

Service Coordination

WHAT IS SERVICE COORDINATION?

Service coordination, as defined by Part C of IDEA, is an active, ongoing process. It consists of the activities carried out by a service coordinator to assist and enable an eligible child and the child's family to receive the rights, procedural safeguards, and services that are authorized to be provided under Part C. Each child eligible under Part C and the child's family must be provided with one service coordinator. To be effective, the service coordinator needs to work in collaboration with the family and the other early intervention service providers.

WHO SHOULD BE THE FAMILY'S SERVICE COORDINATOR?

The family selects a service coordinator. Typically this is an individual with whom they have already had contact and feel comfortable, such as their most frequent service provider. It could be any one of their service providers or another parent of a child with special needs who is very familiar with the early intervention system, including regulations under Part C of IDEA and Michigan's Procedural Safeguard Standards which protect the rights of families in Early On.

INITIAL OR INTAKE SERVICE COORDINATION:

- The service coordinator is the single point of entry into the early intervention system.
- The initial service coordinator, usually dedicated, (not a service provider) provides intake services and facilitates all activities during the first 45 calendar days or until the IFSP meeting.
- At the IFSP meeting, initial service coordinators may be appointed as ongoing service coordinators and continue in this capacity with some families.

DEDICATED SERVICE COORDINATION:

- The service coordinator primarily focuses on service coordination. She or he does not provide early intervention services.
- Service coordinators may be employed by an early intervention program.
- Service coordinators may be independent of the early intervention program, i.e., be employed by another agency, program, or by a private provider.

EARLY INTERVENTIONIST AND SERVICE COORDINATION:

- The primary service provider also has service coordination responsibilities.
- The home visitor provides both intervention services and service coordination to a given caseload of families.
- All members of the multidisciplinary team have direct intervention responsibilities and a selected caseload of families for whom they provide service coordination.

For more information, visit 1800EarlyOn.org.