

**INFANT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM:
REFERRAL, ASSESSMENT, ELIGIBILITY, AND SERVICES**

Sacramento County Infant Development Program

The Sacramento County Infant Development Program (IDP) offers:

- Guidance, information and counseling to families of disabled and at-risk infants and toddlers from birth to thirty-six (36) months at no cost to the family;
- Assessment of a child and a program plan designed to encourage developmental progress; and
- Parent education in developmentally appropriate interventions in the child's areas of need.

The Sacramento County IDP and Alta California Regional Centers (ACRC) provide Early Start Services for the District to support at-risk infants and toddlers and to increase developmental skills to better prepare them for school. ACRC asks the Sacramento County IDP to provide service(s) to children who are not meeting developmental milestones, as the IDP is a vendor who can provide services through ACRC. The following referral procedure is appropriate for all agencies and individuals involved with CA Early Start Services.

Referral Procedure

Most referrals for Early Start Services are made to IDP by the parent/guardian or come from ACRC. A parent/guardian, physician, other service provider or any knowledgeable person may make a referral.

The referral is made based on a child's delay in developmental milestones from birth to three years of age to see if Early Start Services via IDP are necessary. The IDP accepts and responds to all referrals for assessment year-round.

Multi-Disciplinary Assessment Procedure

The IDP is responsible for a full developmental assessment and determining the needs of the child. The assessments are conducted by a multidisciplinary team (Special Ed Teacher, Speech Therapist, Nurse, School Psychologist, etc.) for purposes of service planning. Parent/guardian consent for evaluation must be obtained prior to assessment.

Team members will schedule and complete assessments of the child's developmental skills within 45 days of the referral.

(34 C.F.R. § 303.310.)

If a child is eligible for CA Early Start Services, an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) will be developed that addresses the strengths and needs of the infant or toddler, parental concerns, and early intervention services.

Eligibility Procedure

The IDP shall be responsible for scheduling and conducting an IFSP team meeting within 45 days of the receipt of the oral or written referral. Children may be eligible if there is a 33% delay in any developmental area (communication, physical, social/emotional, self-help, cognition, or adaptive). A child may also be eligible as “established risk,” which means a condition that has a high risk of requiring special services (such as deaf/hard of hearing, visual impairments, and orthopedic impairments). IFSP team meetings shall be held:

- In a setting and at a time that is convenient for families;
- In a place that is a natural location for the child; and
- In the language of the parent’s choice. When needed, an interpreter shall be provided.

Written notice shall be provided to the family and all participants in a timely manner.

Members of an IFSP team (for purposes of developing, revising or reviewing, determining eligibility, and/or recommending placement) for any child may include:

- Parent(s)/guardian - any family members or advocate may attend with parent/guardian permission;
- A surrogate should be appointed, if a parent cannot be located (see information on Surrogate Parents in the Procedural Guide);
- ACRC Service Coordinator;
- Service Providers - persons who will be providing early intervention services under this part to the child or family. This may also include a special education teacher.
- Evaluators - persons directly involved in conducting the evaluations.

If a person listed above is unable to attend an IFSP meeting, arrangements must be made for their involvement through other means, including:

- Participating by telephone or virtually;
- Having a knowledgeable representative attend the meeting; or
- Making pertinent records available at the IFSP.

(34 C.F.R. § 303.343.)

Content of the IFSP

With the agreement of the family, the IFSP shall include the following information:

- A summary of the child's strengths and present abilities, including present levels of development in all relevant areas, based on assessments of qualified professionals and information provided by parents.
- A statement of the family's priorities and concerns relating to the development of the child.
- A statement of the family's resources (including communication, child care, public agencies, financial, etc.).
- Major outcomes expected for the child, including criteria, procedures and timelines used to determine if outcomes are met.
- Other services to be provided, including the type of service and funding source or steps needed to secure the service of the agency providing each service.
- The name of the ACRC Service Coordinator.

The contents of the IFSP and any changes to the IFSP during the year will be fully explained in the IFSP team meeting (annual and periodic reviews) and a copy of all documents will be given to the parents.

(34 C.F.R. § 303.344.)

Services

All Early Start Services are on a voluntary basis and provided free of charge to the family. Informed written consent from the parents shall be obtained prior to starting or changing any Early Start Services described in the IFSP. If the parents do not provide consent to a particular service listed in the IFSP or if they withdraw consent after first providing it, that service may not be provided. However, the Early Start Services, to which the parents do consent shall be provided.

Specific Early Start Services necessary to meet the needs of the child and the family to achieve the outcomes include:

- The frequency and intensity of service(s);
- The method of service(s);
- The length of time the service(s) are provided;
- The location in which the services will be provided; and
- The projected date for initiation/duration of each service.

(34 C.F.R. § 303.344(d).)

Overview of the Process

Referral is made for assessment→ Parent consent for testing obtained→ Multidisciplinary team assesses child→ Meeting held within 45 days of the referral to review results→ If eligible, an IFSP will be created→ Services will be provided by a vendor of ACRC.

Immediate Provision of Services

An interim IFSP for an eligible child may be developed before the completion of the assessment if there is an immediate need and the parent(s) have given written permission. The interim IFSP must meet the following requirements:

1. The immediate need must be documented in the child's record.
2. An interim IFSP shall assign a service coordinator and identify the immediate service to be provided.
3. An interim IFSP shall be followed by an IFSP meeting within the 45-day period that began with the referral.

(34 C.F.R. § 303.345.)

Transfers

Existing information shall be used whenever possible to determine continued or initial eligibility and to minimize delays in the provision of appropriate services when a child's school district of residence is changed to another Local Education Agency. This would be referred to as an interim IFSP.

Review Procedures

The IDP shall schedule and conduct a periodic review of the IFSP for a child every six months or more often if requested by the parent, County Office of Education or district of residence. The purpose of the review is to determine:

- The degree to which progress is being made; and
- Whether modification or revision of the outcomes or services is necessary.

An annual IFSP team meeting shall be held to review the IFSP and monitor the delivery of services. Results of current evaluations and other information shall be used to determine what services are needed and will be provided or continued for the following year.

The periodic review of the IFSP may be carried out by a meeting with other participants of the IFSP. Each periodic review shall provide for, at a minimum, the participation of the

parent/guardian and the ACRC Service Coordinator at a minimum.

(34 C.F.R. § 303.342.)

Transition Services

A Transition Planning Conference shall be scheduled with ACRC, family, and service providers by 2 years 6 months of age to discuss ending Early Start Services and whether or not the child should be referred to the school district of residence for a preschool assessment for special education services.