

Late Referrals- Timelines and Transition Requirements Practice Guide

7/23/2024 Webinar Q&A

Declining Services

Q: If a family declines either Part B or Part C services after being found eligible, should a decline form be signed?

A: If a family declines Part C services after being found eligible for Part C services, a [Declining Participation in the ESIT Program](#) form must be signed.

If a family declines a referral to Part B services after being found potentially eligible for Part B, a Declining Participation form does not need to be signed. If the child is enrolled in Part C services, the parents' decision to decline a referral to Part B should be documented in the Transition Planning section of the IFSP. If notification of potential eligibility has been sent and the family later declines the transition conference, notify the school district of the family's decision.

Q: How does a family's decision to bypass Part C services and go directly to Part B affect the timeline for the child's enrollment into Part B?

A: The timeline for moving through the Part B process may be longer for a child not transitioning directly from Part C. The FRC should coordinate with local school districts to clarify the potential impacts and fully inform the parents.

Q: Could families who are found eligible for ESIT, but considering bypassing Part C services, instead have an IFSP with service coordination as their only ESIT service, in order to get assistance with and expedite the connection to Part B?

A: Yes, the IFSP team can write an IFSP in which service coordination is the only service. The family's IFSP outcome would be related to support for transition to Part B. See [ESIT Technical Assistance Brief 24-01](#) for more information on service coordination-only IFSPs.

Q: Aside from creating a referral, is there any documentation an ESIT Provider Agency needs to keep on file if families elect to go to Part B directly?

A: If the child is in Late Referral Categories 1 or 2 and wants to move directly to Part B, a Declining Participation form must be signed and kept in the child's record. If a child is in Late



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Referral Category 3, a Declining Participation form is not required. The Family Resources Coordinator or referral coordinator should document the support provided in the child's file.

Q: I've heard that ESIT is drafting a new policy that will allow parents of children found potentially eligible for Part B, to opt-out of the notification to Part B. Is there a timeline for when the opt-out process will be in place?

A: The drafted policy is currently under review by the federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). Once the policy is approved by OSEP, DCYF ESIT will announce a 90-day roll out period before the policy is implemented.

Q: What documentation will be required in order for parents to opt out of the Part B notification?

A: During the 90-day roll out period, DCYF ESIT will offer training on the new policy and documentation requirements, including its application to late referrals.

School District Collaboration

Q: How do you refer families not enrolled in Part C to Part B at their local school district?

A: If the child does not have an IFSP and is found potentially eligible for Part B, the FRC would get a signed [Authorization for Release of Records](#) to [make a referral to the school district](#) and to inform the school district the child has no IFSP.

Q: What is the specific guidance for school district partners around collaborating with ESIT for eligibility evaluation in late referral scenarios?

A: The [Interagency Early Childhood Transition Agreement between Division of Children, Youth, and Families and Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction](#) states:

It is permissible and encouraged that ESIT service providers and LEAs jointly and concurrently conduct the evaluation, eligibility, initial IFSP meeting, and initial IEP meeting to ensure coordination and compliance with Part C and Part B timelines. (Scope of work 2.5)

More specific guidance may vary by the school district. ESIT Provider Agencies are encouraged to reach out to local school district partners to develop joint strategies and include this information in [Local Early Support Services Collaboration Plans](#).

Q: Do we need to obtain a written Release of Information from families to reach out to Part B providers in order to collaborate in the eligibility evaluation process?

A: Yes, a signed [Authorization for Release of Records](#) is needed to share evaluation information.

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Category 3 Late Referrals

Q: Do you have to have a signed Release of Information to connect a family to a school district or community partner when providing specifics about the child (ex. name, DOB, etc.) or can you document that verbal consent was received?

A: Yes, an [Authorization for Release of Records](#) is needed when sharing anything more than directory level information (child's name, date of birth, resident school district, parent contact information, FRC contact information) with the local school district and is needed when sharing *any* information with third parties other than the school district.

Q: Do ESIT Provider Agencies receive funding for children who do not have an IFSPs issued due to late referral? We spend significant time coordinating other services for these families.

A: No, pre-IFSP activities are not fundable by DCYF ESIT at this time.

Q: For Category 3 Late Referrals, is the Part C provider responsible for scheduling a meeting between school districts and/or community partners and the family?

A: No, not for Category 3 referrals. The ESIT Provider Agency must provide parents with information and assist them in accessing Part B and other community programs. The FRC is not required to schedule the meetings for Category 3 Late Referrals.

Q: How long is it recommended to keep the referral open while assisting a family to get connected to other services?

A: Once the FRC has provided resources and/or referrals, document the work done and close the record no later than the child's third birthday.

Documentation

Q: Does the FRC need to document the child's Late Referral category?

A: No. There is no need to specify the child's late referral category in the ESIT data management system. However, the FRC must be aware of the requirements and document that those are met, and additionally ensure that all referrals regardless of late referral category are entered into the ESIT data management system.

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