

ANNOUNCEMENT: EI-13 #04
Effective Date: 4/30/2013

SUBJECT: Infants and Toddlers Referred to Pennsylvania's Early Intervention Program from Out of State

TO: Infant and Toddler Program Leadership

FROM: Barbara G. Minzenberg, Ph.D.
Deputy Secretary, Office of Child Development and Early Learning



PURPOSE:

The purpose of this announcement is to provide guidance to the infant and toddler early intervention programs for children who have been referred to Pennsylvania's early intervention program and have been receiving early intervention services in another state.

BACKGROUND:

The Individual Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 2004, Part C, provides financial assistance to states and surrounding territories to develop and implement a statewide, comprehensive, coordinated, multidisciplinary, interagency system that provides early intervention services for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families. Neither federal statute nor federal regulations define the eligibility criteria for state programs. Each state develops a definition of developmental delay that is used to determine eligibility.

There are varying eligibility criteria among states and territories participating in the Part C early intervention program. The variances in eligibility may result in a child being eligible in one state and ineligible in another. In addition, states may also have varying methods or approaches for the delivery of early intervention services. These variances can make it challenging for the infant and toddler early intervention programs to ensure that children and families do not experience unnecessary delays in the implementation of early intervention services when moving into Pennsylvania from another state.

DISCUSSION:

The infant and toddler early intervention programs shall ensure children and families referred to Pennsylvania's early intervention program experience a smooth transition, receive a timely determination of eligibility, and the timely development of an initial Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) meeting, if determined eligible.

Upon receipt of the referral, the infant and toddler early intervention programs should obtain as much information as possible from the sending state and begin the process of determining whether a child may be eligible for early intervention services in Pennsylvania. This shall include gathering information on the supports and services the family is currently receiving, and obtaining the early intervention record of the child, including the existing evaluation and IFSP.

If based on the information gathered, the eligibility of the child for early intervention services in Pennsylvania is in question, an evaluation should occur. In these instances, infant and toddler early intervention programs should schedule and conduct an evaluation within the Part C 45-day timeline for evaluation and initial IFSP development.

If the child's current evaluation and IFSP information, medical records and /or other information indicate that the child already meets the eligibility criteria for early intervention services in Pennsylvania, then the infant and toddler early intervention programs shall begin the process for scheduling an initial IFSP meeting to complete the family assessment and identify the unique strengths and needs of the child and the recommendations for appropriate early intervention services.

Children referred from other states should be considered new referrals for reporting in PELICAN.

NEXT STEPS:

1. The infant and toddler early intervention programs shall ensure that all staff review the information included in this announcement.
2. The infant and toddler early intervention programs shall develop local guidance to ensure eligibility determinations for children referred from another state are made within the Part C 45-day timeline for evaluation and initial IFSP development.

Comment and questions should be directed to the Office of Child Development and Early Learning, Bureau of Early Intervention Services at 717-346-9320 or: ra-ocdintervention@pa.gov.