

EARLY INTERVENTION/EXTENDED SERVICES PARENT INFORMATION NOTICE

The Illinois Early Intervention Program offers parents of eligible children, under the Early Intervention/Extended Service (EI/ES) option, the choice to continue to be eligible for Early Intervention (EI) beyond their child's third birthday until the start of the school year following their third birthday, when all of the following **criteria** are met. The child must:

- have been determined eligible for early intervention with services identified and consented to on the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), and
- have their third birthday between May 1 and August 31 and
- have been found eligible for early childhood special education services (ECSE) under IDEA and Section 14-8.02 of Public Act 102-0209 (Section 11h) and created an Individualized Education Program (IEP).

When your child has an IFSP with the EI program, about six months before your child turns three, you and your EI team will begin planning for a change in services, which necessitates the review and completion of the *EI/ES LEA Consent for Release of Information* for children with qualifying birthdates. Beginning this process several months in advance gives you time to find out whether your child is eligible for ECSE services through your local school district, which might also be referred to as the Local Education Agency (LEA). The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) is responsible for evaluating and providing special education services for children aged three and older and they may request an additional evaluation to determine eligibility for ECSE. You will also separately receive as part of the transition process the booklet entitled, *When I am Three*, which describes the differences between the early intervention and the preschool ECSE programs. Not all children will qualify for ECSE. If your child does not qualify or you decline services through your local school district, your IFSP team will then provide you with information regarding other kinds of early childhood services available in your community.

Transition Steps and the Parent Role

Step 1: Prepare your child and family for transition out of EI.

Step 2: Sign a consent form for referral to the local school district. You can accept or decline the referral. If you accept, then your consent to share your child's record is required.

Step 3: Attend the EI transition planning conference for your child.

Step 4: Provide consent for your child to be evaluated and participate in the school district's evaluation process, if needed.

Step 5: Meet with the IEP team to learn the result of your child's eligibility evaluation for special education services and if eligible, develop an early childhood education plan with your child's IEP team.

Step 6: If your child has been determined eligible for EI/ES, decide if you wish to extend services in EI or begin your journey with ECSE. If not eligible, consider the other options for your child.

EARLY INTERVENTION EXTENDED SERVICE (EI/ES)



The option to select EI/ES for your child is dependent on three criteria. The child must:

- have been determined eligible for early intervention with services identified and consented to on the IFSP, and
- have their third birthday between May 1 and August 31 and
- have been found eligible for early childhood special education services (ECSE) under IDEA and Section 14-8.02 of Public Act 102-0209 (Section 11h) and created an Individualized Education Program (IEP).

A family who is receiving EI services whose child meets all three criteria above, will be able to choose to continue EI/ES beyond the child's third birthday until the start of the next school year following the child's third birthday as outlined in 34 C.F.R. § 303.211 (a)(2)(i) and 325 IL CS Section 11, SB0820-002. If, in the same calendar year, a child's third birthday occurs after the start of that school year, the child will not be eligible for EI/ES. As noted in the booklet entitled, *When I am Three*, there are differences between the IFSP and the IEP. Under the EI/ES option, the IFSP will include an educational component that includes preliteracy and numeracy skills. In addition, if your child meets the required criteria, you will be able to choose to continue with the current services provided through your child's IFSP as part of the EI/ES option, **without any additional out of pocket cost.**

Once you have compared the services outlined in your child's IFSP with the proposed IEP, you will decide if you would like to transition to services on the IEP or continue with the services on the IFSP until the start of the next school year. You and your Service Coordinator will discuss timely transition to ECSE or to EI/ES for IFSP services. The school district should advise the Service Coordinator of your decision within two business days, but you can contact your Service Coordinator immediately if you would like to discuss the process with them. If you do not provide consent to extend services, EI services will end the day before your child's third birthday. Please note that your child **cannot re-enter EI** once they exit, following their third birthday.

It is important that you review this *Early Intervention/Extended Services Parent Information Notice* and discuss your child's potential eligibility for EI/ES with your EI Service Coordinator. It is necessary for you, as a parent of a child whose date of birth might qualify them for EI/ES, to review and sign the *EI/ES LEA Consent for Release of Information* before your child's third birthday to facilitate the necessary referrals for determination of eligibility.

EI/ES System of Payments

The Illinois Early Intervention (EI) Program is funded through various sources and every attempt is made to maximize these sources. Some of the sources involve the family. Family sources for funding EI services may include any combination of private insurance and All Kids. As noted in the section above, there will not be any additional out-of-pocket costs associated with enrollment in the EI/ES option. Family Participation Fees will **NOT** be applied during your family's enrollment period in EI/ES.



Private Insurance plans and state benefit programs will be utilized to fund services provided during your child's EI/ES enrollment. Please review the [Child and Family Connections Notice of System of Payments and Fees](#) for further information regarding the potential use of private insurance and public benefit programs. **EI/ES and Late Referrals** If your child is referred and determined eligible for EI between 45 and 90 days before their third birthday, but is not eligible for ECSE, your child will exit EI the day before their third birthday or the day after you receive notice from the school district that your child is not eligible for ECSE, if the determination is delayed. If your child is not eligible for ECSE, you have the option to exercise your rights as identified in *Procedural Safeguards in Special Education* regarding the eligibility determination. EI services will continue until the conclusion of the complaint process or the start of the next school year.

LEAs (school districts) are still required to offer Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) to three-years old who are enrolled in EI and qualify for an IEP. For those children referred late to EI, or less than 45 days before his or her third birthday, a referral is made to the school district and the district has 60 school days to complete an evaluation.

FOR CHILDREN EXITING AT OR AFTER AGE THREE

Sharing Information with School Districts

Just as you and your family will or have developed a partnership with the EI Program, it is important that you look to the future and your potential transition to the public-school special education program as a partnership that begins as your family is receiving EI supports. Whenever you choose to learn more about your school district's ECSE and related services, you may choose to contact your school district directly or your Service Coordinator can release the information in your child's record, with your consent, to your local district as notification that a potentially eligible child is interested in services. Early notice helps districts with budgeting and planning and should be encouraged when determining if a child will be eligible for ECSE. Any information received by an EI Program, using the *CFC Consent for Release of Information*, becomes part of your child's permanent EI record and may be released with your written permission. The school district may contact your family when they receive this information, but there is no requirement that the school district acts on the information received about children prior to beginning the evaluation process.

Please note, if your child is enrolled in the EI Program, directory information will be forwarded to the State Education Agency (SEA) and the school district where your family resides or the responsible school district when your child is 25-months old. Directory information includes the child's name, date of birth, parent(s) name(s), address, telephone number, the name and contact information for your Service Coordinator, whether the child resides with a parent or foster family, and the language spoken by the family.

If after completing the consent form, you decide against including the school district in transition planning, you leave the EI Program or your family moves from one district to another, additional information will not be forwarded to the school district. If you decide against consent without moving or leaving the EI Program, only directory information will be shared with the school district via the 25-month list, which is generated electronically.

When families do not consent to including their school district in transition planning, a transition planning conference is still required before exiting. The meeting may occur as part of the development or review of the child's IFSP or during a planned transition conference.

Transition Conferences with LEAs

With appropriate consents signed, your Service Coordinator is responsible for arranging a transition planning conference meeting with the school district no fewer than 90 days prior to your child's third birthday and not more than nine (9) months before their third birthday. Invited participants might include:

- (1) you, the parent(s),
- (2) the Service Coordinator,
- (3) school district representative(s),
- (4) your EI providers and
- (5) anyone else you, the school district or Service Coordinator feel would be helpful.

If it is not possible for the school district representative to be physically present at a meeting they may participate by another mode (e.g., telephone or other HIPAA/FERPA compliant synchronous audio-visual communication).





The EI Program is responsible for conducting a transition planning conference to help your family and the school begin to develop a relationship and determine the next steps in the transition process. If you are comfortable with it, the transition planning conference can be held in your home. Please note that the IEP meeting is the school district's responsibility, and it must be a distinct meeting that is separate from the transition planning conference, but it may be held consecutively after the transition planning conference, with your approval. Some school districts may prefer to contact you and schedule a different date for the IEP meeting. In either circumstance, it is still the responsibility of the Service Coordinator to ensure that your child's transition planning conference is facilitated by the EI Program, is held on time, and that the school district is invited with enough notice to facilitate their participation.

If you choose to contact the school district directly and you choose not to have any information shared with the district from your child's EI record, then the Service Coordinator cannot invite the school district to your child's transition planning conference.

Eligibility Determination for Special Education and Related Services

The school district must complete a comprehensive evaluation of your child in the developmental area(s) of concern. To do this a school district may choose to use current information from the EI Program to determine your child's eligibility, or they may choose to have their own personnel evaluate and assess your child to determine eligibility, or they may do some of each.

You will have received the "*When I'm 3, Where Will I Be? A Family's Transition from Early Intervention*" workbook, which was developed by parents, early intervention (EI) specialists, and school personnel to provide you with information as you approach your child's transition from EI services to ECSE services. The workbook is designed to take you step by step through the transition process. We encourage all families to utilize the resource fully and have attached an updated version of one of the tables included, which compares EI services with ECSE services, to the end of this notices as a resource for you as you move forward in making an informed decision.

You are responsible for attending all evaluation/ assessment appointments with the school district to facilitate the eligibility determination and you are an IEP team member. If you have not completed the necessary consents or have not attended scheduled evaluations or meetings, this can impact your child's eligibility for EI/ES.

Role of the Service Coordinator or Provider at the IEP Conference

You may choose to invite the EI Service Coordinator or staff member to attend the initial IEP Conference and may participate in all portions of the meeting. The eligibility decision and the development and implementation of the IEP belong to the IEP team, which includes you as the child's parent(s)/guardian(s). IDEA requires the IEP team to consider the child's IFSP when developing the initial IEP, but it does not require that the IFSP be mirrored in the IEP.

Transition for Children Referred to EI after 33 Months of Age

When a child is referred to the Illinois EI Program fewer than 90 but at least 45 calendar days before his/her third birthday, the EI Program is still responsible for determining whether the child is eligible for EI. If the child is eligible, an IFSP must be developed that identifies the process for transitioning from the EI Program to the local school district or other appropriate services in a timely manner. The Service Coordinator will explain the transition process and timelines for transition to the parent and emphasize the importance of contacting the school district as soon as possible to begin the special education referral process to determine whether the child may be eligible for special education. With written parental consent to contact the LEA, the Service Coordinator could contact the



school district to coordinate the child's initial evaluation with the local school district thus avoiding duplication of efforts.

Per Section 303.209(b)(iii) of the EI regulations of IDEA, referrals to the EI Program for children who are within 45-calendar days of their third birthday shall be re-directed to the responsible local school district for child find activities including potentially an evaluation and services if found eligible for ECSE. A child referred less than 45 days prior to their third birthday will not be considered an EI referral and will not be eligible for EI/ES.

FOR CHILDREN EXITING BEFORE AGE THREE



If one of your EI providers propose a change to the identification, evaluation, or placement of your child or the current EI services, you must be given prior written notice of the suggested change. The Service Coordinator should schedule an IFSP to review the IFSP outcomes and any updated assessment results, if applicable to determine the need for continued EI supports and services. As always, prior written notice must be given to you in order to notify you that your child's IFSP is going to be reviewed. The notice is not necessary if you initiate the review of the plan.

Depending on the circumstances of the child's exit from EI services, the Service Coordinator should offer to hold a transition meeting with you to discuss the discontinuation of the EI services. During this meeting the IFSP may be reviewed, especially the transition plan. The plan should include activities to prepare for the transition and a reasonable timeframe for completing them. It should also include connecting you with community resources outside of the EI Program if they are requested.

Re-entering Early Intervention

Children over age three cannot re-enter the EI Program.

Disposition of Records at Exit

The form entitled, *Notice of Confidentiality Practices*, must be reviewed by families upon intake. A copy should have been given to you and the original maintained by the EI Program. This form ensured that you were informed that your record will be maintained for at least six years from the date of exit and how you can request copies during the six-year period if needed. This form also served as notification that the record will be destroyed after six years. However, a permanent record of a child's name, date of birth, parent contact information (including address and phone number), names of service coordinator(s) and provider(s), exit data (including year and age upon exit, and any programs entered into upon exiting) may be maintained without time limitation per 34 C.F.R. § 303.416 Destruction of information.

Any questions regarding the EI/ES process should be forwarded to your Service Coordinator for clarification.



Comparing Early Intervention and ECSE Services

	Early Intervention	Special Education
Governing Federal laws	Part C of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)	Part B of IDEA
Ages for services	Birth to 3, unless eligible for EI/ES, which continue until the start of the school year following their child's third birthday.	3 through 21
Goal of the program	Helping the family meet the developmental needs of their child with a delay or disability.	Helping the child achieve success within the educational setting.
Evaluation	Two or more professionals from different disciplines complete a developmental evaluation of all five areas of development.	A team of professionals completes an evaluation in the area(s) of suspected disability/concern.
Eligibility	A child must have a 30 percent delay in one or more areas of development, a documented medical condition, as determined by IDHS, Bureau of EI, or meet specified criteria for at-risk.	A child is found eligible using one of the eligibility categories for special education and related services.
Service model delivery	Parents/guardians and caregivers enroll their child in EI services. The type(s), frequency, location, and duration of services, including individuals providing services, are determined through the IFSP process.	LEAs are required to provide special education and related services to eligible individuals, age 3 through 21 years. Services are determined by the IEP team.

	Early Intervention	Special Education
Family Involvement	Families take an active role in the development of the IFSP and in the delivery of services.	Parent/guardians must be a member of any team (e.g., planning and placement) that makes decisions regarding the education of their child.
Service coordination	Each eligible infant or toddler is assigned a service coordinator who coordinates services and assists the family throughout their involvement in the EI system.	A case manager is assigned to each child with an IEP, although service coordination is not required. The case manager is usually someone on the child's IEP team.
Type of plan	An IFSP documents the family functional outcomes developed by the team. IFSPs are reviewed at least every six months with the service coordinator and rewritten annually by the IFSP team.	An IEP documents the child's measurable annual goals, services, and program; the IEP also describes how progress will be measured. The IEP team reviews the IEP annually.
Services	All EI services are provided to support the family's ability to meet their child's developmental needs and the family's desired outcomes. Families are active participants in the delivery of services.	Special education is an educational service or program that is instructional in nature. Related services (such as occupational therapy, physical therapy, or speech and language therapy) are provided when they are required in order to assist a child in obtaining benefit from the special education program.
Location of services	EI services are provided in natural environments, such as the child's home or in other sites in the community where infants and other toddlers without disabilities participate. Services are provided in the context of the family's normal routines.	Children with disabilities are educated in the LRE and with their typically developing peers. A child may receive services in a more restrictive environment only when the IEP team determines that education in general classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

<p>Cost of services</p>	<p>Many services are provided at no cost, but some families may incur a fee based on a sliding scale that takes into account income and family size for services from Birth to Three. As part of the EI/ES option, the current services provided through your child's IFSP will continue <i>without any additional out of pocket cost</i>. Insurance plans may also be billed.</p>	<p>Children are provided a free and appropriate public education (FAPE).</p>
<p>Transition</p>	<p>The transition process for families begins no later than 2 years, 9 months of age. A transition planning conference will be held at least 90 days before the child's third birthday.</p>	<p>An LEA representative will participate in the transition planning conference. If a child is determined eligible for ECSE services, the IEP will be developed by the child's third birthday.</p>