

## EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT

(Authority: IDEA Part C, 20 U.S.C. 1435)

### **Assurance.**

The Department Of Health for the State of Hawaii (HDOH) assures the following:

The State has in effect a timely, comprehensive, multidisciplinary evaluation of the functioning of each infant or toddler with a disability in the State, and a family-directed identification of the needs of each family of such an infant or toddler, to assist appropriately in the development of the infant or toddler. (20 U.S.C. 1435(a)(3)).

### **Policy.**

HDOH conducts a timely, comprehensive, multidisciplinary evaluation for each Part C eligible or potentially eligible infant or toddler referred for early intervention services in the State and a family-directed identification of the needs of each family to assist appropriately in the development of the infant or toddler.

### **Definitions.**

The following definitions which will be used relative to this component:

1. ***Evaluation*** means the procedures used by appropriate qualified personnel to determine an infant or toddler's initial and continuing eligibility consistent with the definitions in Hawaii's Early Intervention State Plan, including the determination of the developmental status of the infant or toddler in the areas of cognitive development, physical development (including hearing and vision), communication development, social or emotional development, and adaptive development.
2. ***Assessment*** means the ongoing procedures used by appropriate, qualified personnel throughout the period of the infant or toddler's eligibility to identify:
  - a. The infant or toddler's unique strengths and needs and the services appropriate to meet those needs;
  - b. The resources, priorities, and concerns of the family and the supports and services necessary to enhance the family's capacity to meet the developmental needs of their eligible infant or toddler.

### **Procedures.**

***Determination of the Multidisciplinary Team.*** The composition of the multidisciplinary team will vary, depending on the needs of the infant or toddler. A

multidisciplinary team is defined as consisting of two or more individuals from separate disciplines or professions who are qualified professionals. The family's interim care coordinator will be encouraged to participate as a team member in the evaluation process. Parents/family members are also encouraged to participate in the evaluation process as their knowledge of their child is critical in obtaining an accurate picture of the strengths and needs of the infant or toddler being evaluated.

The team for any child will be determined by the care coordinator in collaboration with the family. It may include a social worker, a special educator or developmental specialist, an occupational therapist, a physical therapist, or speech-language pathologist. It may also include a nurse, a registered dietitian, an audiologist, or a psychologist. Each child's pediatrician or primary care provider will also be invited to participate.

***Evaluation and Assessment of the Child.*** A multidisciplinary evaluation and assessment of each infant and toddler will be conducted by the multidisciplinary team consisting of qualified personnel and consistent with the Personnel Standards Component in the Early Intervention State Plan. The family will be encouraged to participate in the evaluation process. The Department assures that these personnel will have been trained to use appropriate methods and procedures. The Department further assures that the informed clinical opinion can contribute to the evaluation and assessment of the child, and that informed clinical opinion may be used when instruments do not establish eligibility. However, informed clinical opinion may not negate the results of evaluation instruments.

Each evaluation and assessment will include the following components:

1. A review of the infant or toddler's current health status and medical history;
2. An evaluation of the infant or toddler's level of functioning in each of the following developmental areas:
  - a. Cognitive development;
  - b. Physical development, including vision and hearing ;
  - c. Communication development;
  - d. Social or emotional development; and
  - e. Adaptive development.
3. An assessment of the unique needs of the infant or toddler in each of the developmental areas, including the identification of early intervention services appropriate to meet those needs.

The medical or other records of the infant or toddler may be used to support the multidisciplinary process (without conducting an evaluation of the infant or toddler) if

those records contain information on the infant or toddler's level of functioning in each developmental level.

**Family Assessment.** The family assessment has been designed to determine the resources, priorities, and concerns of the family and the identification of the supports and services necessary to enhance the family's capacity to meet the developmental needs of the child.

1. Any assessment that is conducted must be voluntary on the part of the family.
2. If the assessment is carried out, the assessment must:
  - a. Be conducted by personnel trained to utilize appropriate methods and procedures;
  - b. Be based on information provided by the family through a personal "talk-story" interview; and
  - c. Incorporate the family's description of their strengths and needs related to enhancing their infant or toddler's development.

**Timelines.** The evaluation and initial assessment of each child and family must be completed within 45 days of referral. In the event of exceptional family circumstances that make it impossible to complete the evaluation and assessment within 45 days of referral (e.g., infant or toddler or family member is ill, family is on vacation, etc.) these exceptional circumstances will be documented and the evaluation and initial assessment will be scheduled as soon as possible

**Nondiscriminatory Procedures.** The following procedures have been adopted to assure that the evaluation and assessment process is nondiscriminatory:

1. Tests and other evaluation materials and procedures are administered in the native language of the parents or other mode of community, unless it is clearly not feasible to do so;
2. Any assessment and evaluation procedures and materials that are used are selected and administered so as not to be racially or culturally discriminatory;
3. No single procedure is used as the sole criteria for determining a child's eligibility; and
4. Evaluations and assessments are conducted by qualified personnel.

***Provision of Services Before an Evaluation or Assessment is Completed.***

Early intervention services for a presumed eligible infant or toddler and the infant or toddler's family may begin prior to the completion of the evaluation and assessment if the following conditions are met:

1. Parental consent is obtained;
2. An interim IFSP is developed that includes:
  - a. The name of the care coordinator responsible for implementing the IFSP and coordinating with other agencies; and
  - b. The early intervention services that have been determined to be needed immediately by the child and the child's family.
3. The evaluation and assessment are completed within the required 45-day timeline. Implementing an interim IFSP does not negate the requirement to complete the required evaluation and assessment within the 45-day timeline.

**Practices.**

The following practices have been adopted by the Council to facilitate a family-centered and non-discriminatory evaluation and assessment process:

- The assessment of the child and family will be conducted in the family's home or other natural environment, to the extent possible.
- The family assessment is voluntary and will in no way jeopardize the provision of needed services by the infant or toddler
- Every effort will be made to establish a partnership with the family to maximize parent participation in the assessment process.
- Assessments will be conducted with a respect for the family's privacy, integrity, and ability to make decisions for themselves.
- Families will be given repeated opportunities to identify their resources, priorities, and concerns.
- Evaluation and assessment results will be shared with the family, both orally and in writing, in the child's and family's native language (as appropriate) using language free of jargon.