

**Proposed Changes to Early Steps Policy Documents
Public Comment Period
February 21, 2011 -- March 22, 2011**

Number	Policy	Guidance/Procedures	Summary of Change
COMPONENT 1 – GENERAL SUPERVISION AND ADMINISTRATION			
No Changes			
COMPONENT 2 – PUBLIC AWARENESS			
No Changes			
COMPONENT 3– FIRST CONTACTS/EVALUATION/ASSESSMENT			
Number	Policy	Guidance/Procedures	Summary of Change
3.1.4 	<p>A. Developmental delay meets or exceeds 1.5 standard deviations below the mean in two or more developmental domains or 2.0 standard deviations below the mean in one or more of the following developmental domains, as measured by appropriate diagnostic instruments and procedures:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cognitive 2. Physical (including vision and hearing) 3. Communication 4. Social or Emotional 5. Adaptive <p><u>B. Additional testing is required for eligibility determination for children referred between 24 and 36 months of age when both of the following criteria are met:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Standard scores do not meet the eligibility criteria outlined in</u> 	<p>A. Eligibility will be based on criteria on the date eligibility is determined for <u>Early Steps</u>. Children made eligible under previous, broader criteria who do not meet current eligibility criteria will not be terminated from services.</p> <p><u>B. When using standard scores as a basis for eligibility:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>A standard score of 78 or below in two or more domains meets the -1.5 eligibility criteria.</u> 2. <u>A standard score of 70 or below when the delay is only in one domain meets the -2.0 eligibility criteria.</u> 3. <u>A low score in a single subdomain is not sufficient documentation of initial and/or continuing eligibility.</u> <p><u>C. For children made eligible based on documented sources beyond standard scores:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>The 6 month eligibility redetermination</u> 	<p>Policy and guidance revised to clarify scores that indicate eligibility for Early Steps and to add new requirements related to additional testing for eligibility for some children after the initial 6-month eligibility period.</p>

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	<p><u>3.1.4A above.</u></p> <p>2. <u>Scaled scores for the expressive and receptive language subdomains of the communication domain show a discrepancy of 3 or more points, and at least one of the two subdomain scores is 5 or below.</u></p> <p>C. <u>When additional testing is required, a standardized assessment appropriate to the specified domain must be administered by a qualified professional. The standard score that the child obtains on this domain specific assessment may be used to determine eligibility.</u></p> <p>D. <u>For a child made eligible due to developmental delay based on documented sources beyond standard scores when the scores on the initial eligibility assessment do not meet the Early Steps eligibility criteria, the following must occur:</u></p> <p>1. <u>The rationale behind a recommendation for eligibility must be clearly delineated in the IFSP/Evaluation Report, and must document all pieces of information collected through a variety of methods.</u></p> <p>2. <u>The child must be re-evaluated with parent consent no later than</u></p>	<p><u>does not require an evaluation in all 5 domains. For a child with a concern in only one domain, the IFSP team should choose an appropriate instrument to determine eligibility in the domain of concern.</u></p> <p>2. <u>The 6 month eligibility redetermination should be an individualized process.</u></p>	

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	<p><u>the end of the initial 6 month service authorization period.</u></p> <p>3. <u>The child must meet Florida's eligibility criteria at the second evaluation as stated in 3.1.4 A and B above to remain eligible for services through Early Steps.</u></p> <p>4. <u>Eligibility based on a synthesis of documented sources beyond standard scores that do not meet the Early Steps eligibility criteria stated in 3.1.4 A and B above is only allowed at the initial determination of eligibility.</u></p> <p>5. <u>An appropriate communication standardized protocol must be administered when re-evaluating a child with concerns solely in the communication domain no later than the end of the initial 6 month service authorization period.</u></p>		
<p>3.1.11</p> 	<p><u>Determination of continuing eligibility must take place during the annual evaluation of the IFSP</u></p>	<p>A. <u>The BDI-2 Screener should be used at the annual evaluation of the IFSP to assist with determining continuing eligibility.</u></p> <p>B. <u>If the screener indicates that the child is functioning comparably to same-aged peers, the IFSP team should determine whether the child should be closed to Early Steps or if an additional assessment</u></p>	<p>A new policy added requiring re-determination of eligibility for all children at each annual meeting to evaluate the IFSP. Guidance suggests use of the BDI-2 Screener to assist in determining continuing eligibility.</p>

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		<u>is necessary to determine if the child is still in need of services.</u>	
3.2.2 	<u>Initial contact</u> must be made with the <u>family</u> within 5 calendar days from the date the <u>referral</u> is made <u>received at the LES</u> .	No change	Policy revised to state that contact must be made with the family within 5 calendar days of when a referral is received (not “made”) – to be consistent with policy 2.3.4.
3.2.8 	A minimum of three documented consecutive unsuccessful attempts to contact the family using more than one method of contact must be made prior to eligibility determination and the consent for services before closing a child to <u>Early Steps</u> due to unsuccessful contact attempts	N/A	Policy deleted based on anticipated guidance from the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) in the US Department of Education, reversing previous guidance from OSEP related to closure due to unsuccessful attempts to contact.
3.5.1 	No change	A. The focus of the <u>evaluation</u> should be consistent with the area(s) of concern as indicated by the first contact information and/or developmental <u>screening</u> . B. The purpose of evaluation is to expeditiously confirm eligibility for <u>early intervention services</u> by determining the child’s level of functioning. C. An evaluation is conducted only for the initial IFSP to establish eligibility and is not required for the <u>annual evaluation of the IFSP</u> . D. The <i>Developmental Assessment of Young Children (DAYC)</i> or the <i>Battelle</i>	Guidance revised to be consistent with changes to policies 3.1.4 and 3.1.11. It no longer states that an evaluation is conducted only at initial eligibility determination.

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		<p><i>Developmental Inventory (BDI-2 should be considered first as the evaluation instrument, when appropriate for the child's presenting condition(s).</i></p> <p>E. Neither the DAYC nor the BDI-2 may be appropriate for a child with a single area of concern. If necessary, other <u>evaluation</u> instruments may be administered in specific <u>discipline</u> areas(s) to further determine a child's eligibility. This may especially be helpful when a child falls in the borderline area of eligibility.</p> <p>F. For children who have communication or motor skills as their only area of concern, one of the testing instruments should produce individual scores in the sub-domains of fine and gross motor or receptive and expressive language (such as the Preschool Language Scale 4 (PLS4) for communication domain).</p> <p>G. For a child who fails the secondary screening for Autism Spectrum Disorder, the <u>LES</u> may make a referral to the child's medical home or other community resource, if available, for a diagnostic evaluation. If no other resource is available, the Local Early Steps may evaluate the child for an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) if an ASD diagnosis is necessary to ensure appropriate, quality early intervention services that meet the developmental needs of the child and the needs of the family related to enhancing</p>	

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		the child's development. The Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (ADOS) should be considered first.	
COMPONENT 4– SERVICE COORDINATION			
Number	Policy	Guidance/Procedures	Summary of Change
4.2.18 	<u>The service coordinator must explain to the family, whenever a child's standard scores on eligibility evaluations do not meet the Early Steps eligibility criteria and the child is initially made eligible by other documented sources beyond standard scores:</u> A. <u>The basis on which the child is being made eligible; and that</u> B. <u>Services may be provided for a limited period of up to six months unless the child is re-determined eligible.</u>	N/A	New policy added directing the service coordinator to ensure the family is made aware of eligibility rationale and potential for limited time period for services when a child is initially made eligible based on sources beyond standard scores.
COMPONENT 5– INDIVIDUALIZED FAMILY SUPPORT PLAN (IFSP)			
Number	Policy	Guidance/Procedures	Summary of Change
5.3.13 	No change	A determination of <u>initial or continuing</u> eligibility is recorded on <u>Form D</u> . This form may also be used to describe recommendations for children not found eligible, if any and as appropriate.	Guidance revised to address determination and documentation of continuing eligibility on Form D, consistent with policy changes in 3.1.4 and 3.1.11.
5.5.3 	No change	If family members, other than the parents, and/or advocate(s) are unable to attend the initial IFSP meeting, arrangements should be	Guidance updated to clarify that persons directly involved in conducting the evaluation and/or

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		<p>made to facilitate their participation through a <u>Persons directly involved in conducting the evaluation and/or assessment and persons who will be providing services to the child or family may participate through</u> telephone conference call, emails, or videoconferencing. etc. Participation may also include the submission of reports via mail, or fax. The service coordinator should encourage the family to invite individuals involved in child's life to be part of the IFSP development.</p>	<p>assessment and persons who will be providing services to the child or family may participate in initial IFSP through other means.</p>
<p>5.6.4</p> 	<p>No change</p>	<p>A. If family members, other than the parents, and/or advocate(s) are unable to attend the periodic review, arrangements should be made to facilitate their participation.</p> <p>A. If the evaluators/assessors, service providers, and/or other needed persons are unable to attend the periodic review, arrangements should be made to facilitate their participation through a telephone conference call, designated knowledgeable representative, making available pertinent records, emails, videoconferencing, etc. Participation may also include the submission of reports via mail or fax before the periodic review.</p> <p>B. In keeping with the Early Steps team-based <u>Primary Service Provider</u> approach to service delivery, all members of the <u>IFSP team</u> are encouraged to participate in the periodic review in some capacity.</p> <p>C. Examples of situations that may</p>	<p>Guidance updated to remove duplicative language related to participants in the periodic review of the IFSP.</p>

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		<p>especially warrant the involvement of evaluators/ assessors, service providers, and/or others needed at the periodic review include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When a service provider is providing an update on the progress of the child toward achieving the identified outcomes on the IFSP, s/he will be involved in the periodic review. 2. When a service provider is acting in a dual role as a member of the evaluation team and then as the primary service provider, s/he will be involved in the periodic review. 3. When the child is served by CMS, then the medical professional who conducted the evaluations and/or assessments will be involved in the periodic review. 4. When the child is in custody of DCF under Chapter 39 F.S., then the DCF caseworker or his/her designee will be involved in the periodic review to provide written consent for modified medical services. 	
<p>5.7.4</p> 	<p>No change</p>	<p>A. If family members, other than the parents, and/or advocate(s) are unable to attend the annual evaluation of the IFSP, arrangements should be made to facilitate their participation through a telephone</p>	<p>Guidance updated to remove duplicative language related to participants in annual IFSP meeting.</p>

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		<p>conference call, emails, videoconferencing, etc.</p> <p>Service providers who also provide on-going <u>assessment</u> and <u>evaluation</u> of the child are regarded as evaluators and assessors and therefore their participation is required at the annual evaluation of the IFSP meeting.</p>	
<p>IFSP Form D</p> 	<p>Related to Operations Guide 5.3.13 above</p>	<p><u>Form D: Your Child's Eligibility Evaluation Information</u></p> <p>(Complete Form D for the initial IFSP only)</p> <p>For your child's first IFSP, an evaluation may be completed with your child to determine <u>initial or continuing</u> eligibility, prior to or during assessment. The eligibility information is recorded on this page.</p>	<p>Form revised to be consistent with changes to operations guide 5.3.13 clarifying that the form is completed not only for the initial or first IFSP but may be completed to document continuing eligibility.</p>
<p>Attachment: IFSP Instr. for Form D pp. 29 - 33</p> 	<p>Related to Operations Guide 5.3.13 above</p>	<p>Process</p> <p>The evaluation team determines <u>initial</u> eligibility for early intervention services. The team conducts an initial evaluation in all domains, with a focus in the area(s) in which first contact information and/or developmental screening indicated a concern, to determine the child's current developmental level. The family should be involved in planning for and conducting the evaluation.</p> <p>The evaluation/assessment may take place immediately prior to the scheduled initial IFSP</p>	<p>IFSP Instructions revised to be consistent with changes to operations guide 5.3.13 clarifying that the form is completed not only for the initial or first IFSP but may be completed to document continuing eligibility.</p>

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		<p>meeting or within a reasonably close amount of time, as determined by the family and evaluation/assessment team. Form D should be completed as part of the evaluation/assessment process and reviewed during the IFSP meeting, if needed. Form D serves as the written evaluation report.</p> <p><u>When determining continuing eligibility, Form D will also serve to document the updated finding.</u></p> <p><u>Instructions for Completing Form D</u></p> <p><u>(Complete Form D for the initial IFSP only)</u></p> <p>For your child's first IFSP, an evaluation may be completed with your child to determine <u>initial or continuing</u> eligibility, prior to or during assessment. The eligibility information is recorded on this page.</p> <p>Date of Evaluation (if performed): Enter the date of the evaluation to determine eligibility if it was completed as part of this IFSP. This date will be the same as the assessment date on Form E if the evaluation and assessment are conducted concurrently.</p> <p>Chronological Age: This is the child's age according to the calendar. For example, if a child is born on 5/23/09 and the IFSP is written on 9/28/10, the chronological age is 1 year, 4 months or 16 months.</p> <p>Language Used: Enter the language(s) in</p>	

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		<p>which tests and other evaluation materials and procedures are administered.</p> <p>Method(s) of Evaluation: Indicate method(s) and tool(s) used for the evaluation.</p> <p>Test Instrument(s) Administered: Enter the names of the tool(s) used to conduct the evaluation.</p> <p>Parent Report: Check if parent report was used.</p> <p>Professional Observation: Check if professional observation was used.</p> <p>Collateral Information/Source: Check if collateral information was used and identify the source of the information. Collateral information should be filed in the child's record.</p> <p>Eligibility Evaluation Results: This area is used to document the findings of the eligibility evaluation in the five developmental areas below. Evidence of informed clinical opinion should be included within each section as appropriate:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Using Hands and Body (Gross/Fine Motor Skills) 2. Eating, Dressing, and Toileting (Self-Help/Adaptive Skills) 3. Expressing and Responding to Feelings and Interacting with Others (Social/Emotional) 	

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		<p>4. Playing, Thinking, Exploring (Academic/Cognitive including pre-literacy skills)</p> <p>5. Understanding and Communicating (Receptive and Expressive Communication)</p> <p>Results: Indicate the standard score used in determining eligibility in the right-hand column. A standard score must be documented on Form D.</p> <p>Evaluation Team Signatures</p> <p>The eligibility evaluation team is the same as the assessment team. Please see Form E for signatures. Check if the eligibility evaluation team is the same as the assessment team. If the evaluation and assessment team are the same individuals, they only need to sign once on Form E.</p> <p>The eligibility evaluation team is different from the assessment team. Please sign below. Check if the eligibility evaluation team is different from the assessment team.</p> <p>If the evaluation team is different from the assessment team, the evaluation team members must sign and list credentials on Form D and the assessment team on Form E.</p> <p>Eligibility Determination</p> <p>Eligible for Early Steps (Part C: Early Intervention) based on the following: Check this box if the child is found eligible for</p>	

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		<p>Early Steps.</p> <p>Established Condition of: Check this box if the child has an established condition and fill in the blank with the appropriate diagnosis. If the local school district serves children birth to three, it will be necessary to provide copies of the physician’s statement to document eligibility for children with an established condition.</p> <p>Developmental Delay in the area(s) of: Check this box if the child has a developmental delay, and fill in the blank with the appropriate developmental domain(s).</p> <p>Not eligible for Early Steps (Part C: Early Intervention) based on evaluations completed this day and the IFSP does not need to be completed. The evaluation team makes the following recommendations to the family: Check this box if the child is found not eligible for Early Steps and write any recommendations that the team has for the family. The team should suggest strategies for providing natural learning opportunities to increase skills when they identify the child has the ability to perform certain skills, but lacks the opportunity. Recommendations may also include resources and information to address family concerns and any appropriate referrals.</p>	

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		<p>How to Use this Information</p> <p>The eligibility evaluation information on Form D is used to establish eligibility and will only be completed for children without an established condition. For those children, Form D in its entirety is completed for the initial IFSP, however, the Eligibility Determination section of Form D should be completed for all children and this information will be included on subsequent IFSPs. It is rare that the basis of the child's eligibility will change from year to year; therefore the eligibility information from the initial IFSP can be repeated in subsequent IFSPs.</p>	
<p>IFSP Form G</p> 		<p>To be Added to IFSP Form G:</p> <p><u>Medical Necessity: If your child is a Medicaid recipient, the services reimbursed by Medicaid must be medically necessary. The following is an explanation of the medical necessity of your child's services, if applicable:</u></p>	<p>Form revised to allow clear documentation of medical necessity for services for children who are Medicaid recipients.</p>
COMPONENT 6 – EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES AND SUPPORTS			
Number	Policy	Guidance/Procedures	Summary of Change
6.12.0 Requirements for Children/Families with Inactive Status			
<p>6.12.1</p> 	<p>The Local Early Steps must ensure that no child and family, who have been determined eligible for Early Steps and have an IFSP, are closed to Early Steps because the child and family could not be</p>	<p>"It would be inconsistent with Part C of the IDEA for a State to adopt a procedure that after the third time the early interventionist comes to a home for a scheduled visit and finds no one home . . . that the family receive</p>	<p>Section 6.12.0 Policy and Operations Guide "Requirements for Children/Families with Inactive Status" to be deleted based on anticipated guidance from Office</p>

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	located.	prior written notice, along with a copy of their rights, that their child will be exited from the system unless they are able to call or write to schedule and be present for, another visit. The State cannot assume the parent has revoked consent for services listed on the existing IFSP or that the consent provided for those services is time-limited." [Excerpt from OSEP letter to Connecticut, October 24, 2003]	of Special Education Programs (OSEP) in the US Department of Education and replaced by a new section 6.12.0 as outlined below.
6.12.2 	The LES will designate a child and family that has an IFSP and cannot be located as "inactive" after appropriate and reasonable attempts to contact the family have been taken.	A. The LES may designate the child/family as "inactive" when: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mail is returned and not forwarded. 2. The phone is disconnected. 3. The physician(s) can't locate the child/family. 4. The provider(s) can't locate the child/family. 5. Phone calls are not being returned and/or letters are not being responded to by the family. 6. Several impromptu home visits were made and the family is not home or doesn't answer the door. B. When entering data in the EarlySteps data system: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Indicate inactive status by choosing disposition code of "I" for "inactive." 2. Enter a disposition date of when the 	Section 6.12.0 Policy and Operations Guide "Requirements for Children/Families with Inactive Status" to be deleted based on anticipated guidance from Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) in the US Department of Education and replaced by a new section 6.12.0 as outlined below

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		<p style="text-align: center;">child became inactive.</p> <p>C. The <u>service coordinator</u> may attempt to contact the <u>inactive family</u> at least every 6 months. The <u>service coordinator</u> is not required to make quarterly contact with the family and other service providers.</p> <p>Suggestions related to attempting to contact families in inactive status:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The <u>service coordinator</u> should send a letter to the family at their last known address to attempt to reestablish contact and schedule a review of the <u>IFSP</u> or <u>annual meeting to evaluate the IFSP</u>. 2. The <u>service coordinator</u> may also call the family at their last known phone number as back up. 3. The <u>service coordinator</u> may contact others who have knowledge of the family for assistance in getting information to the family. 4. The <u>service coordinator</u> should document, in the <u>Early Steps record</u>, all attempts to contact the family and file all returned mail in the <u>Early Steps record</u> along with the envelope. 5. Do not send a letter to the family stating "if we do not hear from you by this date, we will terminate you from <u>Early Steps</u>." 	

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<p>6.12.3</p> 	<p>The <u>LES</u> shall ensure that Early Steps services and supports listed on <u>Form G</u> of the <u>IFSP</u> are terminated once the child and family have been designated “inactive”.</p>		<p>Section 6.12.0 Policy and Operations Guide “Requirements for Children/Families with Inactive Status” to be deleted based on anticipated guidance from Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) in the US Department of Education and replaced by a new section 6.12.0 as outlined below</p>
<p>6.12.4</p> 	<p>The <u>service coordinator</u> will provide written prior notice to the <u>family</u> indicating the termination of the specific <u>Early Steps</u> services on the <u>IFSP</u> prior to the end date of the authorization period on the <u>IFSP</u>.</p>	<p>Written prior notice is required because the services are being terminated even though the child remains open in the <u>Early Steps</u> <u>data system</u>.</p>	<p>Section 6.12.0 Policy and Operations Guide “Requirements for Children/Families with Inactive Status” to be deleted based on anticipated guidance from Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) in the US Department of Education and replaced by a new section 6.12.0 as outlined below</p>
<p>6.12.5</p> 	<p>[Reserved]</p>		<p>Section 6.12.0 Policy and Operations Guide “Requirements for Children/Families with Inactive Status” to be deleted based on anticipated guidance from Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) in the US Department of Education and replaced by a new section 6.12.0 as outlined below</p>

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<p>6.12.6</p> 	<p>The LES will close a child and family who have been identified as “inactive” from Early Steps only when:</p> <p>A. The family responds to attempts to contact and withdraws from Early Steps, or</p> <p>B. The family responds to attempts to contact and it is determined via review of the IFSP outcomes with the family that the child has met all <u>outcomes</u> and is no longer in need of Early Steps services, or</p> <p>C. The child turns three.</p>	<p>A. When the family responds to the attempt to contact and/or the child turns three, the “I” disposition code should be changed in the Early Steps data system.</p> <p>B. The disposition date for when the child became inactive needs be changed to the date the family responds to the attempt to contact or the date child turns three.</p>	<p>Section 6.12.0 Policy and Operations Guide “Requirements for Children/Families with Inactive Status” to be deleted based on anticipated guidance from Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) in the US Department of Education replaced by a new section 6.12.0 as outlined below</p>
<p>6.12.1</p> 	<p>At the time of a periodic review or <u>annual meeting to evaluate the IFSP</u>, the <u>IFSP team</u> may determine that <u>decide to end early intervention services and close the child/family to Early Steps. This decision may be made when all of the outcomes have been achieved, the family has no further concerns or needs, the child is functioning comparably to same age peers</u> and there is no reason for the child or <u>family</u> to continue in <u>Early Steps</u>. In this situation, a plan for transitioning out of Early Steps is discussed, termination dates decided, and, at the appropriate time, the child’s record is closed. A child should not be terminated from Early Steps based solely on developmental status. The IFSP team should consider;</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Former section 6.12.0 Policy and Operations Guide “Requirements for Children/Families with Inactive Status” to be deleted based on anticipated guidance from Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) in the US Department of Education. A new section 6.12.0 “Closure to Early Steps is created. Language moved from 7.1.1 D Guide and revised slightly to outline criteria for deciding to close a child to Early Steps during a periodic review or annual meeting to evaluate the IFSP.</p>

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	<p>for example, whether the continued provision of services is required or likely to be required for the child to maintain appropriate developmental progress.</p>		
<p>6.12.2</p> 	<p>Prior to closure, the service coordinator must:</p> <p>A. Provide the family with developmentally appropriate materials necessary for the child to continue making developmental gains.</p> <p>B. Instruct the family how to reinitiate a referral to Early Steps if new concerns arise.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Former section 6.12.0 “Requirements for Children/Families with Inactive Status” deleted and a new section 6.12.0 “Closure to Early Steps” created. Language moved from 7.1.1 E Guide.</p>
<p>6.12.3</p> 	<p><u>A minimum of three documented consecutive unsuccessful attempts to contact the family using more than one method of contact must be made before closing a child to Early Steps due to unsuccessful contact attempts.</u></p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Former section 6.12.0 “Requirements for Children/Families with Inactive Status” deleted and a new section 6.12.0 “Closure to Early Steps” created. Language from deleted policy 3.2.8 moved to this section and revised as it applies to any child closed due to unsuccessful attempts, not only those closed prior to eligibility determination, IFSP development and consent to services.</p>

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<p>6.12.4</p> 	<p><u>Early Steps</u> services must be terminated by the child's third birthday. Appropriate uses of <u>IDEA, Part C</u> funds after a child's third birthday would be to:</p> <p>A. Fund a <u>service coordinator's</u> attendance at an initial <u>IEP</u> meeting for a child transitioning from <u>IDEA, Part C</u> to <u>IDEA, Part B</u>.</p> <p>B. Pay for the administration of the exit <u>evaluation</u> for child <u>outcome</u> measurement.</p> <p>C. Provide compensatory services after a child's third birthday, because it has been determined, via one of the following means, that services have been delayed or interrupted due to some failure on the part of the <u>LES</u> or service provider.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hearing decision, 2. State complaint decision, 3. Mediation agreement, or 4. Finding through other general supervision activities. 	<p>A. <u>IDEA, Part C</u> funds end for children as of the day of their third birthday.</p> <p>B. The timeframe for the administration of the exit <u>evaluation</u> for the child outcome measurement system is specified in the <i>Flowchart and Decision Rules for Entry and Exit for Child Outcome Assessments</i> at www.tats.ucf.edu/.</p>	<p>Former section 6.12.0 "Requirements for Children/Families with Inactive Status" deleted and a new section 6.12.0 "Closure to Early Steps" created. Language moved from 7.8.1 Policy and Operations Guide.</p>
<p>6.12.5</p> 	<p><u>IDEA, Part C</u> does not apply to any child with disabilities receiving a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in accordance with 34 CFR, Part 300.</p>	<p>A child may not be provided services authorized by an <u>IFSP</u> under <u>IDEA, Part C</u> and by an <u>IEP</u> under <u>IDEA, Part B</u>. Any IDEA, Part C eligible child under three for whom an IEP is to be developed, must be closed to IDEA, Part C before they can receive services under IDEA, Part B.</p>	<p>Former section 6.12.0 "Requirements for Children/Families with Inactive Status" deleted and a new section 6.12.0 "Closure to Early Steps" created. Language moved from 7.8.3 Policy and Operations</p>

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			Guide.
COMPONENT 7 – EARLY CHILDHOOD TRANSITIONS			
Number	Policy	Guidance/Procedures	Summary of Change
7.2.5 	<p><u>LEA</u> notification and the <u>opt-out</u> option will be discussed with the <u>parents</u> no later than the <u>IFSP</u> meeting or periodic review closest to the child's 2nd birthday and, for children determined eligible for <u>Early Steps</u> after the child's 2nd birthday, at the initial IFSP meeting.</p> <p>No later than the initial <u>IFSP</u> meeting for children referred after age two or the <u>IFSP</u> periodic review closest to the child's 2nd birthday for all other children, the <u>parents</u> will indicate orally at the meeting whether they choose to <u>opt-out</u> of <u>LEA notification</u> for their child.</p> <p>Notification will be provided for children in inactive status per Policy Handbook 6.12.0 and parents of these children may not have the opportunity to opt out of LEA notification. The last known address should be used when determining which school district to notify for children in inactive status.</p>	No change	Revised policy to be consistent with other changes regarding inactive status.
7.8.1 	<p><u>The LES must assist families in preparing for transitions to new settings and changes in service delivery even when the child is not turning three years of age and/or leaving Early Steps.</u></p>	<p>A. For infants determined eligible for <u>Early Steps</u> while in the hospital, the <u>service coordinator</u> should:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct a review of the <u>IFSP</u>, its implementation and impact of the 	Language moved from Operations Guide 7.1.1 A-C, updated and included in a revised section (7.8.0 – Other Transitions) outlining the process related to transitions other than the transition

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		<p>services provided prior to hospital discharge to determine whether any changes need to be made in the services provided.(Note: The eligibility process and IFSP development should not be delayed due to hospitalization, nor should they be postponed until discharge.)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Obtain input from other service providers and <u>family</u> regarding the appropriateness of the current IFSP. (Note: For children dually enrolled and served by Early Steps and <u>CMS Network</u>, the Early Steps service coordinator will include the CMS Network care coordinator in the flow of activities and sequence of events delineated throughout the transition process.) 3. Address issues related to the transition from hospital to home. 4. Coordinate Early Steps transition activities with hospital discharge planning. <p>B. For children transitioning between <u>LES</u> in Florida, the <u>sending service coordinator</u> should:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct a review of the <u>IFSP</u> to add concerns, priorities, resources and <u>outcomes</u> regardless of the next IFSP review due date. 	<p>to IDEA, Part B.</p>

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		<p>2. Obtain consent from the family to <u>s</u>Share information with the receiving entity.</p> <p>Refer family to other agencies and services as appropriate, with consent of the family.</p> <p>3. Document transition planning activities in case notes.</p> <p>Upon consent, send information such as IFSP's, case notes, provider notes, and other pertinent information from the Early Steps record to the receiving entity. Whenever permissible, the actual <u>Early Steps record</u> should be transferred when the receiving entity is another LES.</p> <p>4. Provide name and phone number of the contact person at the receiving entity to the family.</p> <p>5. Notify current service providers regarding family's plans and expected end date for services.</p> <p>6. Ensure the <u>Early Steps record</u> is transferred from the sending <u>LES</u> to the receiving LES.</p> <p>Conduct an <u>IFSP</u> review shortly after family moves, regardless of the next IFSP review due date.</p> <p>7. Contact the family after the transition to ensure that a link was made with the receiving entity within 30 days of</p>	

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		<p>the transition.</p> <p>8. Close the child's Early Steps record in the Early Steps data system.</p> <p><u>The receiving service coordinator should:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Open the child's Early Steps record in the Early Steps data system.</u> 2. Conduct an IFSP periodic review shortly after <u>family moves arrives</u>, regardless of the next IFSP review due date. 3. <u>Refer family to other agencies and services as appropriate, with consent of the family.</u> <p>C. For children transitioning and leaving the state, the <u>service coordinator</u> should:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>With parental consent, send information such as IFSPs, case notes, provider notes, and other pertinent information from the Early Steps record to the receiving state program.</u> <p>Obtain consent from the family to share information with the receiving state program, if known.</p> <p>Upon consent, send information such as IFSPs, case notes, provider notes, and other pertinent information from the Early Steps record to the receiving state program.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Notify current service providers 	

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		regarding family's plans and expected end date for services. 3. Close the child's Early Steps records in the Early Steps data system .	
7.8.2 	LES must provide written prior notice to the family indicating termination of Early Steps services prior to closing a child to Early Steps.	N/A	Language deleted as it is duplicative of language in 8.4.1 policy and operations guide.
COMPONENT 8– PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS			
Number	Policy	Guidance/Procedures	Summary of Change
8.5.2 	<u>ESSO, LES</u> and service providers must provide written prior notice and obtain written <u>consent</u> from the <u>parent</u> or guardian in order to obtain, release or exchange <u>personally identifiable information</u> concerning the child and <u>family</u> except as specified in <u>Policy Handbook 8.5.6</u> . This also includes the verbal sharing of personally identifiable information.	N/A	Revised to clarify that the requirement to provide notice in writing of the intent to obtain, release or exchange personally identifiable information per IDEA 34 CFR 303.401 is not the same as the requirement to provide 'written prior notice' per IDEA 34 CFR 303.403.
8.6.1 	<u>ESSO, Local Early Steps</u> and service providers will ensure the confidentiality of <u>personally identifiable information, data</u> and records collected, used or maintained, including the right of <u>parents</u> to written prior notice of and written parental <u>consent</u> to the exchange of personally identifiable information among agencies, consistent with Federal and State law.	N/A	Revised to clarify that the right to be noticed in writing regarding the exchange of personally identifiable information per IDEA 34 CFR 303.401 is not the same as the requirement regarding 'written prior notice' per IDEA 34 CFR 303.403.

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COMPONENT 9– FAMILY INVOLVEMENT			
No Changes			
COMPONENT 10 – PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT AND STANDARDS			
Number	Policy	Guidance/Procedures	Summary of Change
10.3.4 	Except as specified in Policy Handbook 12.4.3 <u>Policy 10.3.5</u> , LES will use providers who have active provider records in the electronic data system, who are enrolled in the provider management system and have contracts or agreements for service provision with the <u>LES</u> . The LES will enter into contracts or agreements only with providers who are enrolled in the provider management system.	N/A	Language moved from Component 12 (formerly at 12.4.2) to a new policy because the content is more appropriate for component 10.
10.3.5 	<u>LES</u> will use providers who are not enrolled in the provider management system only when: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. The family's insurance policy requires use of a specific provider who is not enrolled, or B. The <u>IFSP team</u> authorizes a service for which there is no available enrolled provider. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. The use of a non-enrolled provider should be the rare exception and not the rule. B. When the <u>LES</u> must use a provider not enrolled in the <u>CMS</u> Provider Management System due to the circumstances described in Policy Handbook 10.3.5, the LES should provide information and assistance to such provider on enrolling in the CMS Provider Management System. C. The requirements of <u>Policy Handbook 6.1.4</u> supersede the use of a family's insurance provider. D. The Medicaid policy of Freedom of Choice must be followed. 	Language moved from Component 12 (formerly at 12.4.3) to a new policy because the content is more appropriate for component 10.

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COMPONENT 11 – INTERAGENCY AGREEMENTS			
No Changes			
COMPONENT 12 – DATA COLLECTION/REPORTING AND RECORD KEEPING			
Number	Policy	Guidance/Procedures	Summary of Change
12.3.11 	No change..	D. Following are the possible reasons for closure: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attempts to contact unsuccessful - Children for whom <u>who</u> Early Steps personnel have been unable to contact or locate <u>after making at least three consecutive documented attempts before the child and family have been determined eligible and have an IFSP.</u> 2. Attempts to contact unsuccessful - Children who Early Steps designated as "inactive" in the Early Steps data system and turned three years old. 2. Deceased - Children who died on or before their third birthday. 3. Completion of IFSP prior to reaching age 3 - Children who have not reached age 3, have completed their IFSP and no longer require services under Early Steps. 4. Transfer to Other Center/District - Children whose family has moved to another LES region for continued service and for whom contact has 	Language revised to be consistent with deletion of Policy 3.2.8 and changes to Policy 6.12.3 and to clarify that a child may be closed due to unsuccessful attempts at any time, not only prior to eligibility determination, IFSP development and consent to services. The "inactive" designation to be rescinded. Also corrected an error regarding the use of the term "referral" in D.7, when "parent" should have been used instead.

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		<p>been made with the receiving LES.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Not eligible for IDEA, Part B, exit with referrals to other programs - Children who reached their third birthday, were evaluated and determined not eligible for IDEA, Part B, and were referred to other programs, which may include preschool learning centers, Head Start (but not receiving IDEA, Part B services), and child care centers, and/or were referred for other services, which may include health and nutrition services, such as (Women, Infants and Children)WIC. 6. Not eligible for IDEA, Part B, exit with no referrals - Children who reached their third birthday, were evaluated and determined not eligible for IDEA, Part B, but were not referred to other programs. 7. Withdrawal by <u>parent referral</u> or guardian prior to IFSP -Children whose parents declined all services prior to IFSP development. 8. Withdrawn by parent or guardian after IFSP - Children whose parents declined all services after an IFSP was in place, as well as children whose parents declined to consent to IFSP services and provided written or verbal indication of withdrawal from services. 9. IDEA, Part B eligible, exiting IDEA, 	

New language denoted by red double underline. Deleted language stricken in red.

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		<p><u>Part C</u> -Children determined to be eligible for IDEA, Part B who exited (or will soon exit) IDEA, Part C. This includes children who receive IDEA, Part B services in conjunction with Head Start.</p> <p>10. Moved out of state - Children who moved out of state before their third birthday. Do not use this category for a child who moved within state (i.e., from one program to another).</p> <p>11. Not Eligible for Early Steps services - Children determined to NOT meet IDEA, Part C /<u>DEI</u> eligibility criteria at initial evaluation or based on review of relevant collateral information.</p> <p>12. Not considered for IDEA, Part B - Children who reached their third birthday and were not referred to IDEA, Part B. This category may be used to report children whose <u>parent</u> did not consent to an IDEA, Part B referral.</p> <p>13. IDEA, Part B eligibility not determined - Children who reached their third birthday and their IDEA, Part B eligibility has not been determined. This category includes children who were referred for IDEA, Part B evaluation, but for whom the eligibility determination has not yet been made or reported.</p>	

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12.5.4 	The LES will not maintain separate or shadow Early Steps records.	N/A	This section moved from 12.5.1 Operations Guide
12.5.5 	Closed Early Steps records must be maintained by the LES and Early Steps providers for a minimum of five (5) years from the date of closure.	N/A	Re-numbered as 12.5.5 (formerly 12.5.4) because new 12.5.4 was inserted.
12.6.2 	<p>A. The LES must collect the Natural Environment Travel Log from each Early Steps provider who will be reimbursed for travel to the child's natural environment for a service, IFSP meeting or consultation session destination. The minimum required fields to be completed are Provider Name, Provider Signature, Date, Point of Origin, Departure Time, Destination, and Arrival Time.</p> <p>B. <u>There is a maximum travel reimbursement of 60 minutes per child per day.</u></p> <p>C. <u>If an exception to the 60 minute maximum is found to be necessary for a particular child or children living in an outlying area, the LES must:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Inform their program manager of their travel exception policy prior to initiating.</u> 2. <u>Submit a justification and billing report for the travel exceptions</u> 	<p>A. The Natural Environment Travel Log serves two primary purposes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Statewide uniform documentation of travel paid to providers with contract funds. 2. Statewide uniform billing documentation for provider travel. <p>B. Travel is not reimbursable for providing traditional therapy sessions at the provider's official place of business.</p> <p>B. Travel is reimbursable for a provider to travel from their official place of business to the first destination for service delivery, and each subsequent destination for service delivery, and back to the provider's official place of business. A provider's official place of business could be their home; however, the provider cannot claim more than one official place of business.</p> <p>C. The LES can determine which fields, in addition to the minimum required fields,</p>	Policy and guidance revised to clarify the process for reimbursement for travel and to remove basic information already stated on the Natural Environment Travel Log Form.

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	<p><u>when submitting their monthly invoice.</u></p>	<p>the provider will complete, depending on the process the LES will use to verify/audit travel payments to providers.</p> <p>D. The Natural Environment Travel Log is designed to print on one page, front and back.</p> <p>E. The state approved Natural Environment Travel Log – EXCEL version calculates minutes/ mileage/ charge)</p>	
<p>Attachment NE Travel Log</p> 	<p>Related to Policy 12.6.2 above</p>	<p>This form serves two primary purposes:</p> <p>This form serves as statewide uniform documentation of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Billing for provider travel • Travel paid to providers with contract funds <p>Every provider who will be paid for time when traveling must complete a line on this form for travel to the child's natural environment for a service, or to an IFSP meeting or consultation session destination. Travel is not reimbursable for providing traditional therapy sessions in the home or at the provider's official place of business. Travel is reimbursable for a provider to travel from their official place of business to the first destination for service delivery, and each subsequent destination for service delivery, and back to the provider's official place of business. The maximum reimbursement of a single trip is \$30.00.</p> <p>Recording travel time is a habit that is easily learned. Keep a supply of travel logs in a</p>	<p>Natural Environments Travel Log and Form revised to be consistent with changes to Policy and Guide 12.6.2</p>

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		<p>notebook or clipboard with a cover sheet, to hide the child names from casual observers, in your vehicle. Always record your information before you start your car or get out of your car. After you do this for a week or two, it will become a habit.</p> <p>Field Entry Guidance: NOTE: This form is designed to print on one page, front and back</p> <p>Provider Name = The name of the provider traveling to reimbursable destinations. Each individual provider must record travel on their own form.</p> <p>Date = Day of travel. One form can be used for multiple days of travel.</p> <p>Point of origin, Address = When you get in your vehicle Enter the address where travel begins. This cannot be your home address unless that is your official place of business. For your subsequent destinations, enter SAME if your Point of Origin is the same as the previous Point of Destination where services were delivered. Otherwise, enter a new Point of Origin address. If you are using the Excel version of this form and the address does not fit in the box you can make the row taller so the entire address shows. FORMAT, ROW, HEIGHT</p> <p>Time of Departure/Odometer = When you get in your vehicle to begin travel, enter the time and the odometer reading.</p> <p>Destination, Child's Name & Address = Enter the child's name who will be receiving service, or who will be discussed at a consultation session or IFSP meeting. Enter the address where service delivery, consultation, or IFSP meeting will take place, or at the end of the day, the address of your official place of business. This cannot be your home address unless that is your official</p>	

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		<p>place of business. Any return trip from a place of service delivery/consultation/IFSP meeting is added to the time for travel of the last destination and billed to that last child.</p> <p>Time of Arrival/Odometer = At your destination, before getting out of the vehicle, Enter the time of arrival to the destination and the odometer reading.</p> <p>Minutes Spent In Travel (1 unit = 1 minute) /Mileage = These are the calculations of the minutes between the departure and arrival times and the beginning and ending odometer readings. This form is in an Excel format that will calculate these values automatically after you have entered the departure and arrival times and the odometer reading at departure and arrival. <u>There is a maximum travel reimbursement of 60 minutes per child per day.</u></p> <p>OPTIONAL FEATURE (Check with your Local Early Steps to ask if this is required in your area): The highlighted area under the Minutes Spent In Travel (1 unit = 1 minute) /Mileage section can be used for the family's signature if your Local Early Steps requires this verification of travel time. If the travel is for a consultation session or IFSP meeting the family can also sign, or if they are not face to face with the team, the service coordinator or other team member can sign as verification.</p> <p>When the log is full or your invoicing period is over, the provider must sign at the top right of the form to attest to the accuracy of the information. This form must accompany the invoice billing the travel to the Local Early Steps.</p>	

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COMPONENT 13 – DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION AND INTERVENTION (DEI)			
No Changes			
DEFINITIONS			
Number	Policy	Guidance/Procedures	Summary of Change
Annual Evaluation of the IFSP	A face-to-face annual review of a child's development in all domains, including review of existing evaluations and assessments from community providers <u>and a determination of continuing eligibility</u> . The IFSP team will review the success and appropriateness of the services authorized on the IFSP and considers revision(s) of the Individualized Family Support Plan as needed and agreed upon by the Individualized Family Support Plan Team. At a minimum, the family, service coordinator and at least one other professional member of the team must attend.		Definition revised to be consistent with changes to policies 3.1.11, 3.5.1, and 5.3.13.
Scaled score	<u>A conversion of a raw score on a test or a version of the test to a common scale that allows for a numerical comparison between children/students. Scaled scores are particularly useful for comparing test scores over time since the scale will control slight variations for a test that has changed over the years, resulting in several different versions. In Early Steps the terminology "scaled score" often refers to the score for a BDI-2 subdomain with a mean of 10.</u>		New definition added to clarify changes to policy 3.1.4.