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To: All Early Intervention Stakeholders

From: Ann Freiburg, Chief *AmF*
Bureau of Early Intervention

Date: December 18, 2020

Re: Early Intervention (EI) Weekly Update

The Illinois Interagency Council on Early Intervention's Reopen Illinois EI Workgroup last met on December 8, 2020. The workgroup discussed communication related to the tiers, the overall plan across the Restore Illinois phases, and concerns around compliance with guidance. The workgroup also heard about progress being made on electronic signatures, personal protective equipment (PPE) acquisition and distribution, and subgroup activities.

The Bureau and its partners continue to work on guidance and resources to support the work in early intervention. On December 9, 2020, the Bureau posted [updated guidance](#) for in-person service delivery. In response to the growing number of [COVID-related resources](#), Early Intervention Training Program (EITP) has added an additional button to their welcome page to help people navigate more easily.

A guidance document for creating authorizations and billing during the pandemic has now been worked through the approval process. Please review [this information](#) as these changes become effective as of January 1, 2021. Also, a plan for PPE distribution is nearing completion. More information about this should be available soon.

The [Illinois Department of Public Health's website](#) continues to be the best source of information on [regional conditions](#) and the activities currently restricted and permitted within each region. The entire state is currently implementing Tier 3 mitigation strategies through at least January 9, 2020. With another set of holidays approaching, we encourage you to review the CDC guidelines for [safe celebrations](#). Given that these holidays will be unlike those before, we want to remind everyone about the availability of Call4Calm, a mental health support line available to everyone in Illinois. **Call4Calm**, is the free-of-charge emotional support text line for Illinois residents experiencing stress and mental health issues related to COVID-19. Individuals who would like to speak with a mental health professional can text "TALK" to 5-5-2-0-2-0, or for Spanish, "HABLAR" to the same number: 5-5-2-0-2-0.

Please continue to monitor the [Provider Connections](#) website often as all updates to policy and procedure will be posted here. The [EITP](#) website and [Facebook](#) page, and the [EI Clearinghouse](#) website should also be monitored for information and resources.

The Bureau wants to wish everyone a happy and healthy holiday season! We are so appreciative of all that you do on behalf of the children and families we serve.