**FEBRUARY 2020**

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING FOR EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES

**The Massachusetts Department of Public Health, in cooperation with the Massachusetts Interagency Coordinating Council, will hold a hearing on the Commonwealth's application for 34th year funding under Part C.**

**PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND OF THE HEARING**

This hearing is being held for the specific purpose of discussing the Department of Public Health's 34 year grant for funding under Part C. During the hearing the Department welcomes testimony regarding any aspects of the grant.

Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, P.L. 108-446, provides funds to assist states in providing services for infants and toddlers with disabilities. The hearing is about Massachusetts' grant application for 34th Year funding under Part C and is open to families, service providers, and professionals serving young children and families. Language related to amending the EI Operational Standards transition policy by removing the parental opt-out of the LEA/SEA notification will be included. Removing the opt-out provision from the policy would allow an EI program to disclose, without parental consent, minimally personal identifiable information to the LEA and SEA if the child was potentially eligible for Part C services consistent with federal regulations.

**ASSURING SERVICES TO ALL ELIGIBLE FAMILIES**

In the application the state must include assurances demonstrating to the satisfaction of the federal Secretary of Education that:

*All eligible children shall be identified and their families offered an evaluation. If eligible for the Federal EI program, the child and family shall be entitled to the development of an Individualized Family Service Plan and to the early intervention services described in that plan. All families and children shall have procedural safeguards throughout this process.*

This law also lists the components of a statewide system and requires that the state application include the state policies and procedures to assure all components.

**WHO SHOULD TESTIFY?**

Members of families with young children, professionals who serve young children and families, and officials from any state agencies with responsibilities for services to children and families are encouraged to come and speak on the issues outlined in this notice or on any other related concerns.

**WHEN IS THE HEARING?**

**March 12, 2020**

**Immediately following: *Interagency Coordinating Council Meeting;***

MA DPH Offices

67 Forest Street , Marlborough, MA

2:30PM – 4:00 PM

**March 13, 2020**

DPH Northampton Regional Office

23 Service Center Road

Northampton, MA

1 – 2:30pm

**Written comments may be sent until 4/24/2020 and should be addressed to:**

Massachusetts Department of Public Health

Early Intervention Services

250 Washington Street, 5th Floor

Boston, MA 02108 – 4619

Attn: Patti Fougere, Director, Division of EI

**The hearing sites are accessible and sign language interpreters will be present upon request. Please call or email Early Intervention Services at the Department of Public Health if you need assistive devices/services to participate in the hearing by February 28, 2020. To submit a request: Voice (781)774-6631 or email: joan.butterfield@state.ma.us.**

