Family Scheduling Preference and Indicator C1 (Timely Initiation of Services)

A Scenario

It's Tuesday, April 29, 2025. The IFSP team is wrapping up its meeting at a family's home. The team has identified outcomes and goals and determined that DS twice per month would be the ideal service to address the family's priorities and concerns.

"Tuesday mornings only, please; I work Wednesday through Saturday, and Sundays and Mondays are my catch-up time," mom says. The service coordinator makes note of this and promises to do her best to find a provider who can see the child and family on Tuesdays.

Within a day or two the local system identifies a provider who has availability on Tuesdays beginning in early June. Perfect! A little past the 30-day timeline... but it's what the family wants... right? The service coordinator informs the family that the provider will arrive at their home at 10:00AM on June 10th for the first DS visit.

When the first service contact note is entered, TRAC-IT recognizes the June 10th service date as outside of the required "30-day timeline" and prompts for a reason for the delay. The user selects "family scheduling preference" and moves on to another task.

What's Right?

The local system has been able to accommodate the family's preference for a specific weekday and time. *Nice!*

What's Wrong?

There's no documentation to show the system *could've* provided the service within the 30-day timeline—just not on a Tuesday. Could a family's "preference" obscure system capacity issues?

The Fix
Document the availability of DS sessions within the required timelines, and offer those sessions to the family (and document this, too). For example:

Called mom to say I've found a DS provider (Betty Rubble) who can accommodate Tuesday mornings starting on June 10th. Reminded mom that Part C services are required to begin within 30 days of signing the IFSP, and that another provider (Wilma Flintstone) could come sooner—on 5/8, 5/9 or 5/14, none of these a Tuesday. Mom confirmed she understood and added that she'd love to start sooner, but it just has to be Tuesdays.

Summary
Trying to accommodate a family's preference of provider, day, time, etc., is definitely commendable and encouraged whenever feasible. But when that preference causes a timeline to be exceeded, *there must be documentation to support that the system had the capacity to provide a service within timelines*. Without it, the delay cannot be unquestionably attributed to family scheduling preference.

Related: Can families "waive" the 30-day-timeline requirement?

No. A family can choose to have an initial service provided beyond the required 30-day timeline if doing so better aligns with the family's schedule or other needs *and* after being offered one or more service dates and times within Part C timelines. But no, families do not "waive" their rights to timely service delivery (or any other Part C requirement), and a family's choice to begin services beyond 30 days shouldn't be documented as "they waived their right to…".

ITCVA monthly monitoring community of practice (MCoP) call Next: July 2 @ 3PM

Thanks to those who have been able to join us for our initial ITCVA monthly monitoring community of practice (MCoP) calls. We look forward to engaging with you again soon!

As a reminder, MCOP calls are held on the first Wednesday of each month beginning at 3:00PM. **Our next call will be held on July 2nd.** ITCVA MCoP calls are open to anyone who is interested in the topic(s) being covered.

Calls are recorded for those who are unable to attend. Please visit the [Monitoring Community of Practice](#) page of the ITCVA website for a list of upcoming topics, the Microsoft Teams meeting link and session resources.

August 2025
POSM: Lessons Learned and the Path Forward

September 2025
Child Outcomes (Indicator C3)