



**STATE OF WASHINGTON  
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES**

1500 Jefferson Street, SE • P.O. Box 40975 • Olympia WA 98504-0975

Guidance Memo # 2020-03

Date: June 8, 2020

To: ESIT Early Intervention Providers

Re: COVID-19 Planning and Waivers

Based on the progression over time of COVID-19 in Washington State, and concern for the health and well-being of infants, toddlers and families receiving services and staff providing them, the Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT) State Office has determined that *in-person services, with limited exceptions, will continue to be suspended*. Additionally, we are suspending previous guidance limiting the provision of Family Resources Coordination to three months when this is the only service being provided. This suspension will be in place until further notice.

We are aware that not all needs can be met through virtual services. In order to meet the individual needs of *all* children and families, we are developing systems to identify exceptions for children who need time-limited in-person services before there is a more widespread return to in-person services. We will work with stakeholders to determine where and how such services can be provided while ensuring the safety of children, parents and the staff providing services.

To plan for a safe transition to what we anticipate may be a “new normal” for ESIT services, a small group of stakeholders has been convened to develop a re-entry strategy. The group includes representation from early intervention service providers, parents who serve on our State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC), a parent currently receiving services representing the Parent Institute for Engagement (PIE) and ESIT state team representatives. This small group began meeting weekly with the support of national technical assistance staff to develop a re-entry strategy that is in line with [Gov. Inslee's Safe Start Phased Approach](#) and reference materials provided by the [Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center \(ECTA\)](#). I would personally like to thank the task group members listed below for their commitment to engaging in this important work.

Whitney Stohr, PIE Parent Representative  
Cindy Carroll, SICC Provider Representative  
Mary Cline-Stively, SICC Provider Representative  
Lisa Greenwald, SICC Provider Representative  
Anne Lucas, National TA UNC  
Maia Thomas, ESIT Program Consultant

E Renae' Antalan, SICC Parent Representative  
Sugely Sanchez, SICC Parent Representative  
Maryanne Barnes, SICC Provider Representative  
Michelle LaMotte, SICC Provider Representative  
Katy McCullough, National TA UNC

The outcomes for this group include:

1. Developing recommendations and criteria for *limited exceptions* to be applied that would allow a small group of infants and toddlers who have urgent, short term needs to receive in-person support.
2. Developing a plan for transitioning back to in-person services using a regional approach to be applied in line with Gov. Inslee's Safe Start Plan.

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We will develop a re-entry plan that incorporates feedback and insights from families and our statewide network of ESIT early intervention providers. If you have questions, concerns, or ideas that you would like to bring forward to the work group, please contact me at [laurie.thomas@dcyf.wa.gov](mailto:laurie.thomas@dcyf.wa.gov).

Thank you for your flexibility, creativity, and ongoing commitment to services during this challenging time.

Sincerely,

Laurie Thomas

Administrator

Early Support for Infants and Toddlers Program