

Subject: New First Steps guidance for providers

Source: Pam Thomas, Coordinator, First Steps Program

Intended Audience: First Steps providers

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New guidance about First Steps practices is available on the First Steps home page under the Practice Manual tab at: <http://dese.mo.gov/special-education/first-steps>. Scroll down to the Practice Manual tab on the right side of the page.

The Practice Manual has 12 chapters. As you click on each chapter to review the information, please note some chapters indicate “content coming soon” as our office is working on this information.

While the Practice Manual is primarily intended for Service Coordinators, there are several sections that are relevant to First Steps providers, including:

Revised Chapter 2 – Parental Rights, Pages 10 – 15, under Section II – C: Confidentiality. This section includes new information about HIPAA, FERPA, obtaining a release to share personally identifiable information, and confidentiality for provision of service.

Revised Chapter 2 – Parental Rights, Pages 25 – 32, under Section III – A: Translation Services and B – Sign/Cued Language Services. These sections include new information about using Translators and Interpreters for the Deaf.

New Chapter 6 – IFSP Planning, Development and Review. This new chapter includes information about planning for an IFSP meeting with initial and ongoing assessments (Section I), conducting an IFSP meeting and determining services (Section III), and implementing the IFSP by initiating or changing services (Section IV).

New Chapter 9 – Service Guidelines. This new chapter includes definitions of services for direct, joint visit and consultation (Section I), natural environment settings (Section II), providers requiring supervision (Section III), obtaining physician prescriptions (Section IV), timely services (Section V), documenting services in progress notes (Section VI), missed visits and leave of absences (Sections VII and VIII) and compensatory services (Section IX).

First Steps providers are encouraged to review the Practice Manual to ensure provider practices are in accordance with current guidance.