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To: All Early Intervention Payees and Providers
Child and Family Connections Service Coordinators and Staff
All Early Intervention Families

From: Ann M. Freiburg, Chief *AMF*
Bureau of Early Intervention

Date: December 9, 2020

RE: Early Intervention Updated Service Delivery Guidelines

This informational notice is to provide all Early Intervention (EI) stakeholders with an update to Service Delivery Guidelines for Early Intervention in Illinois.

Following further consultation with Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), EI services can continue to be made available through delivery options including limited in-person, Live Video Visits (LVV) and Phone Consultation beginning immediately.

The service delivery method must remain a team (family/caregiver and EI provider) discussion that considers the available options and potential risk factors. Once everyone on the team agrees to the chosen methods based on informed decision-making, the approach is documented in provider case notes and/or service coordinator (SC) case notes.

Considerations the team must discuss and agree to:

- 1) In-person services must comply with all safety protocols outlined in the September 17, 2020 [Revised Early Intervention \(EI\) Plan for Resuming In-Person \(Face-to-Face\) in Phase 4 of the Restore Illinois Plan](#) which requires:
 - a. Limiting the number of families seen in-person by any individual EI Provider to ten (10) including EI families as well as others the EI Provider may see outside of the scope of their EI practice.
 - b. Including families seen for in-person evaluations/assessments in the limit.
 - c. Families/caregivers and EI Providers all agreeing to in-person services only after a discussion about the ability to successfully provide services through LVV and Phone Consultation has occurred. If the team feels that successful implementation of the strategies created by the team cannot be achieved through coaching the family via LVV or Phone Consultation, then the service can be delivered in-person. **Services should be delivered via LVV and Phone Consultation to the maximum extent possible during this time of heightened positivity rates.**
 - d. Prioritizing EI families for in-person services based on family needs and the inability to meet outcomes through other methods of service delivery.
 - e. EI Providers and families adhere to the most recent [CDC](#) and [IDPH](#) quarantine guidelines, whichever is more restrictive.

- 2) LVV must be discussed as an option for some, or all, of the services prior to choosing the in-person service delivery method. Teams should work to maximize the benefits of the LVV coaching prior to implementing in-person service delivery for any particular service.
 - a. Families must continue to be notified of their rights and procedural safeguards throughout these discussions.
- 3) All safety protocols listed in the Revised plan must be followed including, but not limited to:
 - a. [Pre-screening of family and EI Providers](#) to ensure IDPH screening guidelines are met with the results documented in case notes.
 - b. Appropriate PPE should be worn by all individuals present for the in-person service and EI Providers must adhere to the IDPH standards of sanitation before, during and after each in-person service.
 - c. Limit family/caregiver involvement to allow the fewest possible contacts.
 - d. Limit space for delivering in-person services to reduce exposure to multiple surfaces.
 - e. Reduce/eliminate items brought into home which includes paperwork/files unless leaving papers with the family. No “toy bags” should ever be brought into the home as families should be able to use existing items from their home to implement strategies in the context of the family’s routines and activities.
- 4) All team members should check their current local COVID positivity rate by visiting the IDPH website’s listing, [by county](#). This information should be used to assess risk and inform ongoing decisions about the family’s and EI Provider’s willingness to continue in-person services.

All EI Providers should be very familiar with the Region they reside or work within. The information on the Regional breakdown is on the IDPH website at <https://coronavirus.illinois.gov/s/restore-illinois-regional-dashboard>.

It is imperative that all EI Payees, EI Providers, Service Coordinators and families monitor the [Provider Connections](#) site on a daily basis. As new information becomes available, conditions may change, and we want everyone to have the most current information. The Restore Illinois Guidance and EI services delivery plans will continue to be sent to IDPH for review and possible revisions. If or when revisions are needed, the plan will be updated and posted on the Provider Connections as well as other EI Partner websites.

Additionally, please visit the EI Training Program’s website at <https://blogs.illinois.edu/view/6096/807027>.

Another great resource is the EI Clearinghouse Parent Pack at <https://eiclearinghouse.org/resources/trying-times/>.

We appreciate all the efforts put forth to protect the citizens of Illinois by following the guidelines provided. Your continued service to families during this unprecedented time through the various, approved methods is invaluable. If you have any questions about this notice, please contact the Bureau directly at 217/782-1981 or by submitting your questions to DHS.EIQuestions@Illinois.gov.

We continue to work to support you as you support the families of Early Intervention!