

According to Part C Federal Regulations 303.322 (b) Definitions of Evaluation and Assessment

Evaluation means the procedures used by appropriate qualified personnel to determine a child's initial and continuing eligibility, including determining the status of the child in each of the developmental areas:

- (A) Cognitive development.
- (B) Physical development, including vision and hearing.
- (C) Communication development.
- (D) Social or emotional development.
- (E) Adaptive development.

What does this mean for Missouri First Steps eligibility determination?

- 1) All five developmental domains (including vision and hearing) must be assessed **prior** to eligibility determination regardless of the referral reason.
- 2) Formal test scores are **not** required for each developmental domain; evaluation may include both formal and informal methods/instruments.
 - a. For children who are referred with a medical condition, all five developmental domains can be evaluated either formally or informally.
 - b. For children referred with a developmental delay, at least one developmental domain must have a formal test score. The formal score could come from either the DAYC (which gives a formal score for all five domains) or a single-domain evaluation completed outside of First Steps.
- 3) Eligibility documentation must be present in each child's record (best practice dictates it is entered into the child's electronic record) as follows:
 - a. Documentation of the formal or informal evaluation of each developmental domain (including vision and hearing).
 - b. Documentation that the evaluation/assessment was conducted by a multidisciplinary process, including at least two or more different disciplines or professions, where the intake coordinator may be considered one of the disciplines; however, the parent cannot be considered one of the professions.
- 4) A single-domain evaluation completed by an outside source prior to a referral to First Steps may be used to assist with eligibility determination; however, the Service Coordinator must review the length of time that has passed since the evaluation occurred, compared to the child's chronological age, and determine if the evaluation results would be considered appropriate to use for eligibility determination. As a reminder, all five domains must be assessed prior to eligibility determination.