



ISSUE CLARIFICATION

NUMBER: 503-11-044

DATE: June 2003

TOPIC: First Steps (90-day) Transition Meetings and Local Education Agency (LEA or public school system) Case Conference Committee Meetings

RELEVANT SECTIONS OF THE MANUAL: Transition, Section 11

AUDIENCE: Early Intervention Service Providers
Ongoing Service Coordinator
System Point Of Entry

ISSUE FOR CLARIFICATION: It has been determined that there is a need to identify the roles of First Steps providers and Service Coordinators at the First Steps transition meetings and the public school district's Case Conference Committee (CCC) meetings. In addition, the Bureau of Child Development will clarify how providers and Service Coordinators may be reimbursed for these meetings.

CLARIFICATION: The IFSP must include the steps taken to support the transition of the child and family into, within, and from the First Steps early intervention system. For the purpose of this issue clarification, we will focus on activities to ensure a smooth transition of a child and family to services provided by the local public school system under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). However, the Bureau of Child Development recognizes that it is essential to provide families with opportunities to explore a variety of transition options as a child approaches his or her third birthday.

The Transition Meeting

The purpose of the transition meeting is to discuss future service options and matters related to the child's transition as a child approaches his or her third birthday. During this meeting, a written plan for transition is developed, outlining the steps that the family, current early intervention team, Early Childhood Special Education staff and/or other community service providers will follow in order to ensure a seamless and smooth transition from First Steps. The 90-day Transition meeting is convened and facilitated by the First Steps Service Coordinator. First Steps providers are encouraged to attend in order to contribute to the child's plan for transition.

The role of Service Coordinators and Providers at the transition meeting:

- Actively participate in the development of the transition plan
- Discuss family priorities and concerns with regards to transition expectations
- Provide present levels of development and be prepared to share the most recent quarterly report to the LEA representative, with parental consent
- Make recommendations to help achieve transition outcomes stated by the family
- Be knowledgeable of local resources

The written plan must include: (1) desired outcomes (2) identified service providers (3) an outline regarding transfer of information (4) timelines with dates of anticipated conclusion of early intervention services and commencement of subsequent activities (5) with concurrence of the family, a statement of the family's priorities, concerns, and resources related to transition expectations.

In order to actively participate in the Transition meeting it is critical that all individuals are aware of the program requirements and guidelines of potential placement options. Although IDEA authorizes programs for children with disabilities in Part B and Early Intervention Programs for Infants and Toddlers with disabilities in Part C, there are significant differences in the two programs.

It is important that as teams discuss the transition needs and expectations of the family, they realistically identify the resources or programs that may be able to help.

Billing for the transition meeting:

First Steps providers and Service Coordinators may be reimbursed for the face-to-face time spent at a transition meeting (***convened between 90 and 180 days prior to the child's third birthday***) under IFSP development and will not exceed 2.5 hours per meeting or 7.5 hours per IFSP year. Meeting minutes and other appropriate documentation must support all billing.

The Case Conference Committee Meeting

The Case Conference Committee (CCC) meeting is convened after an initial educational evaluation is conducted. The initial educational evaluation must be conducted and the CCC meeting must be convened within sixty (60) instructional days of the date certified personnel receive written parental consent. Children who transition from Part C to Part B have a 3rd birthday timeline according to federal and state statute. By the date of the third birthday of the child who may be eligible for early childhood special education, the public school district must complete the evaluation, convene the CCC meeting to determine eligibility, develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and implement the IEP.

The CCC is a group of persons described in the Indiana State Board of Education, Special Education Rules, Title 511 Article 7, Rules 17-31. The CCC participants in 511IAC 7-27-3 include parents and public agency personnel, and additional individuals, as appropriate. The CCC participants are responsible for reviewing evaluation data and determining a child's eligibility for special education and related services; developing the IEP; determining the appropriate special education services, related services, placement, and the setting(s) services will be provided; and determining other matters that are assigned by federal law to an IEP team or to a CCC by state law. At the discretion of the parent or the school (with parent consent), other individuals who have knowledge or special expertise of the child may participate in the CCC meeting. The party who invites the individual to participate makes the determination of the knowledge and special expertise.

The role of Service Coordinators and Providers at Case Conference Committee meetings:

- To provide present levels of development including specific concerns/priorities
- To provide a *positive* approach to the transition process and system differences
- To assist with the development of the IEP if the child is eligible under Part B
- Provide support to parents during the meeting

IDEA legislation guiding special education for children, ages 3 through 21 is designed to ensure that all children with disabilities have an appropriate education available to them that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs. In a CCC meeting, service coordinators and providers may have information to share about how the effects of the child's disability may influence, interfere with, or prevent the child's educational progress, safety, or ability to function in the anticipated instructional environment. Types of services included under "early intervention" services in Part C and "special education and related services" under Part B are different. For example, physical therapy (PT) and occupational therapy (OT) may be provided as a primary service option, depending on the needs of the child and family. In an early intervention program's family-centered context, services can take a global approach, looking at whole-life, restorative, and developmental issues. In the school system, however, the PT and OT are identified in federal and state regulations as related services that may only be provided if the

therapies enable the child to benefit from special education and they directly impact educational progress. Therapy needs for medical reasons or for ability to function in any aspects of daily living are not provided by schools. It is easy to see how parents may develop a perception that maintaining a particular amount or type of therapy is the key component in a child's development. Parents need a clear distinction between early intervention services that may be developmental or habilitative in nature and related services that are supplemental to the child's instructional program and are required for the child to benefit from special education. The discussion of differences will need to be addressed with the family during the transition process. It is important that differences in program requirements be shared in a positive and informative way.

Billing for the Case Conference Committee Meeting:

Service Coordinators who attend the Case Conference Committee meeting (called IEP meeting in IDEA) may be reimbursed a "contact". The CCC meeting must be held prior to the child's third birthday in order for Service Coordinators to bill for this activity and must be supported by a face-to-face summary sheet signed by the parent.

Direct service providers, at the request of the family, may attend the CCC meeting in lieu of a final treatment session with the child. The CCC meeting must be held prior to the child's third birthday in order for providers to be reimbursed for this activity. An additional meeting authorization will *not* be created for this activity. Therefore, the time reimbursed for attendance at the CCC meeting will not exceed the duration of a treatment session as authorized on the existing IFSP and must be supported by obtaining the parent's signature on a face-to-face summary sheet.

Please retain this Clarification in your Implementation/Practice Manual in the designated Section. If you have questions about this document, please contact your First Steps County Consultant.