

Infant Toddler and Preschool Early Intervention
Operational Guidance
Aligned to Governor Wolf's [Process To Reopen Pennsylvania](#)
June 3, 2020

The Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) recognizes that maintaining the safety of the Early Intervention (EI) workforce and families is essential during the COVID-19 pandemic. OCDEL is utilizing the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance, as well as guidance from the Pennsylvania Department of Health (PA DOH), to support EI programs as EI programs begin planning for safely re-establishing face-to-face EI services in their communities. Links to guidance from the CDC are included at the bottom of this guidance.

OCDEL is providing this guidance to help individuals who provide EI services and the families that receive services to be safe during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Pennsylvania's Plan for Reopening

The administration will use the PA DOH's metrics and a data tool developed by Carnegie Mellon University to decide when to move a county to a new phase. The full plan is available [here](#).

EI programs should review and plan for the implementation of the [CDC](#) and [PA DOH](#) guidelines for reopening.

Red Phase Early Intervention Program Guidance

- Face-to-face Infant Toddler EI services continue to be limited and the use of tele-intervention is encouraged.
- Preschool EI including special education classrooms should follow the preliminary guidance from the Pennsylvania Department of Education regarding in-person instruction for the red phase that can be found [here](#).
- Virtual evaluations continue.

Yellow Phase Early Intervention Program Guidance

- Tele-intervention to deliver EI services and virtual evaluations continue.
- Preschool EI special education classrooms should follow the preliminary guidance from the Pennsylvania Department of Education regarding in-person instruction within schools for the yellow phase that can be found [here](#).
- The Individualized Family Services Plan (IFSP)/Individualized Education Plan (IEP) teams may identify a need to schedule an in-person assessment if the assessment cannot be completed remotely. Providers may also need to provide services in a home if the family does not have access to technology that allows services to be delivered through tele-intervention or the IFSP/IEP team, including the family, has determined that tele-intervention alone is not an effective methodology for delivering specific EI services. Prior to making a home visit, providers of EI services should identify their own risk of transmitting COVID-19 and their risk of complications if they were to be infected. Providers of EI services should also identify family members in the visited home who may be at [risk](#) of transmitting COVID-19 or having complications if infected with COVID-19.
 - When there is an identified need for a home visit, the provider of the EI services should contact the family prior to the home visit to ask the following health screening questions. The provider should document the responses.
 1. Anyone in the home tested positive or suspected of having COVID-19?

2. Does anyone in the home have signs or symptoms of a fever, new or worsening cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, respiratory illness?
3. Has anyone in the home had contact within the last 14 days with someone with or under investigation for COVID-19?
4. Will a person with a weakened immune system, a person who is over the age of 65 years, or a person that has chronic health conditions (e.g. heart disease, lung disease, diabetes), or other factors that pose a risk if the person becomes infected with COVID-19 be present during the visit?

If the provider of EI services believes they are at risk of transmitting COVID-19 or the response is yes to any of the questions above, it is recommended that the provider of EI services communicate with the family the need to postpone the visit and to schedule a time to plan for a future visit.

- If the provider of EI services is not able to contact the family before the home visit and decides to proceed with the visit, the provider should ask the four health screening questions included above before entering the home to make sure the provider is doing everything the provider can to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. The provider should stand approximately 6 feet from the doorway when asking the four health screening questions.
- If the answer is no to all of the health screening questions included above, and the provider decides that going to the home is in the best interest of the child and family, then the provider of EI services should take the precautions listed below to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- **Precautions include:**
 - Following the [CDC](#) and [PA DOH](#) guidelines.
 - Whenever possible, maintaining a minimum 6-foot distance between the provider of EI services and family members during a visit.
 - Visits can take place outside of the home.
 - Wearing masks or cloth face coverings to prevent the asymptomatic spread of COVID-19 and to provide protection when social distancing measures are difficult to maintain.
 - Minimizing physical contact with frequently touched surfaces in the home.
 - Washing your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before entering/going to the home and after exiting. If soap and water are not available, using a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
 - Avoiding touching eyes, nose and mouth.

Green Phase Early Intervention Program Guidance

- Using Tele-intervention for the delivery of EI services and conducting evaluations is permitted.
- Face-to-face services and evaluations may resume when there is minimal concern for the spread of COVID-19 in the area.
- Preschool EI special education classrooms should follow the preliminary guidance from the Pennsylvania Department of Education regarding in-person instruction within schools, that can be found [here](#).
- All EI service providers must follow [CDC](#) and [PA DOH](#) guidelines.
- EI programs should follow the CDC's guidelines for reopening found below.

Resources

The COVID-19 pandemic is a rapidly evolving situation. It is important for EI programs and EI providers to continually check the resources listed below for any new guidance or additional information.

- Get the latest information from PA DOH [here](#).
- CDC guidance for Return to Work for Healthcare Personnel is available [here](#).
- PA DOH guidance for infection prevention and control is available [here](#).
- CDC guidance on infection prevention and control recommendations for patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 in healthcare settings is available [here](#).

CDC Resources

Communities and Healthcare Providers

- [Communities, Schools, Workplaces, and Events Information for Where You Live, Work, Learn, and Play](#)
- [Communications Resources](#)
- [Information for Healthcare Professionals about Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

Pregnant Women, Infants and Families

- [If You Are Pregnant, Breastfeeding, or Caring for Young Children](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)

General Prevention

- [When and How to Wash Your Hands](#)
- [How to Protect Yourself & Others](#)
- [Household Checklist](#)

Families and Young Children

- [Keep Children Healthy during the COVID-19 Outbreak](#)
- [Talking with children about Coronavirus Disease 2019](#)
- [Cleaning and Disinfection for Households](#)
- [Coping with Stress](#)

Social Service Providers

- [Child Care, Schools, and Youth Programs](#)
- [Taking Care of your Behavioral Health \(SAMHSA\)](#)