

GUIDELINES/WORKSHEET
DEVELOPMENTAL JUSTIFICATION TO CHANGE FREQUENCY, INTENSITY AND/OR
LOCATION OF AUTHORIZED SERVICES

(Effective Date: 09/01/09, Revised: 07/01/12, Revised: 11/01/15)

In order to ensure that all Early Intervention (EI) Providers and Service Coordinators are in compliance with 303.421 of Part C of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), are addressing the “Principles of Early Intervention” and other important policies, rules, regulations and guidelines required, all EI Providers must submit a written Developmental Justification of Need and the EI Provider *Developmental Justification to Change Frequency, Intensity and/or Location of Authorized Services Worksheet* to the Service Coordinator for any changes that are requested to existing authorizations for the time period between annual Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) meetings and changes that are made at the six-month review.

EI Providers who wish to request an increase or decrease in the frequency, intensity and/or change the location to an existing authorization must submit a written Developmental Justification of Need to the child’s Service Coordinator. As mentioned above, this includes changes that are made at six-month reviews. Upon receipt of a written Developmental Justification of Need that contains all required information found in the following Worksheet, the Service Coordinator will convene an IFSP review meeting. If changes are requested within the first three (3) months after the development of an IFSP, the original multidisciplinary IFSP team must reconvene. The EI Provider who is recommending the change(s) must be in attendance. The team must agree that a change from the original recommendation(s) is needed and is in the best interest of the child/family.

If changes are requested more than three (3) months after the development of an IFSP, the child’s current multidisciplinary IFSP team must participate in the IFSP review meeting. The team must agree that a change from the team’s original recommendation(s) is needed and is in the best interest of the child/family.

The written Developmental Justification of Need must be based upon the “Principles of Early Intervention” and the policies identified in numbers one (1) through four (4) below. The EI Provider must address all information requested in the following Worksheet. Service Coordinators will return all requests to increase or decrease the frequency, intensity and/or change the location of an existing authorization to EI Providers who fail to include all required information requested in the Worksheet.

Please keep the following policies in mind when developing a written Developmental Justification of Need:

1. EI is covered under Part C of IDEA and is a developmental program. Services are authorized based upon the development of functional outcomes that focus on child development and family training, education and support and must address a child’s developmental needs rather than a child’s medical needs;
2. At the IFSP team meeting, family-centered functional outcomes must be written prior to the determination of service delivery decisions, which would include frequency, intensity and duration of authorizations (see definition of functional outcomes within the *Service Description, Billing Codes and Rates*” - EI Provider Handbook);
3. Functional outcomes must be based upon the “Principals of Early Intervention” which are found on page one of the *“Service Description, Billing Codes and Rates”* - EI Provider Handbook;
4. Part C requires states to provide services in “Natural Environments”. Under Section 303.26 of Part C, Natural Environments is defined as “settings that are natural or typical for a same-aged infant or toddler without a disability.” The Office of Special Education Programs

(OSEP) has had a longstanding interpretation of IDEA that EI services must be provided in a natural environment, unless a written justification exists for providing these services in other settings. Effective July 1, 2005, all Service Coordinators and EI Providers were required to use the *Natural Environment Worksheet* at the IFSP meeting to justify all services that would not be provided in a child's most natural learning environment. (See *Natural Environments Requirements/Worksheet* as defined in the definition section under of Natural Environments with the *Service Description, Billing Codes and Rates*" - EI Provider Handbook). Service Coordinators will not authorize services in a non-natural environment without completing the *Natural Environment Worksheet* at the IFSP meeting.

At the end of the IFSP review meeting, if the IFSP multidisciplinary team has agreed that a change in the originally recommended frequency, intensity and/or location of the existing authorization(s) is in the best interest of the child/family, the Service Coordinator will complete the following steps:

- Require that all members of the IFSP multidisciplinary team who attended the meeting sign the *Developmental Justification to Change Frequency, Intensity and/or Location for Authorized Services* form. By signing this form, the EI Provider is acknowledging that he/she participated in the IFSP review meeting and agrees that a change from the originally recommended frequency, intensity and/or location is needed and that the change is in the best interest of the child/family.
- If an EI provider attends the IFSP review meeting telephonically, the Service Coordinator will print and initial their name by the EI Provider's name on the form. This will verify that the EI Provider attended the meeting telephonically.
- If a change in location from the natural environment was made, attach the *Natural Environment Worksheet* that was completed at the IFSP review meeting to the *EI Provider Developmental Justification to Change Frequency, Intensity and/or Location for Authorized Services Worksheet* at the completion of the meeting.
- Attach the written Developmental Justification of Need that was submitted by the EI Provider who requested the change to the *EI Provider Developmental Justification to Change Frequency, Intensity and/or Location for Authorized Services Worksheet* at the completion of the IFSP review meeting.
- Discontinue the existing authorization(s) and generate a new authorization that reflects the recommended change(s).

**CHILD AND FAMILY CONNECTIONS
DEVELOPMENTAL JUSTIFICATION TO CHANGE FREQUENCY, INTENSITY, AND/OR LOCATION OF AUTHORIZED SERVICES**

Date of IFSP Review: _____ Child's Name (Last, First): _____

Child's EI #: _____ Child's Date of Birth: _____ CFC Office #: _____ Service Type: _____

Original Service Location: _____ Revised Service Location: _____

Original Intensity: _____ Revised Intensity: _____

Original Frequency: _____ Revised Frequency: _____

IFSP Team Summary of Justification: _____

(Attach required written justification from EI provider who requested this change.)

We, the undersigned members of the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) team for the child stated above, participated and agree that a change from the originally recommended intensity, frequency, and/or location is needed and it is in the best interest of the child.

Parent/Caregiver _____ Date _____ Provider/Discipline _____ Date _____

Service Coordinator _____ Date _____ Provider/Discipline _____ Date _____

Provider/Discipline _____ Date _____ Provider/Discipline _____ Date _____

CFC Program Manager acknowledges that Service Coordinator held IFSP Change Meeting and that EI Provider written justification for change is attached. _____
CFC Program Manager _____ Date _____

Under the provisions of the Illinois Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Confidentiality Act, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 USC 1232g, and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, information collected hereunder may not be redisclosed unless the person who consented to this disclosure specifically consents to such redisclosure or the redisclosure is allowed by law.

**EARLY INTERVENTION PROVIDER
DEVELOPMENTAL JUSTIFICATION TO CHANGE FREQUENCY, INTENSITY, AND/OR LOCATION OF AUTHORIZED SERVICES
WORKSHEET**

SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION (REQUIRED FOR ALL CHANGES)

Name and Discipline of Provider Requesting Change				Date of Request
Name of Child's Service Coordinator	CFC #	Child's Name	EI #	

SECTION 2: CURRENT IFSP/AUTHORIZATION INFORMATION (REQUIRED FOR ALL CHANGES)

IFSP Begin Date	Authorized Frequency	Authorized Intensity	Authorized Location	# of Service Sessions Completed by Provider
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Functional Outcome That Supports Current Authorization:
Current Progress Toward That Outcome:

SECTION 3: CHANGE REQUESTED (REQUIRED FOR ALL CHANGES)

Increase in Frequency or Intensity	Decrease in Frequency or Intensity	Change in Location	Discharge
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SECTION 4: WRITTEN DEVELOPMENTAL JUSTIFICATION OF NEED TO CHANGE EXISTING AUTHORIZATION

Providers who are requesting an **increase in frequency or intensity or a change of location must address** all questions and provide all explanations/documentation requested in this Section. Providers who are requesting **a decrease in services or who have found the child age appropriate and are recommending that the child be discharged** from services are only required to address the last statement found under Principle #4 in the "Information Required to Justify This Principle" column.

Principles of Early Intervention & Definition of Functional Outcomes & Written Home Activity Program	Information Required to Justify This Principle
<p>1) Principle #1 - The primary goal of EI is to support families in promoting their child's optimal development and facilitate the child's participation in family and community activities.</p>	<p>Explain how the proposed change will increase this family's knowledge of child development and help to facilitate the child's participation in this family's daily routines and community activities.</p>
<p>Principle #1 Written Justification:</p>	
<p>2) Principle #2 - The focus of EI is to encourage the active participation of families in the therapeutic process by imbedding intervention strategies into family routines. It is the parents who provide the real Early Intervention by creatively adapting their child care methods to facilitate the development of their child, while balancing the needs of the rest of their family.</p>	<p>What types of family training, education and support have you provided to this family to encourage their active participation in their child's services?</p> <p>What types of developmental strategies have been imbedded into this family's daily routines?</p>
<p>Principle #2 Written Justification:</p>	
<p>3) Principle #3 - EI requires a collaborative relationship between families and providers, with equal participation by all those involved in the process. An on-going parent-professional dialogue is needed to develop, implement, monitor and modify therapeutic activities.</p>	<p>Does this family (parent/caregiver) routinely participate in the therapeutic activities as an equal participant? If so, do they participate hands-on, observation, or both?</p> <p>If the family does not actively participate, document the strategies that you have used to encourage active participation. If you have not encouraged active participation in the past, document how you will proceed to work with this family (parent/caregiver) to facilitate participation in all future therapeutic activities.</p> <p>Document the type of existing on-going parent/professional dialogue that you have with this family to determine when therapeutic activities/developmental strategies that have been incorporated into this family's daily routines need to be modified.</p> <p>If you do not currently have on-going parent/professional dialogue with the family, document how you will proceed to work with this family (parent/caregiver) to develop therapeutic activities/developmental strategies to incorporate into this family's daily routines.</p>
<p>Principle #3 Written Justification:</p>	

Principles of Early Intervention & Definition of Functional Outcomes & Written Home Activity Program	Information Required to Justify This Principle
<p>4) Principle #4 - Intervention must be linked to specific outcomes that are family-centered, functional and measurable. Intervention strategies should focus on facilitating social interaction, exploration and autonomy.</p> <p>Definition of Functional Outcomes – Family centered outcomes that are written by the IFSP team and the family based upon the family’s identified priorities and concerns. Family centered functional outcomes are designed to encourage children to participate in the same types of family and community activities as other children their age. In order for this to occur the IFSP team needs to be aware of the family’s routines and the community activities that the family engages in. This will allow the team to consider daily routines and a variety of natural settings for intervention strategies to be implemented once the outcomes are developed. Family participation is the key to intervention and families are more likely to participate when the outcomes are meaningful to them and can be worked on throughout their everyday routines and activities. Functional Outcomes should be written to address areas of family concern rather than focusing on specific professional disciplines or therapies. The outcome must be related to a necessary skill and should state a process and a product. Functional outcomes are developed at the child’s IFSP meeting.</p> <p>Family centered functional outcomes drive the decision making process to determine what EI services a child and family will receive. Service delivery decisions are not based on a child’s medical diagnosis or percentage of delay, but rather on the child and family’s unique strengths, needs, concerns and priorities that led to the development of each individualized family centered outcome. All outcomes must be functional and meaningful to the child and family. Family centered functional outcomes must be written prior to the determination of service delivery decisions, which would include disciplines to provide services and frequency, intensity and duration of services identified on authorizations. All recommendations for services must be based upon the “Principles of Early Intervention.”</p>	<p>Based upon the Principles of Early Intervention and the definition of Functional Outcomes, are the current functional outcome/intervention services considered to be family-centered and do they focus on facilitating social interaction, exploration and autonomy for the child/family?</p> <p>If so, has the current outcome been met?</p> <p>If the current outcome has been met, or is not in compliance with the definition of “Functional Outcomes,” would it be more appropriate to develop a new functional outcome rather than to increase the frequency/intensity of services or to change the location of services?</p> <p>If it is determined that a new functional outcome would not be more appropriate, please explain why an increase in frequency or intensity or a change in location of services would be more appropriate.</p> <p>If this request is to decrease services or discharge the child, please document the progress that this child has made and why intervention services should be decreased or why services are no longer required.</p>
<p>Principle #4 Written Justification:</p>	

Principles of Early Intervention & Definition of Functional Outcomes & Written Home Activity Program	Information Required to Justify This Principle
<p>5) Principle #5 - Intervention shall be integrated into a comprehensive plan that encourages transdisciplinary activities and avoids unnecessary duplication of services. The plan shall be built around family routines, with written home activity programs to encourage family participation in therapeutic activities on a daily basis.</p> <p>Definition of Written Home Activity Program - A written home activity program is a document that is written in the home or other place of service, with the input of the parent/caregiver during a direct service session. It should identify developmental strategies to meet functional outcomes that are important to the family and that support the family in developing or refining their ability to facilitate their child's active involvement in his or her community and family. This document should be shared with all members of the IFSP service team and the parent/caregiver. Time to create a written home activity program with the parent/caregiver is considered to be family training, education and support time that is billable as direct service time only.</p>	<p>Will the proposed increase in frequency or intensity or change in location be a duplication of services that the child is currently receiving?</p> <p>Is there an existing home activity program in place that you developed with the parent/caregiver?</p> <p>If so, was the existing program built around family routines and does it encourage family participation in therapeutic activities on a daily basis?</p> <p>Have the family and other members of the child's IFSP team implemented that program?</p> <p>Would a change to the existing home activity program be more appropriate rather than an increase in frequency/intensity or change in location?</p> <p>If an increase in frequency/intensity or a change in location is still required, explain how the recommended increase or change will impact/change the existing home activity program that is currently in place.</p>
<p>Principle #5 Written Justification:</p>	
<p>6) Principle #6 - Intervention should be monitored periodically to assure that the strategies implemented are successful in achieving outcomes.</p>	<p>Explain how you will work with this family/caregiver to monitor and make changes to the "written home activity program" when needed.</p> <p>NOTE: Please refer back to Principle #3.</p>
<p>Principle #6 Written Justification:</p>	