



POLICIES AND PROCEDURES NEW JERSEY EARLY INTERVENTION SYSTEM

No: NJEIS-06	Subject: Referral System Point of Entry
Effective Date: July 1, 2012	Responsible Party: Part C Coordinator

I. Purpose

To ensure that children and families residing in New Jersey have access to early intervention services.

II. Policy

- A. Regional Early Intervention Collaboratives (REICs) are the established regionally based system points of entry (SPOE) for referral to the New Jersey Early Intervention System (NJEIS) based on the county of residence.
- B. Although the NJEIS is a voluntary program, parent consent is not required for referral under the Individuals with Education Disabilities Act (IDEA), and failure to obtain parent consent cannot extend the requirement for referring a child as soon as possible, but in no case more than seven days, after the child has been identified. However, neither Part C of IDEA nor the regulations require that a referral be made when the parent has requested that a referral not be made. Recommended practice supports the position that parents be informed and involved in the referral process.
- C. REICs must implement state approved procedures for accepting referrals and tracking timelines.
- D. The REIC must implement procedures for coordinating referrals with other community resources when children are not determined eligible for Part C intervention services or other non Part C services are identified as needed by the child and/or family.
- E. A child is considered “referred” to the early intervention system when:
 - 1. The parent contacts the REIC SPOE and requests early intervention services for their child and family; or
 - 2. A child is identified to the REIC SPOE by a primary referral source and the REIC SPOE confirms with the parent that the referral is for early intervention services.

- F. When applicable, REICs must assign a surrogate parent at referral.
- G. After a referral is received, REICs must assign a SPOE service coordinator and contact the family within 2 business days of the referral date.
- H. The SPOE Service Coordinator must assist the family in determining the evaluation and assessment settings and participants (e.g. time of day, who should be present) that will provide the most appropriate evaluation/assessment of their child's ability to function in their natural environment(s).
- I. The SPOE Service Coordinator must forward referral information to the appropriate NJEIS targeted evaluation team with recommendations for appropriate evaluation team practitioners at least two business (2) days before the scheduled evaluation.
- J. Parents must be advised of the NJEIS System of Payment including Family Cost Participation.
- K. The SPOE Service Coordinator must obtain written consent from a parent before releasing personally identifiable information to the referral source or other community resources and for gathering information from sources outside of NJEIS.
- L. With parental consent, the REIC SPOE must have a system in place for letting a medical referral source (the physician or clinic) know the child's eligibility status. This system must ensure that:
 - 1. Timely feedback to the referring physician is provided.
 - 2. With parental consent to release information, a summary of the evaluation and assessment results is given to the child's primary care physician.

III. Procedure

- A. In accordance with Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), a primary referral source is to refer a child as soon as possible, but in no case more than seven (7) calendar days after the child is identified as potentially eligible for NJEIS.
- B. Primary referral sources include but are not limited to: hospitals; physicians; parents; child care programs; local educational agencies; public health facilities or social services agencies; other clinics and health care providers; public agencies and staff in the child welfare system; homeless shelters and domestic violence shelters and agencies.
- C. REICs maintain records on contacts including primary referral source (how the caller found out about early intervention, caller name and contact information; and reason for the call.
- D. The referral process requires the SPOE service coordinator to:
 - 1. Use the NJEIS referral form and forward it for data entry as soon as possible.
 - 2. Forward the referral information to the Targeted Evaluation Team assigned to conduct evaluation/assessment immediately after its completion.
 - 3. Explain and distribute the NJEIS Family Rights document to parents.

4. Collect referral information in the primary language of the parent or through other modes of communication needed by the parent.
5. Use nondiscriminatory practices (race, culture, socioeconomic status or age) when collecting child and family information.
6. Discuss with the family NJEIS's requirement and commitment to provide early intervention services in natural environments.

IV. Related Policies and Procedures

SPOE Referral Spreadsheet (Contact Log)
NJEIS Form-001