

# North Carolina Infant-Toddler Program Procedural Guidance

Reference: Infant-Toddler Program Services Policy

## *Service Providers*

### **Introduction**

The Children’s Developmental Services Agency (CDSA) is the provider of evaluative services and service coordination for the catchment area and will rely upon Infant Toddler Program (ITP) providers in the community to deliver direct community based services through agreements. ITP providers may include public or government agencies, for profit and not for profit corporations, independent practitioners, and sole proprietors. As part of the local lead agency responsibilities, the CDSA will make available to the ITP provider pertinent Early Intervention rules, regulations, standards, procedures, and other information for the provision of early intervention services under this Agreement.

### **Definitions**

A **service provider** is a public or private agency or professional that receives public funds and provides early intervention services for an eligible child and the child's family. All agencies, programs, and individual service providers that receive public funds are considered participating agencies in the Infant-Toddler Program and are responsible for adhering to its requirements.

**Participating agency** as it relates to ITP providers means any individual, entity, or institution that collects, maintains, or uses personally identifiable information to implement the requirements for the North Carolina Infant Toddler Program and the Part C regulations with respect to a particular child. A participating agency includes the state lead agency, the CDSA (local lead agency) and Infant Toddler Program Providers (ITP Providers) that provide any Part C service.

### **Procedures**

1. The Children’s Developmental Services Agencies are responsible for recruiting and enrolling through written agreement qualified public or government agencies, for profit and not for profit corporations, independent practitioners, and sole proprietors as Infant-Toddler Program service providers. See the ITP provider agreement for qualifications.
2. Only enrolled service providers will be recommended to parents for the delivery of Infant-Toddler Program services. If an enrolled service provider is available and the parent chooses a service provider who is not enrolled, the parent must be informed that the Infant-Toddler Program cannot assure the quality of the service and that the parent will be responsible for any costs associated with the delivery of the service. The service and service provider should be listed on the Individualized Family Service Plan with

a notation that the service provider is not an enrolled provider, the service provider was chosen by the parent, and the parent will bear the cost of the service.

3. If the Children’s Developmental Services Agency does not have an adequate number of enrolled service providers to meet the needs of children and their families, the Children’s Developmental Services Agency must provide the service itself while actively searching for and enrolling a qualified service provider. This solution should be considered temporary. All efforts to recruit and enroll additional service providers must be documented.
4. In addition to any other specific responsibilities outlined in the written service provider agreement, enrolled providers of Infant-Toddler Program services, as well as any other provider that receives public funds, must comply with the responsibilities outlined in the Policy.

## **ITP Provider Assurances**

### **1. Infant-Toddler Program Assurances**

Comply with policies outlined in the NC ITP Program Policy Manual found on the NC Early Intervention Program Website [<http://www.bearly.nc.gov/>], the primary authority under federal law (Part C of IDEA).

### **2. Administrative**

- A. Enter into a written service provider agreement with the Children’s Developmental Services Agency as an Infant-Toddler Program service provider.
- B. Ensure that personnel policies, operational procedures, and fiscal procedures within the organization are complementary and support Infant-Toddler Program outcomes.
- C. Acknowledge that while the ITP provider may elect to be a provider for other services outside the scope of Infant-Toddler Program services and comply with those vendor requirements, the ITP provider does not allow those requirements to reduce or override the provision or efficacy of ITP services.
- D. Participate in the Infant-Toddler Program comprehensive data system by submitting required information in accordance with established procedures and timelines.
- E. Use all standard, applicable Infant-Toddler Program forms.
- F. Maintain adequate records documentation consistent with the standards of practice and timelines.

### **3. Confidentiality**

- A. Meet all confidentiality guidelines required by any applicable governmental authority. All existing and newly hired direct service providers performing under this Agreement will sign and adhere to the terms of the North Carolina ITP Confidentiality Agreement, and submit the signed document to the CDSA within the month of their employment.
- B. Not discuss, transmit, or narrate in any form, other information, medical or otherwise, received in the course of providing services under this agreement, except as authorized by the individual, his legally responsible agent, or as otherwise permitted by law.

- C. Not disclose any personally identifiable information without parental consent to any party except the participating agencies that are part of the State's Part C system. The ITP Provider must protect and preserve child and family confidentiality as outlined in the ITP Policy and Procedure Manual.

#### **4. Quality Assurance**

- A. Participate fully in any quality assurance, auditing, monitoring, and evaluation activities required by the CDSA or the Early Intervention Branch State Office to ensure compliance with all documentation requirements, to deliver authorized services to Infant-Toddler Program children in a timely manner, and to take any appropriate corrective action to address problems found through these activities.
- B. Implement and maintain a quality assurance plan within the provider agency to assure all employees and departments serving and/or communicating with families in the Infant-Toddler Program are in compliance with Infant-Toddler Program policies.

#### **5. Education, Licensure, Certification, and Credentialing**

- A. Obtain and maintain in good standing all academic and professional credentials, licenses and certificates as required by law and as applicable, including but not limited to licensure by the appropriate State of North Carolina Departments or Boards.
- B. Maintain all appropriate credentialing requirements as applicable to the service being provided, with submission of a certified copy of the highest post-secondary degree in all cases, a current copy of professional license and/or certification to the CDSA for all applicable services provided.
- C. Notify the CDSA if for any reason they are, or have been at any time, excluded from a public or private insurer. It is the responsibility of the ITP provider to verify that employees providing services are qualified to provide and bill for the services before allowing the employee to provide the service.

#### **6. Complaint Resolution**

The Infant-Toddler Program has adopted written procedures for resolving any complaints filed by an individual or an organization (including from another state) that alleges that an agency of the state, a local agency, or an individual practitioner has violated a federal or state Infant-Toddler Program requirement.

ITP providers will adhere to the complaint resolution process outlined in the ITP Policy and Procedure Manual to achieve timely resolution of intra-agency and interagency disputes about payments for a given service, or disputes about other matters related to the ITP.

#### **7. Fiscal Responsibility**

- A. Affirm financial stability necessary to extend services and operate during the term of the written service provider agreement.
- B. Comply with all public and private insurance carriers.
- C. Demonstrate the ability to bill public and private third-party insurance either directly, or through an agreement with a third party, or as a member of a network which may bill on behalf of the service provider.

- D. Comply with the service authorization process and provide services within the scope of practice and service capacity of its organization.
- E. Provide Infant-Toddler Program services authorized by the Children’s Developmental Services Agency within twenty (20) calendar days of the referral from the Children’s Developmental Services Agency.
- F. Reimburse the Children’s Developmental Services Agency for any state, public or private, insurance paybacks caused by failure to comply with the requirements of the funding source.

**8. Service Delivery**

- A. Participate in the multidisciplinary Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) Team’s ongoing assessment of an infant or toddler with a disability and a family-directed assessment of the resources, priorities, and concerns, of the infant’s or toddler’s family, as related to the needs of the infant or toddler, in the development of integrated goals and outcomes, decisions regarding frequency and intensity of service delivery for the IFSP.
- B. Cooperate with the Children’s Developmental Services Agency in identifying sustainable means whereby natural supports and the strengths of families and communities may be relied upon in order to ensure adequate services for all eligible children and families.
- C. Support implementation of the Individualized Family Service Plan as it is written and agreed upon by the Individualized Family Service Plan team.
- D. Coordinate all recommendations for changes with the Service Coordinator and the family following all necessary procedural safeguards.
- E. Assure that consultation with Early Intervention Service Coordinators, parents, other service providers, and representatives of appropriate community agencies is occurring to ensure the effective provision of services.
- F. Assure that informing and training parents on the specific services being provided, as required by federal regulations, is being carried out in evidence based service delivery models.
- G. Follow all Infant-Toddler Program policies and restrictions related to charging fees to families, including the requirement that all screening, assessment, evaluations and service planning are provided at no cost to the family.
- H. Ensure that all health and safety codes are followed, including compliance with all state laws concerning the reporting of suspected or observed neglect or abuse to ensure the health and safety of all children and families.
- I. Observe and adhere to all professional and current evidence based standards of care in the treatment of children and families.
- J. Comply with all Infant-Toddler Program procedural safeguards, such as following the Prior Written Notice requirements before changing any aspect of services outlined on a child’s IFSP or discharging a child from a service.