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**Provider Information Notice**

**TO:** Early Intervention Providers

**FROM:** Benjamin Delgado, Jr., Chief  
Bureau of Early Intervention 

**DATE:** October 27, 2023

**RE:** Provider Incentive Payment Update

We would like to provide the field with an update on the status of the incentive payments.

**Update on Incentive Payments:** The IDHS Early Intervention (EI) Team has completed the process of obtaining all necessary information from our databases to determine individual service provider eligibility and corresponding incentive payments. We estimate that approximately 4,800 individuals will receive these incentive payments. For additional information on the incentive payments, see the [Press Release](#) and previous [Provider Information Notice](#).

To enhance the distribution process and ensure that providers receive their payments promptly while eliminating administrative costs to EI provider agencies and CFCs, we have been working to establish a direct payment system to the individuals rather than issuing payments through payee entities.

**Testing and Implementation:** We are currently in the final stages of testing this new payment process. As part of our testing, we have been working to establish a process for individuals such as service coordinators, therapy assistants, and providers who work through agencies who therefore have not historically received their own EI payment from the Illinois Office of Comptroller. Our goal is to iron out any potential issues to ensure that payments are successfully processed and distributed directly to all eligible individuals in a prompt and efficient manner after they have been submitted. Once these tests are complete, and any remaining issues are resolved, we will communicate the next steps to the field.

We will keep you updated on our progress and provide detailed instructions on the next steps for agency-based individuals as soon as we are ready to implement the new payment process.

## Incentive Payments: Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. **Status of Payments:**

Question: What is the status of EI Incentive Payments? Have they been sent out yet?

Answer: We understand the anticipation for incentive payments. We are currently conducting a test to ensure payments can be successfully issued directly to individuals. However, to refine the process, minimize errors, and ensure accurate distribution, we need to extend our timeline beyond the initial October 31st deadline.

### 2. **Eligibility:**

Question: How do I know if I am eligible for an incentive payment?

Answer: Information about eligibility criteria for incentive payments can be found in our Provider Information notice dated 07/26/23. You can access this notice at [this link](#). This notice provides details on who qualifies for these payments.

### 3. **Attestation Forms:**

Question: Where can I find the attestation form that Payees/Agencies are required to complete to attest that 100% of the incentive payments received will be passed through to our individual providers?

Answer: Good news! Attestation forms from payees are no longer required. We have streamlined the process, and incentive payments will now be issued directly to eligible individuals, eliminating the need for agency-based attestations.

### 4. **Payment Distribution:**

Question: is there anything I have to do to demonstrate that I am eligible for an incentive payment?

Answer: No, we have received all the information from the credentialing database that provides us with the information necessary to determine who is eligible for incentive payments.

Question: Will the incentive payment be issued to me or to the agency or CFC that I work for?

Answer: Incentive payments will be issued directly to service coordinators and individual providers who meet the eligibility criteria. This change ensures that payments go directly to the individuals providing services. For those who have direct deposit set up, the payment will be deposited into their designated bank accounts. However, if you do not have direct deposit set up or if you are receiving a payment directly from Early Intervention for the first time, your payment will be sent to you via USPS mail.

**5. Change of Information:**

Question: I moved recently. Will my address be updated so I can receive my payment at my new address?

Answer: Provider Connections recently requested that all providers update their home address information by September 20, 2023 if they have changed addresses since applying for or renewing their credential. Our data is based on this updated data.

**6. W-9 Forms:**

Question: I have never received an Early Intervention payment directly from EI because I work for an agency. Is there anything I need to do to be able to receive payment directly?

Answer: W-9 forms will be required for individuals who have not historically received their own Early Intervention payments from the Illinois Office of Comptroller. This includes service coordinators, EI therapy assistants, and providers who work through agencies who have never submitted direct billing to EI. We're working on a secure online and mobile-friendly platform for completing W-9 forms. Once the testing is complete, we will notify everyone through a provider information notice regarding when and how to begin this process.

**7. Credentialing History:**

Question: I have changed roles within the EI system. Which of my credentials will be used to determine the tier of incentive payment that I will receive?

Answer: For determining the tier of incentive payment, we consider an individual's total credentialing history. This means that if you've worked in different roles within the Early Intervention system, your years of experience in each role will be considered. For example, consider an individual who was a service coordinator for 4 years and then became a speech therapist and has maintained an active credential and active caseload as a speech therapist for 6 years. This individual would receive the 10+ years tier payment of \$1,300. This would also apply for those providers who have switched between payees within the EI system.