



Downey-Montebello Special Education Local Plan Area Early Start Policies, Procedures and Practices

- UNAPPROVED -

Policies & Procedures



EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION

SECTION I - POLICIES AND PROCEDURES BIRTH THROUGH AGE THREE

Purpose

The purpose of this section of the manual is to provide supplementary guidance to staff involved in the identification and education of children with disabilities, aged birth to three. Unless addressed in this document, all other District policies and procedures regarding the education of students with disabilities are to be followed.

Introduction

Introduction (Sonoma County, Riverside County)

The following key principles guide the Downey-Montebello SELPA policies, procedures, and practices regarding students with disabilities aged birth to three years. The provision of early intervention may prevent years of special education services. If prevention or early intervention supports are provided early enough, the child may enter general education kindergarten.

Identifying deficits early is the best way to prevent secondary disabilities. An evaluation determines whether or not a child is eligible for early intervention services. The assessment process helps with identifying a child's and family's strengths and needs in order to develop outcomes and determine appropriate services.

A parent of an infant often knows the child best and can be a great contributor in the evaluation and Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) process. Once a child is identified as a student with a disability, the IFSP team will develop a plan to address areas of need. Parents need information on how to work with their children, and they can be trained to continue in the home setting. In developing the IFSP, it is important to keep the focus on the individual child's and family's needs. IFSP services may be provided in the home and/or a community setting. It is helpful to have flexible programming that is set up to meet the unique needs of each child and family.

Infant special education regulations emphasize the provision of services in "natural" environments. Regional Center provides a variety of early intervention services for children who meet eligibility for Early Start. California Children's Services can provide occupational therapy, physical therapy, and specialized equipment services for students who meet their eligibility criteria.

It is important to comply with all the required policies, procedures and forms utilized in the birth through three special education referrals, identification, plan development, implementation, and transition processes. There is a need to provide appropriate early intervention services, individually designed for infants and toddlers from birth through two years of age, who have disabilities or are at risk of having disabilities, to enhance their

development and to minimize the potential for developmental delays (GC 95001). Regional Centers and local education agencies (LEAs) shall conduct child find activities to locate all infants and toddlers who may be eligible for early intervention services (CCR 52040(a)). See [Child Find](#).

A parent/guardian, teacher, administrator, support personnel, outside agency, or any other persons who have knowledge that an individual may need special education services may initiate referrals for possible placement into special education. Referrals shall be processed in a systematic manner, held in strict confidence, and include written notification to the parent/guardian of their rights.

Initial Referral and Intake Procedures

The State Department of Developmental Services (DDS) is the lead agency responsible for administration and coordination of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part C grants. Regional Centers are the venue by which DDS fulfills this responsibility. An Early Start Interagency Agreement is developed between the local Regional Centers (East Los Angeles Regional Center, South Central Los Angeles Regional Center and Harbor Regional Center) and the Downey-Montebello Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) to share some of the responsibilities. Downey-Montebello SELPA is the agency responsible for the provision of Early Start services with a primary focus on children with solely low incidence disabilities (e.g., deaf, blind, deaf-blind, orthopedic impairment, visually impaired). The Downey-Montebello SELPA DHH program serves children who qualify as deaf or hard of hearing, and the Downey-Montebello SELPA serves children who qualify with vision or orthopedic impairments in addition to the Montebello Unified School District.

Anyone who has a concern about an infant's growth or development may make a referral to the Downey-Montebello SELPA by emailing infantreferral@dusd.net. The Early Start providers will help facilitate the referral going to the proper agency. The receiving program will complete the Early Start Program Referral process. A child with a potential disability other than low incidence will be referred to their local Regional Center. If the Regional Center receives a referral for a student with a low incidence disability, the information will be provided to the Downey-Montebello SELPA Early Start.

Once a referral is accepted, it is given to an intake coordinator, who will contact the parent or guardian to set up the initial intake interview in the child's home. This interview consists of basic questions regarding the child's health, developmental history, diagnosis, if any, strengths, weaknesses and needs. Discussion of the family's needs and concerns also occurs at this time. The intake coordinator will then determine the team members necessary for the assessment segment of the initial intake procedures. Necessary parental consent forms will be processed in a timely manner. The assessment team will assess the child in familiar surroundings, such as the home, whenever possible. The evaluation will be completed within 45 days of receiving the referral.

Search and Serve

California Education Code Section (EC §) 56300 reads,

56300. A local educational agency shall actively and systematically seek out all individuals with exceptional needs, from birth to 21 years of age, inclusive, including children not enrolled in public school programs, who reside in a school district or are under the jurisdiction of a special education local plan area or a county office of education.

All referrals must be made in writing. When a verbal referral is made, educational staff shall offer assistance to the individual in making a request in writing and shall assist the individual if the individual requests such assistance. (California Code of Regulations [CCR], Title 5, 3021 (a))

There is a need to provide appropriate early intervention services, individually designed for infants and toddlers from birth through three years of age, who have disabilities or are at risk of having disabilities, to enhance their development and to minimize the potential for developmental delays (GC 95001). Regional Centers and local educational agencies (LEAs) shall conduct child-find activities to locate all infants and toddlers who may be eligible for early intervention services (CCR 52040(a)).

Each special education local plan area (SELPA) submitting a local plan to the State Superintendent must have in effect policies, procedures, and programs relating to child-find and referral. (EC §56205) Each district, the county office, or the SELPA shall actively and systematically seek out all individuals with exceptional needs, aged birth through 21 years.

The Downey-Montebello SELPA coordinates local child find activities including, but not limited to, outreach efforts to hospitals, physicians, childcare programs, public health facilities, other social service agencies and other health care providers. Downey-Montebello SELPA agreed to include information about Early Start in its annual child find public notices.

Infant/Early Start

This section provides information on initial referral and intake procedures for infants, determining eligibility, the Individualized Family Service Plan, service delivery models, and protections provided under procedural safeguards.

A. Initial Referral and Intake Procedures

1. The State Department of Developmental Services (DDS) is the lead agency responsible for administration and coordination of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part C grants. Regional Centers are the venue by which DDS fulfills this responsibility. An Early Start Interagency Agreement is developed with the Downey-Montebello SELPA to share some responsibilities with Local Regional Center. The Downey-

Montebello SELPA is responsible for the provision of Early Start services with a primary focus on children with solely low incidence disabilities (i.e., deaf, blind, deaf-blind, orthopedic impairment, and visual impairment).

2. Anyone who has a concern about an infant's growth or development may make a referral to Downey-Montebello SELPA. In the Downey-Montebello SELPA, the Downey Unified School District (DM SELPA) Downey-Montebello Operations Early Start team is responsible for providing evaluations and special education services to infants with solely low incidence disabilities as is Downey Unified School Districts for infants and toddlers residing within the Downey USD school boundaries. A child with a potential disability other than low incidence will be referred to the local Regional Center. If the local Regional Center receives a referral for a student with a low incidence disability, the information will be provided to the Downey Unified School District or Downey USD depending on the parent's residence.

3. Once a referral is accepted, the parent or guardian will be contacted to set up the initial intake interview. This interview consists of basic questions regarding the child's health, developmental history, diagnosis, if any, strengths, weaknesses, and needs. Discussion of the family's needs and concerns also occurs at this time. Necessary parental consent forms will be processed in a timely manner. The assessment team will assess the child in familiar surroundings, such as the home, whenever possible. The evaluation will be completed within 45 days of receiving the referral.

Determining Eligibility

4. *For Low Incidence disabilities (DHH, VI, DB, O&M) the DM SELPA Early Start staff will complete the evaluation, determine need for services via development of an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), and provide services for infants. All infants or toddlers potentially eligible for any Regional Center program will enter through a single point of entry at the Regional Center to determine eligibility for services.*

5. The Regional Center shall determine the assessment tools it will use for determination of eligibility. The results of the testing will determine eligibility of the child for the program. A child being considered for Early Start services available through Regional Center will need to be evaluated in all five developmental areas (cognitive, physical, communication, social/emotional, and adaptive/self-help skills). The Regional Center has different eligibility criteria based on the age of the child:

a. For a child 23 months or younger, the developmental delay has to occur in at least one of the five developmental areas at 33% or greater. If a child is found eligible for Early Start prior to 24 months, he/she does not have to meet the new criteria.

b. For a child 24-36 months of age, a child must demonstrate a 50% delay in one area or 33% delay in two areas of development.

State - 17 CCR Title 17, Public Health, Division 2, Chapter 2, Article 2 - Evaluation and Assessment 52082

Procedures for Evaluation and Assessment to Determine Eligibility for Infant/Early Start Services

- (a) The determination of eligibility for an infant or toddler shall be made with the participation of the multidisciplinary team including the parent.
- (b) Evaluation and assessment shall be based on informed clinical opinion and include:
 - 1. A review of pertinent records related to the infant or toddler's health status and medical history provided by qualified health professionals who have evaluated or assessed the infant or toddler;
 - 2. Information obtained from parental observation and report; and,
 - 3. Evaluation by qualified personnel of the infant's or toddler's level of functioning in each of the following areas:
 - A. Cognitive development;
 - B. Physical and motor development, including vision and hearing;
 - C. Communication development;
 - D. Social or emotional development; and,
 - E. Adaptive development.
- (c) No single procedure shall be used as the sole criterion for determining an infant's or toddler's eligibility.
- (d) Standardized tests or instruments may be used as part of the evaluation specified in 52082(b) above, and, if used, they shall:
 - 1. Be selected to ensure that, when administered to an infant or toddler with impaired sensory, motor or speaking skills, the tests produce results that accurately reflect the infant's or toddler's aptitude, developmental level, or any other factors the test purports to measure and not the infant's or toddler's impaired sensory, motor or speaking skills unless those skills are the factors the test purports to measure;
 - 2. Be validated for the specific purpose for which they are used.
- (e) If standardized, normed or criterion referenced instruments are used as part of the evaluation specified in 52082(b) above, a significant difference between an infant's or toddler's current level of functioning and the expected level of development for his or her age shall be established when an infant's or toddler's age equivalent score falls one third below age expectation.
- (f) Procedures and materials for evaluation and assessment of infants and toddlers shall be selected and administered so as not to be racially or culturally discriminatory.
- (g) Infants or toddlers with solely low incidence disabilities shall be evaluated and assessed by qualified personnel of the LEA whose professional preparation, license or credential authorization are specific to the suspected disability.

(h) Regional centers, LEAs and multidisciplinary teams shall not presume or determine eligibility, including eligibility for medical services provided through the Department of Health Services, for any other state or local government program or service when conducting evaluations or assessments of an infant or toddler or their family.

Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP)

6. An IFSP document guides the early intervention process for the special education service provider and the family with an infant or toddler between the ages of birth and thirty-six months, who has an identified disability or is at-risk of having disabilities. The IFSP is the vehicle through which effective early intervention is designed and implemented for a child identified as eligible for special education services in accordance with Part C of the IDEA.

7. Through the IFSP process, family members and service providers will work as a team to plan, implement, and evaluate services tailored to the family's unique concerns, priorities, and resources.

8. Developing an IFSP: The IFSP is one of the requirements under Part C, IDEA. It is to be developed after a multidisciplinary team completes an evaluation, which determines that a child is eligible for early intervention services.

9. The following are the federal regulations relating to the IFSP process:

- a. An IFSP must be developed within 45 calendar days after the written referral is received
- b. Parents shall be fully informed of their rights and with parental consent, a referral to the local family resource network shall be made.
- c. Once the multidisciplinary team has established eligibility, arrangements for a convenient meeting date, time, and place must be made. A written notice should be given to the family with enough notice to ensure attendance
- d. The meeting must be conducted in the parents' native language or main mode of communication (if the parents request).
- e. Meeting participants must include parents, service coordinator, person(s) directly involved with evaluation; and may include other family members, advocates, or persons outside of the family, and persons to be providing services.
- f. The IFSP is to be developed jointly by the family and the appropriate qualified personnel.
- g. Review of the IFSP must be conducted annually or more frequently if the parents or service providers request an earlier IFSP and concerns/revisions will be addressed as needed.

10. Content of an IFSP: Specific components to be included on the IFSP form are:

- a. A statement that describes the infant or toddler's present levels of physical development (including vision, hearing, and health status), cognitive development, communication development, social and emotional development, and adaptive development.

- b. With the concurrence of the family, a statement of the family's resources, concerns and priorities related to meeting the special developmental needs of the eligible infant.
- c. A statement of the major outcomes expected to be achieved for the infant or toddler and the family where services for the family are related to meeting the special developmental needs of the eligible infant or toddler.
- d. The criteria, procedures, and timelines used to determine the degree to which progress toward achieving the outcomes is being made and whether modifications or revisions are necessary.
- e. A statement of the specific early intervention services necessary to meet the unique needs of the infant or toddler as identified through the assessments regarding frequency, intensity, location, duration and the method of services delivery and ways of providing services in the natural environments.
- f. A statement of the agency responsible for providing the identified services.
- g. The projected starting date for service delivery and the anticipated duration of the services.
- h. The title of a service coordinator is responsible for the implementation of the plan and coordination with other agencies and persons. A statement of "other" services that the child or family needs, but are not required under Part C, and the steps that will be taken to secure those services (listing of non-required services does not mean they must be provided).
- i. Starting with the initial visit, and on-going throughout Early Start, the family shall be notified that Early Start services will be provided until the student turns three years of age. The steps to be taken in support of the transition of the toddler to preschool services provided under Part B, or other services as appropriate, shall be discussed and documented.

An excellent resource of online resources and explanation of the early start programs can be found on the department of developmental services website at:

<https://dds.ca.gov/services/early-start/>

Transition from Part C to Part B

11. This section provides information about transition from Part C to Part B of the IDEA. This includes transition legal requirements, timelines and responsibilities for transition conference invitation, transition conference, transition plan, notification referral, late referrals, and summer birthdays.

12. The purpose of the transition IFSP is to allow the Early Start service coordinator and the school district to work together and share responsibility with ensuring services at age three adhering to regulatory requirements. In order to create a seamless process to support the child and their family, transition should be addressed at every IFSP, including the initial meeting. This allows the family to get their questions and concerns addressed in a timely manner. Part of this discussion should include information regarding Early Start services stopping at age three.

The differences between Part C and Part B

There are major differences between Part C and Part B special education goals, ages, eligibility criteria, services, plans, location of services, service systems, and cost to families as denoted in the table below.

	PART C	PART B
Goal	To support the family to be able to support their children	To support a child's access to their learning
Ages	Birth - 3 yrs	3 - 22
Eligibility Criteria	Developmental delays and children at risk	Edibility condition that requires special education
Services	Types and frequency of services may vary both in parts B & C	
Plans	IFSP	IEP
Location of Services	Natural Environment	Least Restrictive Environment
Service Systems	Multi-Agency	Education
Cost to Families	Possible Costs	Free

Transition Procedures

California has determined that ALL children being serviced in Early Start programs are potentially eligible for district special education and related services at the age of three. Therefore, ALL children must be referred to Part B services. The service coordinators are required to make a referral to the child's/family's school district of residence with or without the parent's consent. Parents should be informed about the mandatory referral process during transition planning discussions. In the event the family objects to Part B services, they may decline the assessment plan offered by the district.

- 1) **Transition Conference Invitation:** The transition conference will occur no later than 90 days before the child's third birthday. The administrator and/or designee assigned to Early Start will make the arrangements for this meeting. The administrator and/or designee will schedule the meeting, including the time and location on a convenient date for the family and agreed to by the other agencies, including a district representative based on the family's school district of residence. A written invitation is sent as soon as possible, but no later than two days before the meeting, to the family, LEA representative, Early Start providers and other members who the family requests to be present.
- 2) **Transition Conference IFSP Meeting:** The purpose of the transition conference is to plan the activities that will occur prior to the child's third birthday. A transition conference is part of an IFSP meeting so all IFSP requirements must be followed, including a review of information about the child and family current assessment, a review of services, progress toward meeting outcomes, and revision of any outcomes or services as needed. The transition conference must be held no later than 90 days before the child's third birthday or as early as nine months before the third birthday, with agreement of all parties. The IFSP team members who are required to attend the meeting include the parent, service coordinator, district representative, service providers, and family members or others invited by the parent. The transition conference is a good opportunity for the district and the family to begin a positive relationship.
- 3) **Written Transition Plan:** The written transition plan that is developed during the IFSP transition conference should include the individual steps and services to be taken to support the smooth transition of the child for service delivery models at age of three. The family's concerns and priorities regarding transition should be discussed and documented, as well as any necessary supporting resources required by the child and family.
- 4) **Notification Referral:** No later than 90 days before the child's third birthday, the administrator and/or designee assigned to Early Start, whether LOCAL REGIONAL CENTER or local educational agency (e.g., **Downey** USD or **DM SELPA**), must send a referral to the child's and family's school district of residence. The referral must include the child's name and date of birth, and the parent's contact information, including name, address, and phone number. The referral may also include Early Start coordinators name and contact information and the language spoken by the family. The district must maintain documentation of the written referral and has 15 calendar days to develop an assessment plan or prior written notice to deny assessment.

- a) With parent consent, the administrator and/or designee may provide additional identifying information about the child and family, such as the current IFSP, current assessments, and other pertinent information about the child.
- b) The district is required to act on referrals for children who are transitioning from Early Start throughout the year, in order to hold the IEP by the child's third birthday. After receiving the referral and obtaining the parent's consent on the assessment plan, the district is responsible for conducting an evaluation in all areas of suspected disability. The district should also assess the child's strengths and needs to assist the IEP team to develop goals and determine appropriate services designed to ensure a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). An initial IEP meeting must be scheduled on or before the child's third birthday. The purpose of the IEP meeting is to review the results of the evaluation and assessment information and to determine if the child meets eligibility for special education services under Part B. All required components of the IEP meeting under Part B of IDEA must be met.
- c) Extenuating events/circumstances:

Late Referrals

In the case a child is referred to Early Start after they are two years six months of age, the initial IFSP will also serve as the transition conference.

If the child is referred to Early Start between 45 and 90 days prior to their third birthday, the Early Start service coordinator is required to:

- 1) Conduct the initial evaluation and assessment.
- 2) Conduct the initial IFSP meeting, if eligible.
- 3) Develop a transition plan with appropriate transition steps and services.
- 4) Refer the child to the LEA representative of the child's district of residence.

For a child who is referred to Early Start between one and 44 days prior to the child's third birthday, the Early Start service coordinator may, but is not required to:

- 1) Conduct the initial evaluation and assessment.
- 2) Conduct the initial IFSP meeting, if eligible.
- 3) Develop a transition plan.
- 4) Provide the LEA representative notification of referral.

Early Start is required to make a referral to the district or assist the family in initiating contact with the district. The district's responsibility for a child referred to Early Start less than 90 days prior to their third birthday includes:

- 1) Ensure that an initial evaluation under Part B is completed.
- 2) Develop an individualized education program (IEP) by the child's third birthday if the child is determined to be eligible for Part B, even if the 60-day timeline for assessment expired after the child's third birthday.

Summer Birthdays

The LEA is responsible for holding an IEP to offer services before the child's third birthday even if the program is not in session; this includes summer breaks, mid-winter breaks, and other non-instructional days. The recommendation is to hold the transition conference early enough to ensure that all evaluations and assessments are complete and the final IFSP and initial IEP meetings are held by the child's third birthday. The date to implement the preschool services will be determined during the IEP meeting as part of the Offer of FAPE.

Assessment Standards

For students transitioning from infant services into preschool programs:

- a. Assessment will be conducted by a multidisciplinary team as specified in the Assessment Plan, including an authorized early childhood education specialist that serves students with disabilities. Assessment may include:
- b. A comprehensive developmental history conducted by a credentialed school nurse or other qualified individual (to determine age of onset).
- c. A current psychological assessment conducted by a credentialed school psychologist or other qualified individual
- d. A current language assessment conducted by a Speech-Language Pathologist or other qualified individual
- e. A current play-based assessment conducted by the authorized early childhood education specialist
- f. Previous school history, education progress, and medical reports when applicable
- g. A current fine motor assessment conducted by an Occupational Therapist or other qualified individual
- h. A current gross motor assessment conducted by a Physical Therapist or other qualified individual
- i. A current vision assessment conducted by a Visual Impairment specialist or other qualified individual
- j. A current orientation and mobility assessment conducted by an Orientation and Mobility specialist or another qualified individual

The following is a summary of the transition from Part C to Part B requirements and local practices:

Age of Child	Activity
At or before:	These activities will be undertaken:
2 years 6 months	Service coordinator notifies parents that transition planning will begin within the next 3 months and that an IFSP transition plan will be developed before the toddler is 2 years 9 months. Parent consent is obtained to include an LEA preschool representative for a transition IFSP conference. The service coordinator notifies the LEA that there will be a transition IFSP preschool representative before the toddler is 2 years 9 months. Within 30 days, the family, service coordinator and the LEA agree on a date for the transition IFSP conference.
2 years 9 months	Transition IFSP conference is held with service coordinator, parent (s) and preschool representatives of LEA. When possible, this meeting will be combined with the IFSP at 2 years and 6 months. At the transition IFSP conference a projected date for conducting the final review(s) of the IFSP and the initial IEP is set including the identification of the persons responsible for convening the IEP/final IFSP review meeting(s). The date(s) is set collaboratively between the LEA staff, the parent(s) and the DM SELPA or LOCAL REGIONAL CENTER service Coordinator. For students with birthdays between June 1 and August 30, IEPs will be held before June 1. Referrals will be made 60 days prior to June 1. Discussion regarding the need to determine eligibility for an IEP and the requirement that parents provide consent for assessment to the student's district of residence. Steps to prepare for the toddler of changes in service delivery, including steps to help the toddler adjust to, and function in a new setting are discussed. Service coordinator reviews transition material with family.
No less than 90 days prior to the third birthday	Referral and notification of children receiving Early Start Part C Services is completed by appropriate LEA provider, and with parent consent includes all pertinent medical and Early Start records. LEAs have 15 days to develop the assessment plan.
2 years 11 months	Prepare for IEP meeting: Eligibility review for continued FNRC services takes place if appropriate. At least 10 days prior to the IEP the LEA confirms the date of the IEP meeting with LOCAL REGIONAL CENTER. When possible, this meeting may be combined with the exit IFSP review. At times, the IEP meeting date may be tentatively set at the transition IFSP.
By the child's 3rd birthday	IEP and final IFSP meetings are held. Note: If the initial IEP meeting is also the final IFSP meeting, adequate time must be given at the IEP meeting to review progress in achieving IFSP outcomes before initiating discussion of the IEP.
Between the ages of 24 and 30 months	Early Start administrator and/or designee will notify the parents that a transition conference will occur no later than 90 days before the child's third birthday. The conference may occur up to nine months before the child's third birthday, at the discretion of all parties. The family should be advised that the school district representative will be invited to attend the transition conference and that this meeting is part of a formal IFSP meeting as well.

Guidance



Question & Answer Guidance for Early Start Agencies and LEAs in California

Adapted from: 2023 EARLY CHILDHOOD TRANSITION QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES
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SELPA Early Childhood Transition Procedures (Part C to Part B)

Question 1

What are the responsibilities of Early Start Agencies in California for developing a transition plan under Part C (Early Start)?

Answer

Early Start Agencies must ensure that each toddler exiting Early Start has a transition plan included in the IFSP:

- Developed no fewer than 90 days and no more than 9 months (with agreement) before the child's third birthday
- Applies to all toddlers exiting Part C, regardless of potential eligibility for Part B

SELPA Procedures

- The IFSP team (including the family) must:
- Identify transition steps, services, and timelines
- Prepare the family for differences between Early Start (family-centered) and LEA services (student-centered)
- Transition steps must include planning for:
- LEA preschool special education
- Community early childhood programs
- Early Start Agencies must:
- Begin transition discussions well before age two
- Update assessments and prepare documentation for LEA referral (with consent)

Compliance

- Must be documented for Indicator 8A
 - Indicator 8A measures the percentage of toddlers with disabilities exiting Part C who have an IFSP with transition steps and services in place at least 90 days, and (at the discretion of all parties) not more than nine months, prior to their third birthday
 - Missing or late plans = noncompliance
-

Question 2

What are the Early Start Agency responsibilities for transition notification to LEAs and the California Department of Education (CDE)?

Answer

Early Start Agencies must notify:

- The CDE (SEA)
- The child's LEA of residence

Timeline

- At least 90 days before the third birthday

Required Information

- Child name and DOB
- Parent contact information

SELPA Procedures

- Notification is treated as a formal referral to the LEA
- Early Start Agencies should:
- Use standardized SELPA transition notification forms
- Maintain documentation of transmission date
- With parent consent, Early Start Agencies should also share:
- IFSP
- Most recent assessments

Compliance

- Reported under Indicator 8B
 - Indicator 8B measures the percentage of toddlers with disabilities exiting Part C who are potentially eligible for Part B and for whom notification to the SEA (CDE) and LEA occurred at least 90 days prior to the child's third birthday (and consistent with any opt-out policy)
 - Failure may delay IEP → potential denial of FAPE
-

Question 3

What are SELPA expectations regarding opt-out policies for transition notification?

Answer

If an opt-out policy is in place:

- Parents must be informed before notification is sent
- Parents must be given time to opt out in writing

SELPA Procedures

- Early Start Agencies must provide written notice that includes:
- What information will be shared
- Right to opt out
- Timeline and method for opting out
- If parent opts out:
- No notification may be sent

Important Distinction

- Opt-out applies only to notification
 - Separate written consent required for sharing records
-

Question 4

Can a transition conference invitation count as notification to the LEA?

Answer

Yes, if it:

- Is sent ≥ 90 days before the third birthday
- Includes required notification information
- Is sent to both CDE and LEA

SELPA Procedures

- Must be defined in interagency agreements
-

Question 5

What are LEA responsibilities upon receiving a Part C transition notification?

Answer

The LEA must treat the notification as a referral and:

- Provide procedural safeguards
- Request consent or issue prior written notice

SELPA Procedures

- Track referral date
 - Start evaluation timelines (60 days)
-

Question 6

What are Early Start Agency responsibilities for convening a transition conference?

Answer

Early Start Agencies must:

- Convene conference $\geq$ 90 days before age 3
- Include family and invite LEA

SELPA Procedures

- Provide written notice
- Document attendance

Compliance

- Reported under Indicator 8C
 - Indicator 8C measures the percentage of toddlers exiting Part C who are potentially eligible for Part B and for whom a transition conference was held at least 90 days (and not more than nine months, if applicable) prior to the third birthday
-

Question 7

What must Early Start Agencies do if the LEA does not attend the transition conference?

Answer

The Early Start Agency must still hold the conference.

SELPA Procedures

- Document efforts to include LEA
- Provide family with Part B information

Compliance

- Still reported under Indicator 8C (see definition above)
-

Question 8

What if transition services were not completed on time?

Answer

This is Part C noncompliance.

SELPA Procedures

- Correct child-specific and systemic issues
-

Question 9

What are LEA responsibilities related to transition conferences?

Answer

LEAs must participate when invited.

SELPA Procedures

- Send appropriate staff
 - Explain services
-

Question 10

What if a child does not have an IEP by age three?

Answer

This is Part B noncompliance.

SELPA Procedures

- Complete IEP and correct
-

Question 11

What if the parent declines the transition conference but consents to evaluation?

Answer

LEA must proceed with evaluation and IEP.

Question 12

Can LEAs use Part C assessments?

Answer

Yes, with review of existing data.

Question 13

What are responsibilities once eligible?

Answer

IEP must be implemented by age 3.

Question 14

What are procedures for late referrals?

Answer

- 45–90 days → notify ASAP
 - <45 days → refer directly
-

Question 15

Can timelines be extended?

Answer

No—IEP still required by age 3 when applicable.

Question 16

Extended Part C option?

Answer

Not broadly implemented in California.

Question 17

Who defines potentially eligible?

Answer

IFSP team with state policy guidance.

Question 18

Indicator reporting?

Answer

Children included in:

- Indicator 11
 - Indicator 12
-

Final SELPA Implementation Notes

- **Maintain agreements with Early Start Agencies**
 - **Provide joint training**
 - **Monitor Indicators:**
 - ✓ **8A (transition plans)**
 - ✓ **8B (notification)**
 - ✓ **8C (transition conferences)**
 - ✓ **12 (IEP by age 3)**
-

SELPA FILE REVIEW CHECKLIST TOOL

(READY-TO-USE TEMPLATE)

Section A: Child Information

Field	Entry
Child Name	
DOB	
Exit Date	
LEA	
Early Start Agency	
Reviewer	
Review Date	

Section B: Indicator 8A – Transition Plan (IFSP)

Requirement	Yes	No	N/A	Notes
IFSP includes transition plan	☐	☐	☐	
Transition plan has steps for exiting Early Start	☐	☐	☐	
Transition services included (if applicable)	☐	☐	☐	
Transition plan developed $\geq$ 90 days before 3rd birthday	☐	☐	☐	
If earlier than 9 months, team agreement documented	☐	☐	☐	
IFSP meeting documented	☐	☐	☐	
Parent participation documented	☐	☐	☐	

Indicator 8A Compliance Determination:

- ☐ Compliant
- ☐ Noncompliant

Section C: Indicator 8B – Notification

Requirement	Yes	No	N/A	Notes
Notification sent to LEA	☐	☐	☐	
Notification sent to CDE	☐	☐	☐	
Notification sent $\geq$ 90 days before birthday	☐	☐	☐	
Child name included	☐	☐	☐	
DOB included	☐	☐	☐	
Parent contact information included	☐	☐	☐	
Documentation of date sent (email/log/form)	☐	☐	☐	
Opt-out notice provided to parent	☐	☐	☐	
If opted out, no notification sent	☐	☐	☐	

Indicator 8B Compliance Determination:

- ☐ Compliant
 - ☐ Noncompliant
-

Section D: Indicator 8C – Transition Conference

Requirement	Yes	No	N/A	Notes
Conference held	☐	☐	☐	
Held ≥ 90 days before birthday	☐	☐	☐	
Parent attended or declined	☐	☐	☐	
LEA invited	☐	☐	☐	
Documentation of LEA participation OR attempts	☐	☐	☐	
Written notice provided	☐	☐	☐	
Meeting notes/documentation completed	☐	☐	☐	
Discussion of Part B services documented	☐	☐	☐	
Next steps identified	☐	☐	☐	

Indicator 8C Compliance Determination:

- ☐ Compliant
- ☐ Noncompliant

Final Summary

Indicator	Status
8A	☐ C ☐ NC
8B	☐ C ☐ NC
8C	☐ C ☐ NC

AUDITOR SCORING RUBRIC

Use this to standardize determinations across reviewers.

Scoring Levels

Compliant (C)

- All required elements present
 - Timelines met (≥ 90 days)
 - Documentation is complete and consistent
 - No missing components
-

Noncompliant (NC)

Anyone of the following:

Indicator 8A

- Transition plan missing OR late (<90 days)
- Plan lacks required steps/services

Indicator 8B

- Notification missing
- Sent late (<90 days)
- Missing required content
- No documentation

Indicator 8C

- Conference not held
 - Held late
 - No documentation of LEA involvement or invitation
-

Needs Correction (NC-Corrected)

- Initially noncompliant BUT:
 - Corrected during review period
 - Documentation updated
 - Systemic issue addressed
-

Severity Guidance

Issue Type	Severity
Missing documentation	High
Late timeline	High
Minor documentation gaps	Moderate
Formatting/document clarity issues	Low

Auditor Notes Section

- Root cause identified? ☐
 - Systemic issue? ☐
 - Training needed? ☐
-

STAFF TRAINING GUIDE: HOW TO PASS MONITORING REVIEWS

KEY PRINCIPLE

Auditors look for **3 things only**:

1.  Was it done?
2.  Was it on time?
3.  Is it documented?

If it's not documented → it **did not happen**.

Indicator 8A – How to Pass

DO:

- Complete transition plan at **age 2–2.5**
- Include:
 - Steps
 - Services
 - Family support
- Document IFSP meeting clearly

DON'T:

- Wait until last minute
 - Leave plan blank or generic
 - Skip meeting documentation
-

Indicator 8B – How to Pass

DO:

- Send notification **before the 90-day deadline**
- Use standard form
- Save proof (email, system entry)

DON'T:

- Rely on memory
 - Send incomplete info
 - Forget to document opt-out process
-

Indicator 8C – How to Pass

DO:

- Schedule conference early
- Invite LEA (document it!)
- Keep meeting notes

DON'T:

- Cancel if LEA doesn't respond
 - Skip documentation
 - Forget parent participation
-

COMMON FAIL POINTS (MOST FREQUENT AUDIT ERRORS)

1.  No proof of notification date
2.  Transition plan created too late
3.  Missing LEA invitation documentation
4.  Conference happened—but not documented
5.  Inconsistent dates across documents

✓ PERFECT FILE MODEL (WHAT AUDITORS WANT)

A **perfect file** includes:

- IFSP with dated transition plan (8A)
- Notification with timestamp (8B)
- Conference notes + invitation (8C)
- All timelines ≥ 90 days
- Consistent dates across all documents

🚀 BEST PRACTICES FOR STAFF

- Use a **transition tracking system**
- Set alerts at:
 - 2.0 years $\rightarrow$ planning
 - 2.5 years $\rightarrow$ notification
- Keep **templates standardized across SELPA**
- Double-check:
 - Dates
 - Signatures
 - Documentation completeness

FINAL READINESS CHECK (STAFF SELF-AUDIT)

Before closing a file, ask:

- ✓ Is there a transition plan?
- ✓ Was it done 90+ days before birthday?
- ✓ Was notification sent AND documented?
- ✓ Was a conference held AND documented?
- ✓ Do all dates match?

If yes $\rightarrow$ ✓ **Monitoring-ready**
