The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Executive Office of Health and Human Services

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Joanne Sweeney

Riverside Early Intervention - Needham

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Needham, MA 02494

jsweeney@riversidecc.org

June 23, 2025

Dear Joanne:

The purpose of this monitoring report is to provide a summary of the results of the Cyclical Monitoring activities conducted by the Department of Public Health’s (the Department’s) Early Intervention (EI) Division. As part of its general supervision process, early intervention service programs and specialty service programs are monitored on their policies and procedures and implementation of those policies and procedures to meet the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA or the Act).

Those requirements include:

1) Improving educational results and functional outcomes for all infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities; and

2) Ensuring that public agencies meet the program requirements under Part C of IDEA, with a particular emphasis on those requirements that are most closely related to improving educational results for infants and toddlers with disabilities.

During the cyclical monitoring process the EI Division examined the program’s policies and procedures regarding the following monitoring priorities and components of IDEA part C:

* Compliance Indicators (45 Day IFSP timeline, timely services, service delivery, and supervision)
* Results Indicators (services provided in the natural environment, child find and equity, evaluations, assessments, and outcomes)
* Dispute Resolution and family rights
* Data Quality (timely and accurate data entry)
* Fiscal (claims and responsibility)

This cyclical monitoring report summarizes the Early Intervention Division’s review of IDEA Part C requirements and Massachusetts Early Intervention Operational Standards regarding these monitoring priorities and components. The EI Division conducted Cyclical Monitoring activities through interviews with representatives from Riverside Early Intervention - Needham and families that participated in Part C services at Riverside Early Intervention - Needham. In addition to interviews, the EI Division reviewed records (individualized family service plans, service progress notes, claims) of a sample of children with data submitted into the Early Intervention Client System, policies and procedures, and other related documents submitted to the Early Intervention Division.

Based on its review of available documents, information, and interviews conducted, the EI Division has identified 4 findings of noncompliance with IDEA and state requirements described in further detail in the monitoring report, including any required actions.

The EI Division has not identified any noncompliance in the following components: Compliance, Data and Fiscal. Therefore, these items are not included in the narrative below.

Summary of Monitoring Priorities and Outcomes

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| MONITORING COMPONENT   | FINDINGS SUMMARY  |
| Compliance |  |
| Results  | 1.1 The EI Division finds that the program does not complete the Services provided in the natural environment requirement under Federal Regulation 34 CFR § 303.344 (d) and in accordance with Early Intervention Operational Standards Individualized Family Service Plan Development § VII. E. 7, pg. 27. 1.2The EI Division finds that the program does not complete the Documentation Provided in Families Native Language requirements under, Federal Regulation 34 CFR § 303.421 and in Accordance with Early Intervention Operational Standards XIII Procedural Safeguards and Due Process Procedures A. Prior Written Notice Pg 64.  1.3The EI Division finds that the program’s implementation of its policies and procedures does not ensure compliance with referral timeline requirements including staff training and parent involvement in accordance with Early Intervention Operational Standards VI(a)(1) pg. 22. |
| Dispute Resolution  | 2.1 The EI Division finds that the program does not complete the prior Written Notice requirements Under, Federal Regulation 34 CFR §303.421 and in accordance with Early Intervention Operational Standards Procedural Safeguards and Due Process Procedures § XIII. A pg. 63- 65. |
| Data  |   |
| Fiscal  |  |

The EI Division appreciates Riverside Early Intervention - Needham’s continued efforts to improve the implementation of IDEA Part C and the development and implementation of a reasonably designed EIS Program which ensures compliance and improving results for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families. The EI Division notes that having a consistent and transparent system for identifying and correcting noncompliance, particularly noncompliance that impacts the delivery of early intervention services, in accordance with individualized family service plans (IFSPs), and dispute resolution systems that protect the rights of parents, are essential elements to ensuring improved results for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families. If you have any questions, please contact your Clinical Oversight and Support Specialist.

Sincerely,

Kasey Jaynes

Clinical Oversight and Support Specialist, Early Intervention Division

cc: Molly Gilbride, Clinical Quality Manager, Early Intervention Division

 Michelle Conlon, Clinical Quality Assurance Coordinator, Early Intervention Division

**RESULTS**

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| **Legal Requirement/State Standard**  | Noncompliant Policy, Procedure or Practice and EI Division analysis  | Conclusion/Finding  | Next Steps and Required Actions  |
| **1.1 Services provided in the Natural Environment** Under Federal Regulation 34 CFR § 303.344 (d) (1) The IFSP must include a statement of the specific early intervention services, based on peer-reviewed research (to the extent practicable), that are necessary to meet the unique needs of the child and the family to achieve the results or outcomes identified in paragraph (c) of this section, including—(i) The length, duration, frequency, intensity, and method of delivering the early intervention services.(ii) A statement that each early intervention service is provided in the natural environment for that child or service to the maximum extent appropriate, consistent with §§ 303.13(a)(8), 303.26 and 303.126, or, subject to paragraph (d)(1)(ii)(B) of this section, a justification as to why an early intervention service will not be provided in the natural environment.In accordance with Early Intervention Operational Standards Individualized Family Service Plan Development § VII. E. 7, pg. 27A statement of the natural settings in which Early Intervention will be provided, including justification of the extent to which the services will not be provided in a natural environment. Individualized clinical justification on the IFSP for services that do not occur in a natural setting (as determined by the parent and IFSP team) based on the child’s unique needs, family routines, and identified measurable results or outcomes must include the following: An explanation of why the IFSP team determined that the outcomes could not be achieved in the child’s natural settings; an explanation of how the services provided in this setting will support measurable results or outcomes and the child’s ability to function in his/her natural environment; and a plan with a timeline for providing Early Intervention services in a natural setting in order to achieve the outcomes identified on the IFSP. | 1.1During record reviews, the EI Division found that the program did not consistently meet the Services provided in the Natural Environment requirement. The EI division reviewed a total of 10 child records for satisfactory demonstration of 100% compliance with Services provided in the Natural Environment requirements. A total of 1 of these records demonstrated that the program did not complete the Services provided in the Natural Environment requirement, by not having a written justification in the record to as to why an early intervention service was not provided in the natural environment.  | The EI Divisions’ analysis is based on documents and information provided by the program, records located within the EICS, as well as interviews with program staff and families/caregivers. Based on this analysis, the EI Division finds that: 1.1 The program did not complete the Services provided in the natural environment requirement under Federal Regulation 34 CFR § 303.344 (d) and in accordance with Early Intervention Operational Standards Individualized Family Service Plan Development § VII. E. 7, pg. 27. |   Evidence of implementation— as soon as possible, but no later than one year from the date of this monitoring report, the program must demonstrate to the EI Division:Demonstration of 100% compliance with Services provided in the Natural Environment, as evidenced by the EI Division’s review of subsequent records. |
| **1.2 Documentation Provided in Families Native Language**Under, Federal Regulation 34 CFR § 303.421: Prior written notice and procedural safeguards noticeThe notice must be—Written in language understandable to the general public; and provided in language the parent understands, as defined in §303.25, of the parent or other mode of communication used by the parent, to empower parents as decision makers, unless it is clearly not feasible to do so.In Accordance with Early Intervention Operational Standards XIII Procedural Safeguards and Due Process Procedures A. Prior Written Notice Pg 64The notice must be: a. written in language understandable to the general public, and b. provided in the native language of the parents, unless it is clearly not feasible to do so.1. If the native language (as defined in Section II of these standards) or other mode of communication is not written language, the service coordinator must:a) translate the notice in a manner acceptable and understood by the parent,B) document that the notice has been translated in a manner acceptable and understood by the parent, and c) provide the parent an opportunity to discuss the contents of the notice and have questions answered. | 1.2 During record reviews, the EI Division found that the program did not consistently meet the Documentation Provided in Families Native Language requirement. The EI division reviewed a total of 10 child records for satisfactory demonstration of 100% compliance of Documentation Provided in Families Native Language requirements. A total of 1 of these records demonstrated that the program did not complete the Documentation Provided in Families Native Language requirement when providing prior written notice for the transition planning conference.  | 1.2The EI Division finds that the program does not complete the Documentation Provided in Families Native Language requirements under, Federal Regulation 34 CFR § 303.421 and in Accordance with Early Intervention Operational Standards XIII Procedural Safeguards and Due Process Procedures A. Prior Written Notice Pg 64. | Evidence of implementation— as soon as possible, but no later than one year from the date of this monitoring report, the program must demonstrate to the EI Division:Demonstration of 100% compliance with Documentation Provided in Families Native Language, as evidenced by the EI Division’s review of subsequent records. |
| **1.3 Child Find and Referral****Child Find and Referral**Under 34 CFR 303.302 Scope of child find. The lead agency, as part of the child find system, must ensure that—[(1)](https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/c/d/303.302/b/1) All infants and toddlers with disabilities in the State who are eligible for early intervention services under this part are identified, located, and evaluated, including—[(i)](https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/c/d/303.302/b/1/i) Indian infants and toddlers with disabilities residing on a reservation geographically located in the State (including coordination, as necessary, with tribes, tribal organizations, and consortia to identify infants and toddlers with disabilities in the State based, in part, on the information provided by them to the lead agency under §[303.731](https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/c/h/303.731)(e)(1)); and[(ii)](https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/c/d/303.302/b/1/ii) Infants and toddlers with disabilities who are homeless, in foster care, and wards of the State; and[(iii)](https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/c/d/303.302/b/1/iii) Infants and toddlers with disabilities that are referenced in §[303.303](https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/c/d/303.303)(b); and[(2)](https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/c/d/303.302/b/2) An effective method is developed and implemented to identify children who are in need of early intervention services.In accordance with Early Intervention Operational Standards VI(a)(1) pg. 22Under EI Operational Standard § VI(a)(1), the program is required to provide a face-to-face or telephone response to the parent made within 14 calendar days following the initial referral. Attempts to contact the parent of a child referred are documented in the record. An infant or toddler may be re-referred at any time prior to his/her third birthday.   | 1.3During interviews, it was identified that the program’s implementation of its policies and procedures does not ensure compliance with referral timelines. During interviews, families reported being told there was a waitlist for the program and reported not hearing from the program for over a month after first referral.  | 1.3The EI Division finds that the program’s implementation of its policies and procedures does not ensure compliance with referral timeline requirements including staff training and parent involvement in accordance with Early Intervention Operational Standards VI(a)(1) pg. 22. | Evidence of implementation— as soon as possible, but no later than one year from the date of this monitoring report, the program must demonstrate to the EI Division:1. Procedures that demonstrate that the EI program has conducted training activities and has a monitoring process to ensure its early intervention staff are trained to be knowledgeable on the provisions of IDEA Part C; specifically, the program is required to provide a face-to-face or telephone response to the parent made within 14 calendar days following the initial referral.
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**DISPUTE RESOLUTION**

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| **Legal Requirement/State Standard**  | Noncompliant Policy, Procedure or Practice and EI Division analysis  | Conclusion/Finding  | Next Steps and Required Actions  |
| **2.1 Prior Written Notice** Under, Federal Regulation 34 CFR §303.421 Prior written notice and procedural safeguards notice. a) General. Prior written notice must be provided to parents a reasonable time before the lead agency or an EIS provider proposes, or refuses, to initiate or change the identification, evaluation, or placement of their infant or toddler, or the provision of early intervention services to the infant or toddler with a disability and that infant's or toddler's family.  In accordance with Early Intervention Operational Standards Procedural Safeguards and Due Process Procedures § XIII. A pg. 63- 65Families are provided written notice a reasonable time before an Early Intervention provider proposes to initiate or refuse an activity that relates to the identification, evaluation, or change in IFSP service; the provision of appropriate Early Intervention services; disclosure of personally identifiable information requiring consent; or accessing public or private reimbursement for service.Early Intervention programs are required to use the forms and notices provided by DPH when requesting consent or providing notice for the following activities unless approval has been granted by DPH for the program to use a different form: • evaluation/assessment to determine eligibility, • convening an IFSP meeting for the purpose of developing an initial, subsequent or review of an IFSP, and• providing IFSP services (Universal IFSP form). | 2.1During record reviews, the EI Division found that the program did not consistently meet the Prior Written Notice requirement. The EI division reviewed a total of 10 child records for satisfactory demonstration of 100% compliance of Prior written notice being sent for the Transition Conference requirement. A total of 5 of these records demonstrated that the program did not complete the Prior written notice requirement.  |  The EI Divisions’ analysis is based on documents and information provided by the program, records located within the EICS, as well as interviews with program staff and families/caregivers. Based on this analysis, the EI Division finds that: 2.1The program does not complete the Prior Written Notice requirements Under, Federal Regulation 34 CFR §303.421 and in accordance with Early Intervention Operational Standards Procedural Safeguards and Due Process Procedures § XIII. A pg. 63- 65. |  Evidence of implementation— as soon as possible, but no later than one year from the date of this monitoring report, the program must demonstrate to the EI Division:Demonstration of 100% compliance with Prior Written Notice requirement as evidenced by the EI Division’s review of subsequent records.  |