services identified in the IFSP is necessary.
- The review may be carried out by a meeting or by another means that is acceptable to the parents and other participants.
- If services are changed as a result of the review, the parent must be provided with Prior Written Notice and Procedural Safeguards before initiating the changes in early intervention services described in the IFSP. Written parental consent is obtained prior to the provision of early intervention services described in the IFSP.

Annual Meeting to Review and Evaluate the IFSP

An Annual IFSP Review Meeting which meets regulatory requirements must be convened with the family annually to review the IFSP. At this meeting the following occurs and is documented:

- A discussion of the child's present levels of development based on a review of any current evaluations and ongoing assessment
- A discussion of new concerns, priorities and resources of the family;
- The child's continued eligibility status for Early Intervention is communicated to the family.
- A review of IFSP outcomes and services is conducted;
- Revised/new outcomes and services are developed as needed;
- The parent must be provided with Prior Written Notice and Procedural Safeguards before initiating any changes in early intervention services described in the IFSP.
- Written parental consent is obtained prior to the provision of early intervention services described in the IFSP.

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Re-determining Eligibility

Whenever there is a question of eligibility Prior Written Notice and Procedural Safeguards are issued and parent consent for a multidisciplinary evaluation/assessment is obtained. After the evaluation has been conducted, an Eligibility/IFSP meeting which meets regulatory requirements is convened. The child's present levels of development are discussed with the parent and documented using the framework of the three global child outcomes and how the child's functioning compares to peers. The child's eligibility for Early Intervention is determined and shared with the parent in writing.

- The parent must be provided with Prior Written Notice and Procedural Safeguards after the eligibility decision.
- If the child meets eligibility criteria, an IFSP Development meeting is convened (See IFSP Development)
- If the child is no longer meets eligibility criteria, the child the child is discharged (See Ending The IFSP)

Ending the IFSP

Once a child has been determined eligible the IFSP cannot be ended prior to age 3 unless the child is no longer eligible for early intervention under Rhode Island Early Intervention policies and regulations, the parents have withdrawn from the EI program, or the EI program has been unable to contact the family.

When a child no longer meets eligibility criteria for EI as determined by multidisciplinary evaluation, the discharge is completed at the Eligibility/IFSP meeting as "Discharge - Completion of IFSP Prior to Age 3".

If the parent declines a multidisciplinary evaluation and the IFSP team, including the parent, has determined all identified goals have been reached, an IFSP meeting is convened which meets all regulatory requirements. At this meeting, the parent must be:

- Provided with Prior Witten Notice and Procedural Safeguards for discharge.
- Provided with community resources if appropriate

The discharge is documented on an SRF/Session note, specifying the discharge reason as "Discharge - Completion of IFSP Prior to Age 3".

When the family withdraws from services voluntarily:

- Documentation of the withdrawal, the reason and the discharge date is indicated on an SRF/Session Note;
- The parent is provided Prior Written Notice and Procedural Safeguards; and information regarding available community resources if appropriate.

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Ending the IFSP

(continued)

- The child is discharged as “ Discharge- Withdrawal by parent/guardian.”

When a child/family with an IFSP is not home for three consecutive scheduled visits without any advance cancellation (or appropriate explanation) or is unable to be contacted:

- A letter is sent to the family to inform them that an IFSP review meeting is needed
- If the family responds:
 - The service coordinator schedules an IFSP meeting with the family to determine what, if any, services the family wants to receive and how those services can best be delivered to meet the family’s needs.
 - If the family indicates they no longer want to receive services, the procedures used when a family withdraws from services voluntarily are followed.
- If the family does not respond:
 - Attempts to contact the family must occur and are documented on a Services Rendered Form (SRF)/Session note or phone log. These could include contact with the referral source such as the pediatrician or DCYF if there is a release on file, family members or other collaborators.
 - If the family does not respond to the first notice, the program should send a second notice to the address on file giving the family 10 days Prior Written Notice, accompanied by Procedural Safeguards, informing them that if they do not respond in 10 days services will discontinue.
 - If the family does not contact the program within 10 days, the child is discharged as “Discharged- Attempts to Contact Unsuccessful.”

Special Circumstances

Additional guidance can be found at the [Sherlock Center for Disabilities at Rhode Island College](#) regarding special circumstances for IFSP development (i.e. the instate transfer of Early Intervention services, second episodes of Early Intervention services.)