

**North Carolina Infant-Toddler Program Guidance for Personnel Certification
Document for Public Participation and Review**

The North Carolina Infant-Toddler Program (ITP) Guidance for Personnel Certification (*Guidance*) applies to early intervention service coordination and special instruction services. Early intervention service coordination may be billed as Targeted Case Management, or other appropriate service billing definition/code. Special instruction may be billed as Community Based Rehabilitative Services (CBRS), or other appropriate service billing definition/code.

There are two types of certificates granted by the Children's Developmental Services Agency (CDSA) for the county in which services are provided. The Infant, Toddler, and Family Specialist Certificate applies to early intervention service coordination and special instruction services for which a four-year degree is required. The Infant, Toddler, and Family Associate Certificate applies to special instruction services for which a two-year or less degree is required.

All holders of an Infant, Toddler, and Family Specialist or Associate Certificate, who obtained their certificate prior to the publication of this revised *Guidance* (insert publication date, expected Fall 2013), and who maintain employment with a CDSA or CDSA-enrolled community based provider, continue to hold their certificate.

Any applicant for the certificate, who has not yet attained it before the publication of this revised *Guidance* may choose to:

1. Complete the *Guidance* requirements under which he or she applied, or
2. Attain the certificate under the new *Guidance*.

Federal Regulations

Early Intervention Services

§303.13 Early intervention services.

- (a) General. Early intervention services means developmental services that--
- (1) Are provided under public supervision;
 - (2) Are selected in collaboration with the parents;
 - (3) Are provided at no cost, except, subject to §§303.520 and 303.521, where Federal or State law provides for a system of payments by families, including a schedule of sliding fees;
 - (4) Are designed to meet the developmental needs of an infant or toddler with a disability and the needs of the family to assist appropriately in the infant's or toddler's development, as identified by the IFSP Team, in any one or more of the following areas, including--
 - (i) Physical development;
 - (ii) Cognitive development;
 - (iii) Communication development;
 - (iv) Social or emotional development; or
 - (v) Adaptive development;
 - (5) Meet the standards of the State in which the early intervention services are provided, including the requirements of Part C of the Act;
 - (6) Include services identified under paragraph (b) of this section;
 - (7) Are provided by qualified PERSONNEL (as that term is defined in §303.31), including the types of PERSONNEL listed in paragraph (c) of this section;
 - (8) To the maximum extent appropriate, are provided in natural environments, as defined in §303.26 and consistent with §§303.126 and 303.344(d); and
 - (9) Are provided in conformity with an IFSP adopted in accordance with section 636 of the Act and §303.20.

Qualified Early Intervention Personnel

§303.31 Qualified PERSONNEL.

Qualified PERSONNEL means PERSONNEL who have met State approved or recognized certification, licensing, registration, or other comparable requirements that apply to the areas in which the individuals are conducting evaluations or assessments or providing early intervention services.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1432(4)(F))

Early Intervention Service Coordination

§303.34 Service coordination services (case management).

(a) General. (1) As used in this part, service coordination services mean services provided by a service coordinator to assist and enable an infant or toddler with a disability and the child's family to receive the services and rights, including procedural safeguards, required under this part.

(2) Each infant or toddler with a disability and the child's family must be provided with one service coordinator who is responsible for--

(i) Coordinating all services required under this part across agency lines; and

(ii) Serving as the single point of contact for carrying out the activities described in paragraphs (a)(3) and (b) of this section.

(3) Service coordination is an active, ongoing process that involves--

(i) Assisting parents of infants and toddlers with disabilities in gaining access to, and coordinating the provision of, the early intervention services required under this part; and (ii) Coordinating the other services identified in the IFSP under §303.344(e) that are needed by, or are being provided to, the infant or toddler with a disability and that child's family.

(b) Specific service coordination services. Service coordination services include--

(1) Assisting parents of infants and toddlers with disabilities in obtaining access to needed early intervention services and other services identified in the IFSP, including making referrals to providers for needed services and scheduling appointments for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families;

(2) Coordinating the provision of early intervention services and other services (such as educational, social, and medical services that are not provided for diagnostic or evaluative purposes) that the child needs or is being provided;

(3) Coordinating evaluations and assessments

(4) Facilitating and participating in the development, review, and evaluation of IFSPs;

(5) Conducting referral and other activities to assist families in identifying available EIS providers;

(6) Coordinating, facilitating, and monitoring the delivery of services required under this part to ensure that the services are provided in a timely manner;

(7) Conducting follow-up activities to determine that appropriate Part C services are being provided;

(8) Informing families of their rights and procedural safeguards, as set forth in subpart E of this part and related resources;

(9) Coordinating the funding sources for services required under this part; and

(10) Facilitating the development of a transition plan to preschool, school, or, if appropriate, to other services.

(c) Use of the term service coordination or service coordination services. The lead agency's or an EIS provider's use of the term service coordination or service coordination services does not preclude characterization of the services as case management or any other service that is covered by another payor of last resort (including Title XIX of the Social Security Act--Medicaid), for purposes of claims in compliance with the requirements of §§303.501 through 303.521 (Payor of last resort provisions).

Special Instruction

(14) Special instruction includes--

(i) The design of learning environments and activities that promote the infant's or toddler's acquisition of skills in a variety of developmental areas, including cognitive processes and social interaction;

(ii) Curriculum planning, including the planned interaction of **PERSONNEL**, materials, and time and space, that leads to achieving the outcomes in the IFSP for the infant or toddler with a disability;

(iii) Providing families with information, skills, and support related to enhancing the skill development of the child; and

(iv) Working with the infant or toddler with a disability to enhance the child's development.

Comprehensive System of Personnel Development

§303.118 Comprehensive system of **PERSONNEL** development (CSPD).

Each system must include a comprehensive system of **PERSONNEL** development, including the training of paraprofessionals and the training of primary referral sources with respect to the basic components of early intervention services available in the State. A comprehensive system of **PERSONNEL** development--

(a) Must include--

(1) Training **PERSONNEL** to implement innovative strategies and activities for the recruitment and retention of EIS providers;

(2) Promoting the preparation of EIS providers who are fully and appropriately qualified to provide early intervention services under this part; and

(3) Training **PERSONNEL** to coordinate transition services for infants and toddlers with disabilities who are transitioning from an early intervention service program under Part C of the Act to a preschool program under section 619 of the Act, Head Start, Early Head Start, an elementary school program under Part B of the Act, or another appropriate program.

(b) May include--

(1) Training **PERSONNEL** to work in rural and inner-city areas;

(2) Training **PERSONNEL** in the emotional and social development of young children; and

(3) Training **PERSONNEL** to support families in participating fully in the development and implementation of the child's IFSP; and

(4) Training **PERSONNEL** who provide services under this part using standards that are consistent with early learning **PERSONNEL** development standards funded under the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care established under the Head Start Act, if applicable.

Personnel Standards

§303.119 PERSONNEL standards.

(a) General. Each system must include policies and procedures relating to the establishment and maintenance of qualification standards to ensure that **PERSONNEL** necessary to carry out the purposes of this part are appropriately and adequately prepared and trained.

(b) Qualification standards. The policies and procedures required in paragraph (a) of this section must provide for the establishment and maintenance of qualification standards that are consistent with any State-approved or State-recognized certification, licensing, registration, or other comparable requirements that apply to the profession, discipline, or area in which **PERSONNEL** are providing early intervention services.

Obtaining the Certificate

The certificate is obtained at employment with a CDSA or CDSA-enrolled community based provider, and maintained throughout employment. There is no renewal requirement. Ongoing supervision is required by the CDSA for service coordination, and by the CDSA-enrolled provider for special instruction.

To apply, the applicant must complete the *Application for Certificate*, and submit it to the CDSA for the county in which services are to be provided (www.beearly.nc.gov). The CDSA must either award the certificate, or deny it on the basis of degree attainment (see below) within 30 days of receipt of the application.

The applicant must have received a four-year degree (for the Specialist Certificate) or a two-year degree or less (for the Associate Certificate) from an accredited university, college, or community college. The degrees listed below are required. Each degree listed below includes competencies associated with Child Development, Family Development, Screening and Assessment, Interdisciplinary Family Service Planning, Intervention Strategies, Interagency and Community Process, and Professionalism and Ethics. These are critical competencies to the early intervention services for which the certificate is obtained; see federal regulation references in this document.

Accepted degrees:

- Child Development/Family Relations
- Birth-Kindergarten Education
- Human Development/Family Studies
- Psychology
- Social Work
- Special Education
- Early Childhood Special Education

Continuing Education:

Professional development/technical assistance opportunities in the form of modules, links to training, publications and other similar opportunities will be provided by the Early Intervention Branch state office. It is expected that certificate holders complete these opportunities when offered.

Application for Certificate

Certificate Type

- Infant, Toddler, and Family Specialist Certificate or
- Infant, Toddler, and Family Associate Certificate

Early Intervention Service to be Provided

- Early Intervention Service Coordination
- Special Instruction

Applicant Information

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Employer _____

Employment Date _____

Educational Attainment*

Degree _____

Major _____

*Attach official copy of transcript; degree type and major must be clearly listed.

Signature of Applicant _____

Date Received by CDSA _____

Date Certificate Awarded _____ OR Date Certificate Denied _____

NC Infant-Toddler Program Infant Toddler and Family Specialist/Associate Certificates

	Current	Proposed changes
Infant-Toddler and Family Specialist/Associate (ITFS/A) certification applies to:	Children’s Developmental Services Agency staff and community based providers of special instruction.	CDSA staff who provide early intervention service coordination (billed as targeted case management) and providers of early intervention special instruction services (billed as community based rehabilitative services). Currently certified staff retain their certificate.
Personnel Certification Categories:	<p><i>The INFANT, TODDLER & FAMILY ASSOCIATE CERTIFICATE</i> is applicable to practitioners with an associate degree or less in a health, education, early childhood, or other human service field, based on transcript review.</p> <p><i>The INFANT, TODDLER & FAMILY SPECIALIST CERTIFICATE</i> is applicable to practitioners who hold a baccalaureate or higher degree in a health, education, early childhood, or human service field based on transcript review OR those holding a baccalaureate or higher degree in a non-human service field who have four years of full-time, post-bachelor’s degree accumulated experience with the infant and toddler population.</p> <p>-Registered nurses with current North Carolina license who completed a 2, 3, or 4 year program are eligible for the Specialist Certificate.</p> <p>-Applicants must have at least 27 hours of coursework in health, education, or early childhood to be able to qualify for certification if the applicant holds one of the following degrees: Religion, Sociology/Anthropology, Social Sciences, Rehabilitation Counselor or Criminal Justice.</p>	<p>The applicants have received a four-year degree (for the Specialist Certificate) or a two-year degree or less (for the Associate Certificate), from an accredited university, college, or community college. The degrees listed below are <u>required</u>. Each degree listed below includes required competencies.</p> <p><u>Accepted degrees:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Child Development/Family Relations ○ Birth-Kindergarten Education ○ Human Development/Family Studies ○ Psychology ○ Social Work ○ Special Education ○ Early Childhood Special Education
Certification process:	Satisfactory process toward certification must be made within a 3-year timeframe from the date of employment. Seven competency areas and observation of practice are required.	Certificate is obtained at employment (see <i>Application for Certificate</i>)
Awarding certification:	A Certification Reviewer recommends applicant for ITFS/A to the Early Intervention state office. Approval is granted by the Early Intervention state office.	CDSA reviews the <i>Application for Certificate</i> and applicant’s transcripts. Approval is granted/denied by the CDSA within 30 days of receipt of application.
Certification Renewal:	30 professional development contact hours annually.	No renewal requirement. Certificate holders are expected to complete professional development/technical assistance opportunities provided by the Early Intervention state office.