

Timely Service Delivery Requirements

The Department of Health and Welfare's Idaho Infant Toddler Program is designated as the lead agency to ensure the administration and coordination of early intervention services. The Department provides assurances of timely delivery of services included on a child's Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP).

§303.342(e) identifies that each early intervention service in an IFSP must be provided as soon as possible after a parent provides consent for the services.

§303.344(f)(1) identifies that the IFSP must include the projected date for the initiation of early intervention service, which must be as soon as possible after a parent provides consent for the services.

Idaho defines timely services as any early intervention service on the initial IFSP, annual IFSP, or IFSP Addendum that are initiated by the projected early intervention service initiation date. In other words, the actual start date of the early intervention service is equal to or less than the projected start date on the IFSP.

If a service is not provided on or before the projected start date, the delay reason must record a delay reason in the program's data system and document it in a CSR. The information in the CSR should support the information recorded in the data system.

The following includes acceptable family reasons for providing a service after the projected start date:

- Child/family illness or hospitalization
- Conflict with family scheduling/appointment
- Difficulty making contact with family
- Family cancelled
- Family indecisiveness to participate in program

The following includes the acceptable extenuating circumstances for providing a service after the projected start date:

- Natural disaster
- Extreme weather

Agency reasons are not acceptable reasons for providing a service after the projected start date and are counted as untimely provision of services. The following includes a list of agency reasons for providing a service after the projected start date:

- Conflict with agency scheduling/appointment
- Provider illness
- Delay in receiving documentation
- High referrals/caseloads
- Interpreter/translation issue
- New staff
- Other – Agency (must record a description of the agency reason in the data system)

The Service Provider should use the following guidance to determine the reason for a delay in providing timely services:

- Multiple Reasons - When there are multiple reasons for delaying the provision of services, the decision of how to code this is based upon what caused the most significant delay. The following is an example of multiple reasons for a delay: The projected service start date was June 17, 2016. The initial service visit was scheduled for 6/16/16, but the service child was ill and had to re-schedule. The initial service visit was re-scheduled for 6/23/16, but the therapist was ill and had to re-schedule. The initial service visit was re-scheduled again for 6/28/16, but the child was ill and the visit had to be re-scheduled for the third time. The initial service visit was scheduled for and held on 7/7/16. Since the service was delayed twice with a child illness (delaying the service for 14 of the total days being delayed) and only delayed once with a provider illness (delaying the service for 7 of the total days being delayed), the final delay reason entered is a family reason based on the child's illnesses.

Children and families eligible for services through the Infant Toddler Program have immediate needs that affect their lifetime development. It is imperative that services identified in the IFSP are delivered in a timely fashion and meet the needs of the child and family. Providing service during the critical growth and development years increases the child's chances of resolving many problems and preventing others. Timely service delivery can positively affect the child's outcomes and the family's capacity to meet the needs of their child.

Strategies to Assure Timely Services

The Infant Toddler Program implements the following service delivery alternatives to assist in meeting a family's needs, with limited resources:

- Services are provided in cooperation with existing community resource, as appropriate.
- Many services are delivered through private contractors.
- The intake and eligibility determination process has been streamlined.
- Identify child and family's priority areas when determining functional outcomes and objectives in the IFSP.
- Other sources for reimbursement such as Medicaid and private insurance are fully utilized.
- Service delivery models maximizing parent participation/training enables parents to promote their child's learning between visits.
- Other strategies include using a primary therapist and completing co-visits.

Prior to determining that any service on the IFSP cannot be provided to a child in a timely manner, the Program is required to complete and document the following activities promoting the efficient use of the available local, state, and federal resources:

- Explore ways to streamline the intake and evaluation process.
- Maximize staff utilization, including clustering caseload assignments for specific geographic areas.
- Ensure accurate identification of each family's priorities in relation to the delivered services.

- Maximize the efficiency/effectiveness of delivered services (i.e., implement models using primary therapists and completing co-visits with parents and other caregivers).
- Ensure appropriate use of available community resources (i.e., contractors, private service coordination agencies, and private developmental disability agencies that are qualified to serve this population, etc.).
- Ensure an adequate level of service coordination for each family (the IFSP should include service coordination objectives around actively seeking out additional service options to meet the needs of the child/family).

A multidisciplinary evaluation to determine eligibility and the initial IFSP must be developed for every child. The IFSP must specify what services are required to maximize the child's development and should include the expected frequency, intensity, duration, method and location for all services determined by the team. Service coordination ensures that each family receives all services identified on the IFSP.