Eligibility Determination Process

The multidisciplinary team considers the multidisciplinary evaluation of the child and the subsequent recommendations, family situation, parent recommendations, observational information, and Informed Clinical Opinion to determine whether the child meets the criteria for Developmental Delay or Established Condition.

An eligibility determination for the child must include:

- Review of pertinent records related to the child’s health status and medical history.
- An evaluation of the level of functioning, as needed, in cognitive development, physical development including vision and hearing, communication development, social/emotional development, and adaptive development.
- An assessment of the child’s unique needs in terms of developmental areas and identification of services appropriate to meet those needs.
- A summary of the family's information regarding the child.

An evaluation report completed for eligibility should be in the child’s permanent record. The report must include, but is not limited to, the following components:

- Eligibility comments,
- Summary of findings, and
- Recommendations for treatment.

In addition to initial eligibility, a child’s eligibility is reviewed on an annual basis to ensure continued eligibility for ITP services. See “Annual Reverification” in the section below.

Service Coordinator

The Service Coordinator performs the following related to a child’s eligibility determination:

- If the child is found eligible:
  - Discusses scheduling of an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) meeting and options for services and Outcomes that the family would like to see for their child.
  - Provides appropriate notice to the family.
  - Provides a Prior Written Notice to identify the child’s eligibility using the Prior Written Notice form, to the parent/guardian of a child who was determined eligible for early intervention services.
  - Reviews Parent Rights and provide a copy of the Idaho Infant Toddler Program Child and Family Safeguards brochure, which offers a complete description of procedural safeguards to the family.
  - Ensures there is documentation of the Prior Written Notice and that Parent Rights were reviewed with the family.
  - Continues the process to develop the IFSP and implement services.
If the child is found ineligible:

- Explains the reason(s) for the ineligibility and other options available for services in the community through a personal contact.
- Ensures there is documentation in the child’s permanent record about dates and types of evaluations used and whether the family was referred to monitoring, other services, or informed about re-evaluations.
- Provides appropriate notice to the family.
  - Provides a Prior Written Notice of the refusal of eligibility using the Prior Written Notice form, to the parent/guardian of a child who was determined ineligible for early intervention services.
  - Reviews Parent Rights and provide a copy of the Idaho Infant Toddler Program Child and Family Safeguards brochure, which offers a complete description of procedural safeguards to the family.
  - Ensures there is documentation of the Prior Written Notice and that Parent Rights were reviewed with the family.

Recommended practice suggests a need for more than a Prior Written Notice form and a need for a personal communication to inform the parent/guardian that their child is ineligible for direct services. Internal procedures for refusal to initiate identification, placement, or provision of early intervention services should be conducted under close supervision of the local supervisor and program manager.

**Annual Reverification**

In addition to initial eligibility determination, a child’s eligibility is reviewed on an annual basis to ensure continued eligibility for ITP services. The annual reverification process is completed prior to the annual IFSP being developed, and helps the MDT identify children who should graduate or may require additional evaluation since enrolling in the program.

The MDT is responsible for completing the eligibility and annual revalidation checklist before developing the child’s annual IFSP.

- If the child is found eligible, no additional steps are taken. The completed eligibility checklist should be stored in the child’s permanent record.
- If the child is found ineligible, follow the same process as initial eligibility determination.
- If the child is found borderline and requires a full eligibility re-determination, follow the same process as initial eligibility determination.

See Eligibility Reverification Tips for additional information. (want to put this under the section?)
Eligibility Reverification Tips

In most cases, the Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) will know the child’s current functioning or medical status to document and determine annual eligibility reverification. In these instances, a team can determine that a child continues to meet ITP eligibility criteria without an MDT eligibility review of the child’s records or re-evaluation (refer to MDT eligibility review below). Examples of these cases include:

- Limited or no growth in development that does not impact current ITP eligibility.
- Recent screener/ongoing assessment demonstrates increased growth in development but does not impact current ITP eligibility.
- Established medical condition that does not warrant a change in ITP eligibility. Examples include Down Syndrome, Spinabifida, Cerebral Palsy, Autism, etc.

If the MDT cannot definitively reverify eligibility without taking additional actions, an MDT eligibility review is required. In this instance, the multi-disciplinary team must decide the action(s) necessary to reverify eligibility. These actions could include but are not limited to:

- Review of pertinent records/information including but not limited to the IFSP, CSRs, existing medical records, parent feedback, existing evaluations, existing ongoing assessments and/or screeners.
- Completion of a screener or assessment.
- Completion of an evaluation that looks at all developmental domains resulting in a standard deviation, percentile, or age equivalency scores in accordance with ITP eligibility.

MDT eligibility review examples:

- Medical Status Change
  - Change in current medical status (e.g. chronic otitis media, torticollis, cleft lip and palate) that has been resolved and could change program eligibility.
  - New medical diagnosis that may warrant a change in program eligibility category (e.g. DD (speech delay) to EMC (autism, hearing loss, apraxia, etc.), ICO (motor delay) to EMC (cerebral palsy)).
  - EMC eligibility based on newborn code (e.g. prematurity, small for gestational age, low birth weight, etc.)

- Developmental Status Change
  - Significant growth in development that could impact program eligibility.
  - A moderate growth in development, however development is still delayed compared to typically developing peers that may impact program eligibility.
  - Child currently eligible under Informed Clinical Opinion.

NOTE: When the MDT decides on which action(s) to take to reverify eligibility, keep in mind that denials of ITP eligibility can only be made using assessments or evaluations which include all developmental domains that yield standard deviation, percentile, and/or age equivalency scores.