

**INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT
DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
AND
DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH
FOR PART C OF THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT**

Review and Renewal of Agreement

This agreement between the Department of Mental Health (DMH) and Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) shall be automatically renewed annually, on July 1, unless one of the parties notifies the other party in writing 30 days before the renewal date that revisions are needed or the agency does not wish to renew the agreement. Revisions can be made throughout the year upon agreement of both parties. The agreement is effective upon the signatures of each agency representative.

Purpose of Agreement

This agreement addresses the Missouri provision of appropriate early intervention service to infants and toddlers (0 – age 3), as defined by state and federal regulations implementing the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part C. This agreement is entered into to maximize resources, reduce duplication of services, and provide a statewide system of early intervention services that is coordinated, comprehensive, and multidisciplinary in nature. In Missouri, the statewide system of early intervention services is known as First Steps. This agreement delineates statewide responsibilities of DESE and DMH and the regional responsibilities of the DESE contracted System Points of Entry (SPOE) and the Regional Offices for Developmental Disabilities (RO).

State Level Agency Responsibilities

Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)

1. Serve as the lead agency for Part C.
2. Develop and maintain the infrastructure for the First Steps system including:
 - Contracting for the Central Finance Office (CFO).
 - Contracting for SPOE.
 - Developing and implementing the training and credentialing system for early intervention providers and service coordinators.
3. Implement the General Supervision requirements of IDEA, Part C.
4. Coordinate State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC) meetings four (4) to six (6) times per year.

Department of Mental Health (DMH)

1. Maintain active participation in the SICC.
2. Provide statewide leadership that encourages strong partnerships at the regional and state level to enhance the First Steps system.

Regional Responsibilities

A. DMH Regional Office Responsibilities(RO)

1. DMH Regional directors, or their designees, and SPOE directors shall develop a joint plan for coordination of First Steps in the SPOE region. At a minimum, the plan should address regular communication between directors, or their designees, and the process to coordinate the provision and timely assignment of service coordinators for children who are eligible for services from the Division of Developmental Disabilities.
2. To accept children who were eligible for the First Steps program as automatically eligible for Regional Office services and not require the child/family to undergo additional eligibility determination procedures at the RO (see Section C).
3. Assign staff to participate in the Regional Interagency Coordinating Council (RICC).
4. Assist the SPOE with child find activities by promoting child find activities and making referrals to First Steps system.

B. System Point of Entry (SPOE) Responsibilities

1. Educate families about the philosophy and beliefs of the First Steps system.
2. Conduct all intake and evaluation functions for children referred to First Steps.
3. The SPOE service coordinator shall facilitate, monitor, and supervise the initial IFSP team meeting(s) and is considered the offeror of services for purposes of the First Steps system.
4. The SPOE shall develop and maintain a system for collection, storage, and inventory procedures; and, if determined appropriate, redistribution of used Assistive Technology (AT) equipment purchased by the First Steps system and no longer needed for the child.
5. Identify members and coordinate meetings for the RICC.

C. Referral Procedures from DESE SPOE to DMH Regional Office

1. At least 30 business days before the child turns three years old, the SPOE office sends a release of information and the child's IFSP to the RO.
2. The RO attempts to contact the family within 1-2 business days after receiving the First Steps information to conduct the intake interview. The RO also mails an application packet to the family.
3. After the interview is conducted, the RO opens the EOC record and completes the contact log.
4. Once the family returns a complete application, the RO assigns an intake worker who notifies the family in writing that the application is complete. The process for addressing

incomplete application follows the standard RO rules, including contact with the family to address any shortcomings.

5. Based upon the IFSP documentation confirming the child's First Steps eligibility, DD eligibility determination and initial service plan are completed for the RO. Additional medical information is not necessary for DD eligibility.

6. The RO obtains a release of information for ongoing communication with First Steps after age three.

Resolution of Interagency Disputes

In the event that the ROs and SPOEs are unable to resolve any regional disputes in a timely manner, then DESE will use the following procedures:

- Staff in each agency's central office shall review the nature of the dispute and attempt a resolution.
- In the event that resolution is unsuccessful, the DD Division Director and the Assistant Commissioner for Special Education will resolve any outstanding disputes.
- If that resolution is unsuccessful, the Director of DMH and the Commissioner of DESE will render a decision. If the two agencies cannot resolve the issue, the parties involved may refer the dispute to the Governor for a final decision.

For the State of Missouri

Signed:



for Commissioner, Department of Elementary
and Secondary Education



Director, Department of Mental Health

11/18/2016

Date

11/7/2016

Date