



DC Early Intervention Program FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What Is the DC Early Intervention Program?

The DC Early Intervention Program (DC EIP) serves as a single point of entry for infants and toddlers whose families or others have concerns about their development. DC EIP is charged with implementing the Infants and Toddlers Program under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part C (34 CFR, Part 303). Under this Act, DC EIP is responsible for services to young children, birth to three (3) years. Children are automatically eligible for early intervention services when they have a condition known to result in developmental delay (like Down syndrome). They are also eligible if they demonstrate a 50% developmental delay in any one of five developmental areas (cognitive, physical, communication, social/emotional, and adaptive). Under special circumstances, children may also be determined eligible based on additional information indicating that there is a potential delay in areas that are difficult to assess with standard measures.

What Are Early Intervention Services?

Early Intervention services are designed to meet the needs of the child. DCEIP provides a variety of services such as occupational, physical and speech/language therapy, as well as special instruction, vision, and audiology (hearing) services. Early intervention services may also include services for the family designed to assist in the child's development. Services for the family include family counseling, training, and home visits.

Who Can Refer a Child to DC EIP?

The DC EIP accepts referrals from anyone who has concerns about a child's development including parents, family members, friends, physicians, hospitals, Medicaid, child care staff, and social workers.

What Happens When a Child Is Referred?

DC EIP will work with the family to determine if the need for a multidisciplinary evaluation of the child's developmental levels is needed. As part of this process, and with the parent's permission, a screening may be completed. If an evaluation is needed, it will be conducted with parental consent. The evaluation will focus on specific child development skills in the following areas:

- Physical – how the child moves, uses hands, sees and hears
- Cognitive – how the child thinks and learns
- Communication – how the child understands language, makes beginning speech sounds, and uses speech
- Social/Emotional – how the child copes, interacts, and gets along with others
- Adaptive - how the child does activities such as eating, drinking, dressing, and toileting

If the child is eligible for services, an Individualized Family Services Plan (IFSP) will be developed with input from the family. This plan will describe the services needed by the child and family and how they will be provided.

Who Pays for Services?

Federal law requires that specific services be provided at public expense to children and families who are eligible. These include:

- Activities Related to Child Find/Referral
- Evaluation/Assessment
- IFSP Development and Review
- Development and Distribution of Procedural Safeguards Notice (Notice of Family Rights)
- Service Coordination
- Selected Therapeutic Services

A family may have to assume some or all of the costs for other Early Intervention Services, depending on the parents' ability to pay. Medicaid or private insurance can be designated payors.

Who Provides the Services?

DC EIP uses both program staff and approved contractors to provide the required services. Families who use their private insurance or those enrolled in a Medicaid Managed Care Organization may use the therapists identified by their insurance company.

Where Are Services Provided?

Early intervention services must be provided in the child's natural environment, including the home and community settings in which children without disabilities participate. Children can receive their services in the child's primary setting during the day. Some go to licensed child care centers or early intervention programs designed to serve children with delays.

What Should I Do to Make a Referral?

Referring a child is easy. Simply call The DC EIP Child Find Hotline at (202) 727-3665 between the hours of 8:15 AM and 4:45 PM. If you call before or after business hours, please leave a voice mail. A referral form can be emailed, faxed or mailed to you. Referrals can also be emailed to osse.dceip@dc.gov or faxed to (202) 724-7230.

District of Columbia law requires DC government agencies to ensure equal access to their programs by persons with limited or no English proficiency. To request a document in your primary language or an interpreter, please call the DC Early Intervention Program Monday-Friday 8:00a.m.-5:00 pm on (202)727-3665, or use the DC Relay service at 711 for all callers who are deaf, hard-of-hearing or speech impaired.