

Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT)

Qualified Personnel Guidelines

Purpose

The purpose of this guidance is to provide clarification regarding the types of Early Supports for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT) services listed on Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs), and the types of personnel who are qualified to provide these services in accordance with [WAC110-400-0050](#).

Background

Early intervention services, according to Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), are developmental services provided under public supervision and by qualified personnel ([CFR303.13](#)). The Department for Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF), as the State Lead Agency for Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part C services, has the authority and responsibility to determine and assure qualifications of ESIT providers as a part of the general supervision requirements. Qualified personnel means personnel who have met state requirements in the areas in which they are conducting evaluations, assessments, or are providing IDEA Part C services on an eligible child's IFSP ([CFR303.20](#)). The services and personnel listed in this guidance are not exhaustive. Providers and employers should consult with their County Lead Agency (CLA) or their ESIT Service Delivery/Technical Assistance Specialist with questions about including other types of services or personnel on the IFSP.

At-A-Glance Chart of Providers, Qualifications, and ESIT Services

The following table summarizes the array of providers with qualifications and the ESIT Service they are qualified to provide. ESIT Service descriptions follow the At-a-Glance table. Employers and applicants should consult the websites of the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) and Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), if necessary.

ESIT Provider Type/Discipline (CFR303.13c)	Qualifications to Provide ESIT Service	ESIT Part C Service (CFR303.13b)
Family Resources Coordinator (FRC)	ESIT Credential*	Service Coordination
Developmental Specialist	ESIT Credential* And	Assistive Technology Family Training, Counseling, and Home Visits Sign Language or Cued Language



Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

Original Date: December 2021 | Revised Date: April 1, 2025

Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT) | Approved for distribution by Valerie Arnold, ESIT State Administrator

	Minimum of a Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) Or Bachelor's Degree in a Related Field and coursework	Developmental (Special Instruction)
Developmental Associate	ESIT Credential* And Associates Degree in Early Childhood Education, or related field OR Actively enrolled in program (provisional DA)	Assistive Technology Family Training, Counseling, and Home Visits Sign Language or Cued Language Developmental (Special Instruction)
Developmental Specialist – Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH)	ESIT Credential * And Completion of a college/university program for Education of Children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing	Assistive Technology Family Training, Counseling, and Home Visits Sign Language or Cued Language Developmental (Special Instruction)
Developmental Specialist – Blind and Low Vision (BLV)	ESIT Credential* And Completion of a college/university program for Education of Children who are Blind or Low Vision	Assistive Technology Blind/Low Vision Family Training, Counseling, and Home Visits Sign Language or Cued Language Developmental (Special Instruction)
Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist (COMS)	Academy for the Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Educational Professionals (ACVREP) Certification in Orientation and Mobility	Assistive Technology Blind/Low Vision Family Training, Counseling, and Home Visits
Occupational Therapist (OT) Certified Occupational Therapist Assistant (COTA)	DOH Occupational Therapy DOH Occupational Therapy Assistant	Assistive Technology Family Training, Counseling, and Home Visits Nutrition (includes feeding support)

Original Date: December 2021 | Revised Date: April 1, 2025

Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT) | Approved for distribution by Valerie Arnold, ESIT State Administrator

		Occupational Therapy
Physical Therapist (PT) Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA)	DOH Physical Therapy DOH Physical Therapy Assistant	Assistive Technology Family Training, Counseling, and Home Visits Physical Therapy
Speech Language Pathologist (SLP) Speech Language Pathologist Assistant (SLPA)	DOH Speech Language Pathologist DOH Speech Language Pathology-Assistant	Assistive Technology Family Training, Counseling, and Home Visits Nutrition (includes feeding support) Sign Language or Cued Language Speech and Language
Audiologist Pediatric Audiologist Educational Audiologist	DOH Audiologist OR OSPI Educational Staff Associate (ESA) Certificate - Audiology	Audiology
Social Worker	DOH Social Worker Associate DOH Social Worker Counselor Advanced Social Worker Independent Clinical Social Worker	Family Training, Counseling, and Home Visits Social Work
Psychologist	DOH Psychologist	Family Training, Counseling, and Home Visits Psychology
Mental Health Provider	DOH Certified Counselor DOH Agency Affiliated Counselor DOH Mental Health Counselor DOH Marriage and Family Therapist Center for Early Relational Health (CERH) Infant Mental Health Endorsement (IMH-E®) as	Family Training, Counseling, and Home Visits

	Infant Mental Health Specialist	
Licensed Medical Provider	DOH Physician Medical Doctor (MD) DOH Physician Assistant (PA)	Medical Health
Ophthalmologist Optometrist	DOH Physician Medical Doctor (MD) DOH Optometrist	Blind/Low Vision Medical
Registered Nurse (RN) Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)	DOH Registered Nurse DOH Licensed Practical Nurse DOH Nursing Assistant	Family Training, Counseling, and Home Visits Nursing
Registered Dietician (RD) Nutritionist	DOH Dietitian Nutritionist	Nutrition

*The ESIT Credential is earned after employment and completion of required training provided by the Department of Children, Youth, and Families ESIT Program. For more information on specific qualifications for the ESIT Credential, see the appropriate [credential guidance](#).

Supervision Guidelines

Therapy assistants require supervision, and employers should refer to the professional standards from governing disciplines, i.e., American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), American Physical Therapy Association (APTA), or American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), as their guidance varies as to the nature, frequency, and length of supervision.

Developmental Associates must receive supervision from a credentialed Developmental Specialist for support in the provision of quality services. This may mean at least face to face contact at the beginning of services or at least once per month.

- 1) All Developmental Associates and therapy assistants should have a Supervision Plan on file that is individualized based on experience, knowledge, and skills.
 - a. Components of Supervision Plans should include:
 - i. Frequency of contact – Minimum monthly contact is recommended and could include additional contacts such as weekly touch bases, monthly in-person planning, or quarterly joint home visits
 - ii. Type of contact - such as phone calls, virtual meetings, or in person to plan service delivery, reflect together on caseload, and conduct joint visits with families according to IFSP

- iii. Evaluation/assessments responsibilities - such as who conducts, writes reports, updates present levels of developments, and how Developmental Specialist or therapist will sign off on the work completed by the Developmental Associate or therapy assistant.
- iv. Service delivery responsibilities – such as who is listed on the IFSP (may be different per child/family), if joint home visits are needed and how conducted, and in general a description of supports for the Developmental Associate or therapy assistant.

Documentation of supervisory activities should be recorded and available upon request of DCYF, CLA, or the ESIT provider's licensing agency. Supervisors may also need to sign off on records for billing purposes.

Emergency and Chronic Personnel Shortages

When there is no qualified professional, assistant, or anyone working toward requirements available, activities needed to meet outcomes must still be listed on the IFSP and still be delivered. Teams may discuss alternative professionals to implement activities if appropriate, may connect with surrounding communities to cooperatively plan, may use tele-therapies if appropriate, or consult with the regional DCYF ESIT Service Delivery/Technical Assistance Specialist or their CLA.

Part C Early Support Service Descriptions (Alphabetical Order) ([CFR 303.13](#))

Assistive Technology Services

Service to support children in the use of assistive technology (AT) for active participation within a child and family's daily routine. Service may include evaluation and functional assessment to determine the necessary and appropriate device (high or low tech), assistance to acquire device(s), and direct support in adapting and maintaining device(s) to be used in child's daily routines.

Qualified Provider(s) with specialized knowledge of technologies in their field:

- Developmental Specialist
- Developmental Associate
- Developmental Specialist – DHH
- Developmental Specialist – BLV
- Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist (COMS)
- Occupational Therapist (OT)
- Certified Occupational Therapist Assistant (COTA)
- Physical Therapist (PT)
- Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA)
- Speech Language Pathologist (SLP)
- Speech Language Pathologist Assistant (SLPA)

Audiology Services

Service to support children who are or may be deaf or hard of hearing, including identification and evaluation of hearing levels, determination of appropriate amplification or listening devices, and appropriate auditory training for use of device.

Original Date: December 2021 | Revised Date: April 1, 2025

Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT) | Approved for distribution by Valerie Arnold, ESIT State Administrator

Qualified Provider(s):

- Audiologist
- Pediatric Audiologist
- Educational Audiologist

Blind/Low Vision Services

Service to support children who are (or may be) blind or low vision, including evaluation and assessment of visual functioning (may include both diagnosis and appraisal of specific visual disorders), orientation and mobility training, accommodations of environment or materials for visual/auditory/tactile accessibility, and multi-sensory training/support to enhance use of other sensory modalities (touch, auditory) when vision is not accessible.

Qualified Provider(s):

- Developmental Specialist – BLV
- Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist (COMS)
- Ophthalmologist
- Optometrist

Developmental Services (Special Instruction)

Service to support children with the acquisition of skills in all developmental domains, specifically in cognitive processing and social interaction, and achievement of IFSP outcomes through assessment and curriculum planning for family centered instruction.

Qualified Provider(s):

- Developmental Specialist
- Developmental Associate
- Developmental Specialist – DHH
- Developmental Specialist – BLV

Family Training, Counseling, and Home Visits

Service to support families in understanding the individual needs of their child and ways to enhance the child's development, including social emotional support. Service is driven by a family focused outcome.

Qualified Provider(s):

- Developmental Specialist
- Developmental Associate
- Developmental Specialist – DHH
- Developmental Specialist – BLV
- Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist (COMS)
- Occupational Therapist (OT)
- Certified Occupational Therapist Assistant (COTA)
- Physical Therapist (PT)
- Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA)
- Speech Language Pathologist (SLP)
- Speech Language Pathologist Assistant (SLPA)

Original Date: December 2021 | Revised Date: April 1, 2025

Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT) | Approved for distribution by Valerie Arnold, ESIT State Administrator

- Social Worker
 - Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker (LICSW)
 - Licensed Advanced Social Worker (LASW)
 - Associate-Advanced
 - Independent Clinical Social Worker (AACSW)
- Psychologist
- Licensed Mental Health Provider
 - Certified Counselor
 - Agency Affiliated Counselor
 - Mental Health Counselor
 - Marriage and Family Therapist
 - Licensed Professional Counselor
 - Infant Mental Health Specialist
- Nurse
 - Registered Nurse (RN)
 - Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)
 - Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)

Health Services

Service to support children who have special health care needs to access and participate in ESIT services. Service may include the maintenance of existing health care needs (such as tracheostomy care, feeding tubes, etc.) and consultation between the child's medical provider(s) and any member of the child's IFSP team.

Qualified Provider(s):

- Licensed Medical Provider
- Pediatrician or Physician
- Nurse
 - Registered Nurse (RN)
 - Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)
 - Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)

Medical Services

Service to support children through medical diagnostic and evaluation purposes to determine a child's developmental status and potential eligibility for Part C services.

Qualified Provider(s):

- Licensed Medical Provider
- Pediatrician or Physician
- Ophthalmologist
- Optometrist

Nursing Services

Service to support children's health status to enable participation and ability to benefit from Part C services. Service may include assessment of health status for the purpose of providing nursing care to prevent health problems and promote optimal health. Additionally, this service supports plans developed by physicians which may include the administration of medications and other treatments.

Qualified Provider(s):

- Nurse
 - Registered Nurse (RN)
 - Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)
 - Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)

Nutrition Services

Service to support children's nutritional needs through assessment, development, and monitoring of appropriate plans to address dietary health, feeding skills, and food habits or preferences.

Qualified Provider(s):

- Registered Dietician (RD)
- Nutritionist
- Occupational Therapist (OT)
- Certified Occupational Therapist Assistant (COTA)
- Speech Language Pathologist (SLP)
- Speech Language Pathologist Assistant (SLPA)

Occupational Therapy Services

Service to support children's functional ability to perform tasks related to self-help skills, behavior, and fine motor play through sensorimotor development. Service may include identification, assessments, and program planning to focus on adaptation to environment and use of assistive/orthotic devices to enhance development of fine motor abilities and functional skills.

Qualified Provider(s):

- Occupational Therapist (OT)
- Certified Occupational Therapist Assistant (COTA)

Physical Therapy Services

Service to support children's gross motor, movement development, and sensorimotor function. Service may include identification, assessments, and program planning to focus on support to enhance gross motor or movement abilities through enhancement of musculoskeletal status, neurobehavioral organization, perceptual and motor development, cardiopulmonary status, and effective environmental adaptation.

Qualified Provider(s):

- Physical Therapist (PT)
- Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA)

Psychological Services

Service to support children's psychological health through administering and interpreting psychological and developmental assessments, obtaining, integrating, and interpreting information about a child's behavior and child/family conditions related to learning, mental health, and development. Additionally, the service may plan and manage a program of psychological counseling to child/family, and provide parent training, family counseling, and consultation on child development.

Qualified Provider(s):

- Psychologist

Service Coordination

Service to support children and their families in accessing Part C services through case management and coordination of all services.

Key role and responsibilities include:

- o assuring that families' understanding of the Procedural Safeguards (Parent Rights)
- o coordination of evaluations and assessments
- o facilitation of the development and review of IFSPs
- o coordination of services across agencies
- o making of appropriate referrals for needed ESIT Part C services and community resources
- o serving as the single point of contact for carrying out all IFSP activities
- o coordination the funding sources for services (SOPAF)
- o facilitation of the development of a transition plan to Part B or other services.

Qualified Provider(s):

- Family Resources Coordinator

Sign Language or Cued Language Services

Service to support children's access to language, regardless of the hearing level of the child, through visual and auditory language models. This includes supporting the development of language through sign language, oral/auditory language with amplification, augmentative communication strategies, and/or cued language, for both expressive and receptive language acquisition.

Qualified Provider(s):

- Developmental Specialist
- Developmental Associate
- Developmental Specialist – DHH
- Developmental Specialist – BLV
- Speech Language Pathologist (SLP)
- Speech Language Pathologist Assistant (SLPA)

Social Work Services

Service to support parent-child interactions within the context of family through social emotional developmental assessments and living conditions/patterns. Service may provide individual or group family counseling with caregivers for social skill building activities, address family living conditions which may impact a child's participation in ESIT services, and the coordination of community resources and services to support families.

Qualified Provider(s):

- Social Worker
 - o Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker (LICSW)
 - o Licensed Advanced Social Worker (LASW)
 - o Associate-Advanced
 - o Independent Clinical Social Worker (AACSW)

Speech and Language Therapy Services

Service to support children in development of communication and language skills through identification, diagnosis, and appraisal of specific communication disorders and delays and services to help children learn or improve language skills related to communicating with their family.

Qualified Provider(s):

- Speech Language Pathologist (SLP)
- Speech Language Pathologist Assistant (SLPA)

Transportation

Services that include the family's cost of travel that enable an infant or toddler with a disability and the child's family to receive early intervention services.