

# Interruption in Service Transition

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Families and children should receive the services and supports outlined on an Individualize Family Service Plan (IFSP) s, as planned. However, circumstances may arise that require staffing or service adjustments during IFSP implementation. Over the course of the year, interruptions that range from insignificant to major may be encountered.

Planning for direct services for children enrolled in the Infant Toddler Program takes place in collaboration with families and professionals through the IFSP process. The Outcomes identified in the IFSP document reflect levels of service to meet the child's and family's needs. It is, therefore, important that they are carried out as planned.

Direct services to infants and toddlers throughout the state are provided in a number of ways and through a variety of professional staff. It is likely that short-term and long-term interruptions will occur. Each situation is unique and solutions to the interruptions must be tailored to individual family needs. There are, however, certain procedures that are included in federal and state regulations that make it necessary to take specific actions in the event of service interruption.

## Short-Term Interruption Procedures

The Infant Toddler Program defines short term interruption as an interruption to early intervention services for less than 90 days.

The following actions are required to address a short-term Service interruption(s):

- Discussion takes place at the IFSP about the Family's preference for service options in case of short-term interruptions.
- The Service Coordinator or the direct service provider notifies the family by phone (or other means of direct communication) about the interruption and reschedules or arranges for alternative service options.
- Direct service staff, Supervisor, and family work together to determine options for alternate service. This could include rotating staff to cover for an absent therapist, use of substitutes or volunteers, providing parent training information/home programs, and rotating schedules so that the same children are not always cancelled (e.g., Monday holidays).
- The Service Coordinator or direct service provider documents the reason(s) in a CSR for short-term interruptions and actions taken in the child's permanent record.

## Long-Term Interruption Procedures

The Infant Toddler Program defines long term interruption as an interruption to early intervention services for greater than 90 days.

The following actions are required to address a long-term Service interruption(s) (more than four weeks in duration):

- Options to accommodate a long-term interruption of services are discussed at the IFSP meeting with the family and other participants. These plans are detailed on the Service Coordination Outcomes page of the IFSP.

Options to accommodate changes on the IFSP include use of support disciplines, substitutes, cross-training of staff, rescheduling of sessions, extension of professional contracts, or arrangements with alternate providers.

- The Service Coordinator is notified prior to or when it is known that there will be any long-term interruptions.
- The Service Coordinator contacts the family by phone and in writing by using the Prior Written Notice form, and provides the Child and Family Safeguards booklet. The Service Coordinator explains the reason(s) for the interruption and reviews the recommendations about making adjustments to the services planned on the IFSP.
- The Service Coordinator files a copy of the completed Prior Written Notice form to document in the child's permanent record the reason(s) for the interruptions, and the actions taken to assure the IFSP is followed.

Internal and contracted providers and provider agencies will demonstrate a good faith effort to maintain contact with the family in order to resume services when family circumstances or preferences are causing the interruption. This will include three attempts to deliver the service and contact the family (one of them in writing) before attempts to make contact are stopped.

- The Service Coordinator facilitates an IFSP addendum meeting to make the proposed changes to the original IFSP and obtains Consent by having parent/guardian sign the IFSP Addendum.
- The Service Coordinator documents the necessary changes in to the program's data system
- The Service Coordinator remains in close communication with the local program personnel or Program Manager about the disruption to service and actions to minimize the disruption.