

Early Intervention and Turning Three During COVID-19

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Guidance Updates on Early Intervention

- DPH/Mass Health:
 - Approved a temporary policy change and eligibility extension for EI providers/vendors to continue care (under 130 CR 440.403(A)(3)).
 - Extension until a comprehensive Part B eligibility evaluations completed, and the Local Education Authority (LEA) determines that the child has successfully transitioned to ECSE or until October 15, 2020, whichever is sooner.
 - EI providers must ensure there is no duplication of services with services provided by LEAs during the transition.

Temporary Eligibility Extension

- Covers:
 - EI services to eligible children who turn three between March 15 and August 31, 2020.
 - Referred to LEA for a Early Childhood Special Education evaluation.
 - Signed IEP but needs continued EI services to support transition to Special Education.

Temporary Eligibility Extension

- Purpose:
 - Continue to provide services, *to the extent possible*, in order to prevent regression.
 - To provide a “bridge” between EI and appropriate Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) services.
- Link: <https://www.mass.gov/lists/masshealth-provider-bulletins-by-provider-type-d-h#early-intervention->

Temporary Eligibility Extension

- Provides:
 - Coverage of EI services between June 1, 2020 and October 15, 2020.
 - EI programs can provide your child's IFSP services, even if your child was already discharged from EI upon turning 3.
 - EI specialist and program must be certified.
 - EI assessments and IFSP can be utilized to build IEP although Special Education (timelines are still in effect).



Temporary Eligibility Extension

- Additional:
 - Collaboration between school districts, EI providers and family to determine best transition plan for each child.
 - If the child has started IEP services (even remotely), they would not be eligible for extended services unless the district decides to contract with the EI providers to provide such services.
- ECSE:
 - Due to COVID 19, school districts' ability to provide inclusionary public preschool programs may be impacted due to decreased enrollment of nondisabled peers
 - Updated waiver process related to Inclusionary Class Size, 603 CMR 28.06 (7)(e) and (f) is forthcoming

Source: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/>



Temporary Eligibility Extension:

- Parents Next Steps:
 - Contact your Early Intervention Provider to inform you would like to continue implementation of your child's IFSP, even if services were discontinued.
 - Follow steps needed to continue needed evaluations for Special Education eligibility.
 - Telehealth or in-person?
 - Follow proper protocol/guidelines for PPE/Social Distancing/Health Safety

Tips for Parents

- Communicate regularly with service provider.
- Keep expectations realistic.
- Review child's IFSP goals and benchmarks and prioritize.
- Work collaboratively
- Share your challenges and concerns with the provider/team.
- Document any struggles and regression.
- Be patient with your child and yourself.

IFSP versus IEP

Used in EI for children birth to 3 and their families	Used in special education for children ages 3 to 21
Includes information about the child's present levels of development	Includes information about the child's present levels of educational performance and participation in developmentally appropriate activities
With the family's approval, it may also include information regarding the family's resources, priorities, and concerns related to the development of their child	Includes information about the family's concerns for enhancing the child's education
After the team determines a list of priorities and concerns, the family determines which outcomes will be included on the IFSP	The IEP team, including the parents or guardians and related service providers who work with the child, determines the goals

IFSP versus IEP

Includes the major outcomes desired for the child and family, as well as the methods, timelines, and a plan to measure progress	Includes measurable annual goals, academic and functionally, designed to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enable the child to be involved in and make progress in the general curriculum;• Describe how progress will be measured and how often• Describe how progress will be reported to the family
Includes the natural environments where services will be provided	Describes services provided in the least restrictive environments (LREs) and an explanation of the extent, if any, that the child will not participate with typically developing children
Includes the early intervention services and supports necessary to meet the unique need of the child and family in order to achieve the identified outcomes.	Includes the special education, related services, supplemental aides and services, modifications, and supports to help the child make progress and participate in developmentally appropriate activities

IFSP versus IEP

Team membership includes:

- A parent or parents of the child
- Other family members as requested by parents
- An advocate or person outside of the family if the parent requests
- Service Coordinator
- A person or persons conducting evaluations or assessments.

Team membership includes:

- A parent or parents of the child
- Regular Education Teacher
- Special Education Teacher
- A representative of the school district who can commit resources
- Person who can interpret results of evaluations
- Others who have knowledge or expertise about the child.

Source: <https://www.pacer.org/parent/php/PHP-c59.pdf>

Early Intervention Resources

Early Intervention:

<https://www.mass.gov/orgs/early-intervention-division>

ASHA Webinar Series/Covid-19:

<https://www.asha.org/Events/COVID-19-ASHA-Web-Event-Series-on-Early-Intervention/>

Early Intervention to Special Education:

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/ecse/StrategicAreas.html#transition>

Telehealth and COIVD-19:

<https://www.mass.gov/alerts/ei-telehealth#1483216>

Video Series Early Intervention through technology:

<https://ddc.ohio.gov/video-ei-series>

Special Education Resources

Tips on Pre-K and Distance Learning:

<https://cec.sped.org/Tools-and-Resources/Resources-for-Teaching-Remotely/Webinars/EarlyChildhoodOnline>

<https://www.edutopia.org/article/7-tips-managing-distance-learning-preschool>

<https://sites.google.com/dpi.nc.gov/nck-3fap/remote-learning/pre-kindergarten-remote-learning>

The Student Remote Learning Plan:

<https://files.constantcontact.com/2cce95d1401/920816a3-3746-4a0e-9243-18968e516280.pdf>

The Student Daily Remote Learning Record:

<https://files.constantcontact.com/2cce95d1401/be8a6bee-8eaf-4914-a700-68082250b68a.pdf>

Questions and Contact Info

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