



First Steps

2009 – 2010

Request for Funds

Amendment Packet

The Bureau of Child Development Services (BCDS) is accepting contract amendment requests for the contract funding year 2009 - 2010. Enclosed in the RFF Amendment Packet are the required documents needed for the Amendment approval process.



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INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE:

Through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part C, along with Title XIX funding (Medicaid), the Lead Agency is making funds available to assist each Cluster Local Planning and Coordinating Council (LPCC) in their coordination of a family-centered, neighborhood-based, interagency system of services for infants and toddlers with special needs and their families and to support the ongoing work of the cluster System Point of Entry (SPOE). Contracts will be offered to each Cluster who can demonstrate an ability to coordinate the activities required under federal and state regulations for Part C.

Terms for Cluster Fiscal Agents:

1. Must adhere to State and federal laws, regulations and policies
2. Must agree to a cost reimbursement contract that requires an outcome-based agreement and the ability to cover expenses for 45-60 days
3. Must be incorporated as a not-for-profit and in good standing with the State of Indiana and the First Steps system
4. Must have an annual audit prepared by an independent certified public accountant documenting sufficient internal controls, pursuant to the level of not-for-profit status
5. Must be bonded and insured
6. Must be experienced with public resources and monitoring sub-recipients
7. Must be experienced working with multiple funding sources
8. Must be registered with the Secretary of State as a not-for-profit (unless legally exempt)
9. Must not be a provider of First Steps early intervention services within the cluster, with the exception of service coordinators and eligibility determination (ED) team members
10. Must have additional agency income with a value of 10% or greater of the total grant award

Please sign below to attest compliance for the above terms.

Signature of Authorized Individual

Date Signed

The deadline for submission of the RFF application is December 15, 2008

*Any RFF Amendment submitted after the December 15, 2008 deadline will be subject to a delay in contract implementation and prorating of funding. All clarifications to the RFF must be submitted and approved prior to initiation of the contract. RFF applications not fully approved by **January 31, 2009** may be subject to delayed implementation of the contract and pro-rating of funding.*

- The contract is built upon a performance-based system. Funds will not be reimbursed without documentation of meeting the required outcomes.
- The travel reimbursement rate is limited to the State reimbursement rate.
- The amendment will be written for a one-year period.
- Fiscal Agents will submit claims and supporting documentation.

2009-2010 RFF Amendment – 11/18/2008

INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

- All expenditures submitted on the claim form must be within the same calendar month.
- Fiscal Agents will receive payment by using direct deposit. If any information has changed, a direct deposit form must be submitted with the application packet.
- Claims submitted after 60 days may be denied.
- Clusters will maintain functional Internet access, individual email accounts for all cluster staff, and a cluster website and check their email daily.
- Cluster staff changes and contact/referral information changes should immediately be forwarded to: FirstStepsWeb@fssa.in.gov as they occur.
- When submitting the RFF, include the **original and 1 electronic copy** to:

First Steps RFF 2008-2009
402 W. Washington Street, Rm. W-386 MS02
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2739
FirstStepsWeb@fssa.in.gov
ATTN: [Jeri McGarvey@fssa.in.gov](mailto:JeriMcGarvey@fssa.in.gov)

- Allocations are maximum allowable funds that will be drawn down as actual expenses are incurred.

LPCC Allocations will remain unchanged from 2008-2009 allocations.

SPOE Allocations will be modified based on an evaluation of current child counts and percentage change from 2007-2008 child counts.

Submit all documents indicated on the submission checklist by the RFF Amendment deadline (December 15, 2008)... No contracts will be executed until the application packet and any clarifications are fully approved.

SUBMISSION CHECKLIST

Following are the documents needed for submission to the Lead Agency for the approval process. The cluster should utilize the checklist to ensure the RFF Amendment packet is complete when submitted to the Lead Agency:

- Fiscal Agent letter of intent and Fiscal Agent sheet, agreeing to be the Fiscal Agent for the Cluster for 2009-20010. State that 2009-20010 Activities and Strategies will remain consistent with 2008-2009. If there are any substantial changes in locations or structural set-up, you must identify them in your letter of intent. Document how the clustered counties will continue to work together to ensure all Outcomes are met. **Due March 1, 2009.**
- Organizational Chart for all SPOE/LPCC staff identifying name, position, and location. **Due March 1, 2009.**
- Budgets for the Cluster's First Steps Early Intervention System, Parts 1 and 2. **Due December 15, 2008 (This budget does not need LPCC approval before submission; final budget w/ LPCC approval will be due March 1, 2009)**
 - Total Budget Amounts must equal the total allocation for the cluster
 - Budget Summaries with Narrative
 - Cost Allocation Plan is needed
 - Administrative allowance (Fiscal Agent)
- LPCC Outcome pages with signature of authorized individual, **Due December 15, 2008**
 - I. Public Awareness & Child Find
 - II. Provider Recruitment & Provider Matrix
 - III. Procedural Safeguards, Information & Services, & Quality Assurance
 - IV. Transition & Interagency Agreements
 - V. Functions of the LPCC
- SPOE Outcomes with signature, **Due December 15, 2008**
- SC Outcomes with signature, **Due December 15, 2008.**
- Specific cluster activities to support LPCC, SPOE and Service Coordination outcomes, **Due March 1, 2009.**
- Strategic Actions Plans, due March 15, 2009
 - **Provider Recruitment/Retention: Cluster must submit an action plan outlining activities that have been and will be utilized to increase providers or maximize the number of existing providers. The activities will need to reflect the issues in your cluster.**
 - **Referrals for child under 1 year: Cluster must submit an action plan outlining specific activities that will be developed and completed to enhance child find activities for children under the age of 1 year.**

BUDGET SUMMARY INSTRUCTIONS

PLEASE NOTE: Separate budget summaries must be completed for the LPCC and the SPOE-SC.

BUDGET ITEM SUMMARY: Budget items are to be included for each major funding category (other federal, other state, other local or in-kind) to indicate the budget required to administer this grant activity. The use of other funding for the coordination of the activities under this grant activity is encouraged.

PERSONNEL SUMMARY: LPCC staffing must be based on identified outcomes for the cluster and practical application of the grant allocation. Staffing patterns by county will not be approved. All SPOE intake coordinators and Service Coordinators must have direct programmatic supervision by the SPOE or SC supervisor. List each position title that will be working directly with this grant and the funding attached to the position **regardless of whether it is a salaried or contract position.**

BUDGET NARRATIVE: Attach a budget narrative which identifies the sources and dollar amounts of other federal, other state, other local and in-kind contributions used to support this grant activity, the basis for, and what is included in your fringe benefits. List any service you plan to contract. List any equipment you plan to purchase with First Steps funds. List the basis for your travel budget (mileage/per diem rates must be at or below the State reimbursement rate). Include a copy of your approved **indirect cost plan**, and include the basis for the other costs under item 3. **Explain how the budget is within scope of the grant project.**

LINE ITEM DEFINITIONS:

1. **PERSONNEL SALARIES AND FRINGE/CONTRACTED SERVICES** – the amount needed to pay for salaries and fringe benefits of those people performing grant activities. **Include the definition of a FTE (e.g., 1 FTE = 40 hrs. per week).** The amount needed to pay for contracted services for this grant activity. **A written agreement/contract must be on file with the Lead Agency which specifies the service(s) to be purchased, the content, and the rate of costs** for all contracted services.
2. **MATERIALS, SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT** – the amount needed to pay for the materials and supplies cost for this grant activity. Public relations (PR) materials not clearly related to the successful achievement of an outcome will not be considered appropriate expenditures. The amount needed to pay for the equipment to be used for this grant activity. Equipment is an article of non-expendable tangible personal property with a unit cost of \$500 or more and a useful life of two years or more. Title to the equipment is vested to the State. Items purchased at a cost of \$5000 or more require separate prior approval and must be made in accordance with standard procurement procedures.
3. **TRAVEL** – the amount needed to pay for travel associated with providing services under this grant.
4. **ALL OTHER DIRECT COSTS** – the amount needed to pay utilities, telephone, postage and other costs. Other costs are direct costs and cannot be included in the other four line items but are associated with this grant project.
5. **INDIRECT COSTS** –the amount needed to pay for costs associated with this grant project. The items are not charged on a direct basis and therefore are budgeted in accordance with **a cost rate or a cost allocation plan**. A copy of the cost plan must be submitted with the original budget for this grant. The administrative cost is limited to **5 % cap or less.**
6. **OCCUPANCY** – the amount needed to pay for rent costs for this grant activity.

Budget amendments must be submitted and approved prior to expenditure of the funds. If any line item is modified by 10% or more over the course of the contract, prior approval by the Lead Agency must be obtained. This includes the increase or decrease of any individual line items. Amendment requests must be submitted to the Lead Agency to allow adequate time for review. Amendment requests submitted after 01-31-2010 will not be approved.

LPCC BUDGET SUMMARY – Part 1

Reporting Period FY (April 1, 2009 - March 31, 2010)

CLUSTER COUNTIES:

Budget Summary	Part C	Other	In-kind	Total
1. Personnel/ Contracted Services				
2. Materials, Supplies and Equipment				
3. Travel				
4. Occupancy				
5. All Other Direct Costs				
Indirect Cost:				
Total Budgeted				

LPCC BUDGET SUMMARY – Part 2 Performance Metric Allocation

Reporting Period FY (April 1, 2009 - March 31, 2010)

CLUSTER COUNTIES:

Budget Summary	Part C	Other	In-kind	Total
1. Personnel/ Contracted Services				
2. Materials, Supplies and Equipment				
3. Travel				
4. Occupancy				
5. All Other Direct Costs				
Indirect Cost:				
Total Budgeted				

LPCC BUDGET SUMMARY – Part 3

Reporting Period FY (April 1, 2009 – March 31, 2010)

CLUSTER COUNTIES:

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PERSONNEL SUMMARY: LPCC staffing must be based on identified outcomes for the cluster and practical application of the grant allocation. Staffing patterns for each county will not be approved. List each position title and attach job descriptions for everyone working directly with this grant and the funding attached to the position **regardless of whether it is a salaried or contract position.** Sequoia job classes must be used under the Title column.

NOTE: All contracted and employed staff is subject to Lead Agency approval.

Position	Title	FTE	Part C	Other	In-kind	Total
Total Budgeted:						

LPCC BUDGET NARRATIVE

1. Personnel Salaries and Fringe / Contracted Services:

2. Materials, Supplies and Equipment:

3. Travel:

4. Occupancy:

5. All Other Direct Costs:

6. Indirect Costs (including Cost Allocation Plan):

SPOE-SC BUDGET SUMMARY – Part 1

Reporting Period (April 1, 2009 – March 31, 2010)

CLUSTER COUNTIES:

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Budget Summary	Part C	Other	In-kind	Total
1. Personnel/ Contracted Services				
2. Materials, Supplies and Equipment				
3. Travel				
4. Occupancy				
5. All other Direct Costs				
6. Indirect Costs				
Total Budgeted				

SPOE-SC BUDGET SUMMARY – Part 2 Performance Metric Allocation

Reporting Period (April 1, 2009 – March 31, 2010)

CLUSTER COUNTIES:

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Budget Summary	Part C	Other	In-kind	Total
1. Personnel/ Contracted Services				
2. Materials, Supplies and Equipment				
3. Travel				
4. Occupancy				
5. All other Direct Costs				
6. Indirect Costs				
Total Budgeted				

SPOE-SC BUDGET SUMMARY – Part 3

Reporting Period FY (April 1, 2009 – March 31, 2010)

CLUSTER COUNTIES:

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PERSONNEL SUMMARY

NOTE: All contracted and employed staff is subject to Lead Agency approval. Sequoia job classes must be used under the Title column.

Position	Title	FTE	Part C	Other	In-kind	Total
Total Budgeted:						

SPOE-SC BUDGET NARRATIVE

1. Personnel Salaries and Fringe / Contracted Services:

2. Materials, Supplies and Equipment:

3. Travel:

4. Occupancy:

5. All Other Direct Costs:

6. Indirect Costs (including Cost Allocation Plan):

INTERNET ACCESS FOR CLUSTER PERSONNEL

1. FULL INTERNET ACCESS:

All cluster personnel must have access to the Internet via high speed connection that has sufficient security measures in place. All staff must have individual email addresses.

2. DEFINITION OF FULL INTERNET ACCESS:

Full Internet access shall mean the ability to send and receive electronic mail with attachments, without limitations to size or format of the attachments, and access to the World Wide Web.

3. FREE EMAIL ACCOUNTS:

We will not accept free email accounts that limit or prohibit the personnel's ability to accept attachments regardless of size or format

4. CHANGE OF LPCC/SPOE INFORMATION:

All changes, such as personnel, telephone numbers, fax numbers, addresses, etc., should be emailed to the Lead Agency at the FirstStepsWeb@fssa.in.gov no later than 2 business days.

5. USE OF PERSONNEL EMAIL/INTERNET ACCOUNT:

Only the staff should have access to the email/internet account. The email/Internet account, as with other equipment, is to be used for LPCC/SPOE business only. Access to the staff software, email, and information should be granted only to First Steps personnel.

6. FREQUENCY REQUIREMENTS FOR CHECKING EMAIL:

Email should be checked at a minimum daily.

7. FIRST STEPS WEB ADDRESS: The First Steps web site address is: www.firststeps.in.gov . Please check the website at a minimum of once per week.

Signature of Authorized Individual

Date Signed



LOCAL PLANNING COORDINATING COUNCIL (LPCC) - OUTCOMES

LPCC Instructions:

The RFF must address the required LPCC outcomes listed on the following pages. Performance standards have been identified for each outcome and each cluster is expected to personalize the strategies and activities to meet the individual needs of the counties within the cluster. The Lead Agency has identified the means by which the performance standards will be measured.

Each cluster's LPCC allocation is the maximum amount available. To receive the full amount the LPCC will be required to meet performance standards as outlined in their contract. Expenses and activities conducted on behalf of the cluster must be tied to an outcome as listed in the RFF. Requests for reimbursement may be submitted on a monthly basis for costs incurred.

The Lead Agency has identified funds to be awarded upon meeting performance standards, which are identified on Attachment A. These will be tied to the achievement of the LPCC outcomes as written in the RFF. The completed documentation form will be due to the Lead Agency (September 15 and December 15) based on the information presented by the cluster; the performance allocations identified on Attachment A and Budget Summary Part 2 may be released based on the achievement of the performance standards. If the cluster is unable to verify achievement of the performance standards, access to these funds will not be granted.

The quarterly activity calendars, in addition to listing regular maintenance activities, should identify specific needs based on cluster concerns and data and provide specific targeted activities to address those needs. For instance, if referrals fall off from a specific county or source or there are some difficulties with scheduling transition meetings within a certain school district, then activities should be designed to meet that need.

I. PUBLIC AWARENESS & CHILD FIND

Outcome Statement: Support the awareness and visibility of the First Steps system throughout the cluster to assist in the increased identification and referral of infants and toddlers.

Performance Standards:

1. 1.4% of children served with an IFSP will be under the age of 1 year.
2. The population served will be comparable to the demographics of the cluster.
3. Appropriate and timely referrals are to be made to the SPOE from a variety of community partners.
4. 3.3% of the cluster's infants and toddlers population will be served*.

Performance Measures: Profile reports and First Steps data system reports will be utilized in the measurement of this performance standard.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

1. As directed by the Lead Agency, the cluster will track primary and secondary sources of children eligible and not eligible for the program.
2. Conduct training to local referral sources on eligibility guidelines and referral procedures on a monthly basis.
3. Distribute informational materials and conduct monthly informational activities throughout the cluster that describe the First Steps system. Child care agencies, physicians' offices, social service agencies and community agencies must be contacted on an ongoing basis.
4. Develop and maintain Memoranda of Agreements (MOAs) with referring agencies.
5. Work in collaboration with Child Protective Services (CPS) to ensure referrals for screening of children involved in cases of substantiated abuse/or neglect or who have been exposed to illegal substances.
6. Develop strategic plan to identify requirements for children under age one.

The signatory below attests to the development and implementation of strategies designed to meet the above minimum requirements and implementation of activities identified in the approved activity calendars. [see instructions on previous page]

Signature of Authorized Individual

Date Signed

* These outcomes are APR indicators that the State reports to OSEP.

II. PROVIDER RECRUITMENT and PROVIDER MATRIX

Outcome Statement: Families are presented with adequate information to make an informed choice regarding the selection of providers and location of services.

Performance Standards:

1. Families in all areas of the cluster will have available providers for needed services.
2. After initial data entry, all providers must login to the provider matrix and review/update the information monthly.

Performance Measures: Profile reports and First Steps data system reports will be utilized in the measurement of this performance standard.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS:

1. Monitor the provider matrix and address any non-compliance issues or concerns on an on-going basis to ensure that providers are available in all 16 services and ensure an adequate choice of providers for families.
2. Assist Providers with credentialing and enrollment.
3. Maintain regular communication with all cluster providers and coordinators.
4. Provide strategies to address any provider availability concerns, including provider retention strategies or future needs.
5. Contact potential new providers (names supplied by UTS) to assist with enrollment and address any questions or concerns they may have.
6. Provide opportunities for provider networking and/or mentoring.
7. Coordinate/Facilitate quarterly opportunities for provider networking.

NARRATIVE:

The signatory below attests to the development and implementation of strategies designed to meet the above minimum requirements.

Signature of Authorized Individual

Date Signed

III. PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS, INFORMATION & SERVICES, and QUALITY ASSURANCE

Outcome Statement: First Steps will be responsive to the priorities of families and providers through ongoing communication that will provide input into the system to include timely access to early intervention services.

Performance Standards:

1. Ensure services are provided in the natural environment to the most extent possible and are also monitored to ensure that IFSP teams make individualized decisions regarding the settings in which infants and toddlers receive EI services*.
2. All issues and concerns will be adequately addressed within 60 days of receipt of concern, utilizing procedures as set forth by the Lead Agency. Formal complaints must be forwarded to the State within two business days*.

Performance Measures: Profile reports, First Steps data system reports, family surveys, and substantiated complaints/concerns will be utilized in the measurement of this performance standard.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS:

1. Will conduct self assessment activities, including surveys, as directed by the Lead Agency. Implement strategies to improve the system based on the results of the self-assessment activities.
2. Facilitate ongoing communication with parents, providers and local referral sources to increase awareness of local resources and program information updated regularly. Strategies may include: local meetings, newsletters, office visits.
3. Develop and implement a process to address concerns following State guidelines and adhering to state reporting requirements*.
4. Develop and maintain a cluster wide resource directory of services and activities to support families and children. The directory should be available to all Service Coordinators within the cluster and must contain a minimum of: Alternative Services, Child Care opportunities, Pre-school opportunities, Private Services, Community Centers, Park & Recreation, Libraries, Outpatient Therapies, Mom’s Day Out, Information on disabilities and development (the “Rainbow Book”)*.
5. Support Training Opportunities regarding local service options (internal – e.g. consultation model) and external (alternative services) for all Intake and Ongoing Service Coordinators.
6. Identify and ensure an adequate number of surrogate parents are available within the cluster.
Provide a narrative below for the identification and training of surrogate parents
7. A cluster website must be maintained and updated regularly.

Narrative:

The signatory below attests to the development and implementation of strategies designed to meet the above minimum requirements.

* These outcomes are APR indicators that the State reports to OSEP.

Signature of Authorized Individual

Date Signed

IV. TRANSITION & INTERAGENCY AGREEMENTS

Outcome Statement: Increase access to family resources and collaboration of social service agencies to create smooth transitions for infants, toddlers, and families into, within and out of the early intervention system.

Performance Standards:

1. Have current, signed Memoranda of Agreements (MOAs) with all special education planning districts, Head Start and early Head Start that are actively evaluated and shared with the community.
2. Conduct planned transition activities such as transition trainings with staff and meetings/trainings with community partners and parents to address transition issues or topics with each Special Education Planning District within the cluster on a semi-annual basis. Knowledge of transition options is increased as a result of quarterly meetings/trainings with service coordinators, community partners, and parents.

Performance Measures: SPOE Report, Exit survey data, Closure form, Peer Review, and IFSP transition pages will be utilized in the measurement of this performance standard.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS:

1. Develop and maintain Memoranda of Agreements (MOAs) with all special education planning districts and Head Start/Early Head Start for the cluster. Each MOA must be reviewed and updated annually.
2. Maintain a cluster transition committee comprised of parents, providers, service coordinators, representatives from all local lead education agencies (LEAs) and Head Start. The transition committee will identify community resources and work to meet outcomes as developed by the Lead Agency and the State Transition Team. By April 1, 2009, the cluster will submit a list of the members of the cluster transition committee, a cluster transition plan, and an activity calendar to support transition activities and include a minimum of:
 - Quarterly staff meeting
 - Quarterly meetings with Community partners (e.g. Transition Committee)
 - Annual Transition informational meetings including: Part C, Part B, parents, Head Start in each Special Education Planning District (meetings may be combined as appropriate)

The signatory below attests to the development and implementation of strategies designed to meet the above minimum requirements.

Signature of Authorized Individual

Date Signed

V. FUNCTIONS OF THE LPCC

Outcome Statement: Each cluster will have a single LPCC which shall consist of active members from each county who reasonably represent the population of the cluster. LPCC members shall include, at a minimum, the following:

- Two (2) parents of children with disabilities under the age of 12.
- One (1) health or medical representative;
- One (1) educational representative;
- One (1) social services representative;
- One (1) early intervention service provider;
- (1) Head Start representative; and
- One (1) child care representative.

Performance Standard:

1. LPCC will meet a minimum of quarterly with the required membership.
2. LPCC must comply with RMS requests within 2 business days and update information, including submitting staff information and changes, etc.
3. By-laws must be approved by the State, due April 1, 2009

Performance Measures: Membership list and minutes of meetings will be utilized in the measurement of the performance standard

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS:

1. Ensure the membership of the LPCC adequately reflects the underserved population and demographic make - up of the county and includes at a minimum those persons as listed above. Ensure one of the parents has no other affiliation or role in First Steps and is not attending with the financial support of another program. State will develop and send out attendance sheets for LPCC meetings in order to track attendance and voting rights.
2. Ensure there are procedures in place to inform families about the LPCC, invite them to attend, and have access to the supports available to enhance their participation.
3. Give adequate advance notification of meetings to all interested parties.
4. Ensure LPCC activities comply with state required by-laws, which should include at a minimum: policies and procedures for conflict resolution, conflict of interest, membership and voting requirements, and loyalty/confidentiality clause. All by-laws must be approved by the lead agency.
5. Formally evaluate the effectiveness of all system processes conducted by contractors, coordinators, fiscal agent and SPOE functions.
6. Maintain contracts for all persons who receive or manage funds for the LPCC.
7. Monitor and track assistive technology (AT) and ensure the re-use of AT equipment.

The signatory below attests to the development and implementation of strategies designed to meet the above minimum requirements.

Signature of Authorized Individual

Date Signed



SYSTEM POINT OF ENTRY (SPOE) - OUTCOMES

The RFF must address the required SPOE outcomes, including Service Coordination, listed on the following pages. Performance standards have been identified for each outcome and each cluster is expected to personalize the strategies and activities to meet the individual needs of the counties within the cluster. The Lead Agency has identified the means by which the performance standards will be measured.

Each cluster's SPOE allocation is the maximum amount available to the cluster to achieve the SPOE outcomes as listed in this RFF. Expenses and activities conducted on behalf of the cluster must be tied to an outcome as listed in the RFF. Requests for reimbursement may be submitted on a monthly basis for costs incurred. Documentation of cluster activities toward meeting outcomes may be requested monthly to support claims (please see sample monthly claim forms).

The Lead Agency has identified funds to be awarded upon meeting performance standards, which are identified on Attachment A. These will be tied to the achievement of the SPOE outcomes as written in the RFF. The completed documentation form will be due to the Lead Agency (September 15 and December 15) based on the information presented by the cluster; the performance allocations identified on Attachment A and Budget Summary Part 2, may be released based on the achievement of the performance standards. If the cluster is unable to verify achievement of the performance standards, access to these funds will not be granted.

The System Point of Entry (SPOE) is the central point that is responsible for ensuring that all children and their families referred to First Steps receive a timely response and that the delegated activities are conducted with families in a prompt, professional, culturally competent, and family-centered manner. Each SPOE serves as the electronic link between First Steps and the Central Reimbursement Office (CRO). Each cluster is required to identify a single SPOE location where general operations and all early intervention records and electronic files will be maintained. Depending upon the local needs and configuration there may be satellite offices or contracted intake staff in other locations in the cluster. All referrals are electronically stored, and routine updates to this information are made based upon the information obtained and the decisions made with regard to eligibility, service planning, and service delivery through the development of an IFSP.

The SPOE must respond to all referrals by conducting a face-to-face interview with the family to obtain informed consent and written permission to proceed from the parent/legal guardian. Due process and procedural safeguard information is introduced during the initial interview and all subsequent procedural safeguard moments.

The SPOE, on behalf of the Lead Agency, is responsible to ensure that all of the opportunities available under IDEA, Part C are made available to families. The SPOE is to ensure that families are given accurate and timely information, with full understanding of the family's rights, opportunities and responsibilities under federal and State law.

I. SPOE REQUIREMENTS

SPOE OFFICE

1. The SPOE must have an independent First Steps identity exclusive of an affiliation with any other entity.
2. Must be in good standing with the First Steps system.
3. The SPOE will maintain all early intervention records and electronic files in single location.
4. During normal business hours, the referral phone must be answered by a SPOE Staff. If a call rolls over to voice mail, the call must be returned within two business days. If the phone has a “zero” option, it may only transfer to paid FS staff.
5. The SPOE offices must be handicapped accessible, and available to the general community 5 days per week, 52 weeks a year during normal business hours, for example: 9:00 am to 5:00 p.m. The operating hours should be posted at the office for the general public, and should be indicated on the phone system. The offices should have staff **present and available to respond to phone calls** at all times, except during the posted lunch times.
6. The SPOE must be able to electronically scan documents for the purpose of document sharing and distribution.

SPOE STAFF

7. SPOE staff must meet appropriate early intervention (EI) credentialing requirements and be in good standing with the First Steps system. All intake and service coordinators must receive direct programmatic supervision from the SPOE (or SC) supervisor.
8. With the exception of service coordination, no SPOE personnel may provide ongoing early intervention services (this includes paid or unpaid positions).
9. SPOE personnel (paid or unpaid positions) may not supervise ongoing EI providers.
10. Must have working knowledge of the First Steps system, due process, and procedural safeguards.
11. Must understand the Combined Enrollment Form and multiple program eligibility standards at the minimum Children’s Medicaid and Medicaid Waiver.
12. Must have working knowledge of the following State and federal regulations:
 - Early intervention record development, maintenance
 - IFSP development
 - Transition
 - Confidentiality (FERPA)
 - Family centered care and natural environments
13. Must have knowledge of community and state programs as well as financial and support resources.
14. Must communicate data entry information daily to the Central Reimbursement Office.
15. SPOEs must implement a State approved Quality Assurance plan that includes direct supervision of staff.

14. SPOEs must hold, at a minimum, monthly staff meetings with regular attendance by all service and intake coordinators and maintain a log of attendance and follow up methods for those coordinators who are unable to attend.
15. Each Intake and Service Coordinator must use a digital camera or other digital technology to capture parent financial and other relevant documentation.
16. All staff must be identified publicly as representatives of First Steps and not of the employing agency.
17. No persons directly related may be placed in a direct supervisory-subordinate relationship.
18. Must meet Federal and State Regulations and Policy and Procedures as they relate to Part C of IDEA.

II. SPOE FUNCTIONS

1. REFERRALS - Receive referrals (verbal or written)
 - a) Establish the initial early intervention and electronic record with the CRO
2. INTAKE - Conduct and complete intake activities
 - a) Obtain informed written parental consent to proceed
 - b) Initiate requests for information with informed, written parental consent
 - c) Conduct a comprehensive developmental screening and parent interview to determine areas of concern
 - d) Intake activities must be conducted in the family's primary language or other mode of communication, including in writing, of the family's rights and procedural safeguards
 - e) Communicate with the referral source regarding next steps
 - f) Facilitate application through use of the Combined Enrollment Form to programs such as Hoosier Healthwise, CSHCS, etc.
 - g) Provide families with additional resource information regarding programs for which the family or child may be eligible, to address the needs of the family*.
3. ACCESS - Facilitate access for children and their families to programs and services that will help families support the child's growth and development.
4. RECORD - Develop the Early Intervention (EI) Record for each child referred
 - a) SPOE will maintain the original EI record of each child referred to the SPOE.
 - b) The CRO will maintain an electronic EI Record for each child referred to the SPOE, regardless of the outcome of the referral, e.g., eligible or not, accept or decline service, etc.
 - c) The SPOE will assist the CRO to maintain and update the electronic EI Record, including a comprehensive checklist of activities to determine if all appropriate steps have been followed, and document that procedures have been implemented to secure eligibility determination and the development of an IFSP in a timely manner within 45 days of referral.
 - d) Ongoing service documentation including notifications, IFSP reviews/evaluations and new IFSPs, key correspondence and releases shall be maintained by the SPOE.
5. ELIGIBILITY - Ensure that eligibility determination is completed according to regulations*
 - a) Arrange or collect relevant assessments and evaluations necessary to determine eligibility; and/or the development of the IFSP for eligible children,
 - b) Utilize Eligibility Determination (ED) team members in adherence to State guidelines in the determination of eligibility and authorizations of services,
 - c) Update the child's record with the SPOE and CRO,

* These outcomes are APR indicators that the State reports to OSEP.

- d) Ensure that a multidisciplinary ED team will review the materials assembled to assist in eligibility determination with the Intake Coordinator and parent/legal guardians, and document this accordingly,
 - e) Advise and provide documentation to the parent of their due process and procedural safeguards related to eligibility determination activities or activities necessary to develop the IFSP, in a timely manner*.
 - f) Facilitate timely communication with the child's primary care physician to assist in the eligibility determination and IFSP service planning.
6. ELIGIBILITY - Arrange for and ensure the timely completion (within 45 days) of necessary assessments and evaluations to either 1) determine eligibility, or 2) collect and disseminate required information necessary to plan and complete an IFSP:
- a) Create authorizations for essential and necessary diagnostic and/or developmental, specialty assessments/evaluations,
 - b) Collect relevant reports and input, working with the ED Team to determine eligibility or ensure that all appropriate information is available prior to arranging for the IFSP team meeting.
7. IFSP - Facilitate the IFSP Team Meeting, adhering to State and Federal guidelines and completion of the initial IFSP:
- a) Ensure that the variety of planning activities prior to the IFSP team meeting are conducted with each family of an eligible child
 - b) Ensure that each family understands the IFSP process, is familiar with the IFSP format, and is well prepared as an equal participant to the IFSP team for the scheduled meeting*
 - c) Ensure that an initial IFSP is developed for each eligible child within 45 days of referral
 - d) Assist the family in locating available provider(s) for identified IFSP services through the review of the provider matrix.
 - e) Develop timely and accurate authorization(s) for services based on the IFSP
 - f) Establish positive, ongoing linkages with service coordinators and the family.
8. ADMINISTRATION - Perform clerical functions related to CRO authorization(s) for IFSP services:
- a) Ensure consistent procedures
 - b) Provide timely and accurate data entry
9. ADMINISTRATION - Maintain and provide consistent, comprehensive data to assist local and state planners.
10. SERVICE COORDINATION - SPOE will ensure that each family is provided with a single ongoing service coordinator who is employed by the SPOE. Service Coordinators need to perform all functions required to meet Federal requirements for service coordination and due process as specified throughout 34CFR303.

The SPOE will carry out these functions through the development of qualified staff. Intake coordination position(s) should be assigned with the primary responsibility to respond to all referrals. The intake coordinators must be provided with adequate staff or clerical support to ensure that EI records and the data system between the SPOE and CRO is maintained and current and in compliance with federal and state regulations for Part C.

III. SPOE OUTCOMES

The following outcomes will be utilized as markers of success:

1. REFERRAL – The SPOE will work in collaboration with Child Protective Services (CPS) to ensure referrals for screenings of children involved in cases of substantiated abuse and/or neglect or who have been exposed to illegal substances.
2. IFSP - Will be developed with ED team involvement at the meeting and EI services to meet child's and family's outcomes will be provided in the child's natural environment including the home and community settings in which children without disabilities participate. Only when EI services cannot be achieved in the natural environment shall services be provided in another setting. SPOE will need to track ED team IFSP attendance monthly and submit to the State quarterly. SPOE must demonstrate and document that a good faith effort was put forth to include all IFSP ED team members.
3. IFSP – The initial IFSP meeting will be held within 45 days of referral to the SPOE. EI Files will not be closed and reopened in order to avoid the 45-day timeline. SPOEs must document (in the EI file) why each reopened file was closed and reopened and submit log to the State*.
4. IFSP – Each IFSP will contain a completed transition page*.
5. IFSP – A primary care physician signature for the IFSP will be obtained in a timely manner which allows services to start within 30 days.
6. TRANSITION – The SPOE will initiate transition activities for children referred to First Steps at thirty (30) months of age or older and will convene a transition meeting in conjunction with the IFSP.
7. TRANSITION - SPOE will electronically disseminate the Part B child find activity information semi- annually per State instruction*.
8. ADMINISTRATION – Files for all enrolled children will contain documentation, including the AEPS, to support eligibility as determined by a multidisciplinary ED team using the AEPS in accordance with state eligibility guidelines*.
9. ADMINISTRATION – The SPOE will ensure accurate and timely data entry within 10 days of the receipt of applicable documentation. Supporting documentation must be located within the early intervention file for the child to support data entry.
10. ADMINISTRATION – SPOE will ensure accurate and timely data entry of Family Interview and Exit Interview, including child development and progress*.
11. ADMINISTRATION – Files for all enrolled children must contain documentation to support the family's income and private insurance. The SPOE must ensure that the information is maintained and regularly reviewed, at a minimum annually or as changes occur, to insure current and accurate information*.
12. ADMINISTRATION – SPOE personnel must meet enrollment and credentialing guidelines and be in good standing with the First Steps system.
13. ADMINISTRATION – The SPOE must have a Spanish-speaking staff and an intake coordinator trained in Sky*Hi (to more actively work with families with hearing loss).
14. ADMINISTRATION – The SPOE and all relevant staff must comply with RMS requests in a timely manner and update information, including submitting staff information and changes, etc.
15. ADMINISTRATION – Spanish Interpreter services will not authorized for intake and ongoing Service Coordination without prior approved by the State.

16. ADMINISTRATION - RMS training must be documented and provided to all new staff during orientation and semi-annually for all ongoing staff.

The signatory below attests to the development and implementation of strategies designed to meet the above minimum requirements.

Signature of Authorized Individual

Date Signed

The following outcomes will be utilized as markers of success:

IV. SERVICE COORDINATION OUTCOMES

1. SERVICE COORDINATION- Initial SC (SC 101) training is to be completed over the course of not less than one month, and caseloads will be built gradually after training is completed. New SC's will not assume a full caseload immediately upon completion of training.
2. SERVICE COORDINATION – All children will have a single ongoing service coordinator.
3. SERVICE COORDINATION – Ensure ongoing service coordination activities as outlined in State/Federal regulations and service definitions.
4. SERVICE COORDINATION – Ensure that IFSP meeting arrangements and prior written notice is provided to the family and other participants at least ten (10) days before the meeting date, facilitating attendance of ED team members and ongoing providers.
5. SERVICE COORDINATION – 6 month reviews and the annual IFSP review will be completed in a timely manner. State checklists for initial contact, quarterly contact, third quarter, and six month review will be used
6. SERVICE COORDINATION – All IFSP services are initiated within 30 days of the initial IFSP, the 6-month and annual IFSPs and any other changes and additions to the IFSP. While providers actually start their services, service coordinators must do what they can to facilitate that process ensuring services are initiated within 30 days and must include documentation in the EI file*.
7. SERVICE COORDINATION – Knowledge and compliance with complaint and due process investigation activities according to State guidelines and procedures.
8. SERVICE COORDINATION – Intake and Ongoing Service Coordinators will develop a working relationship with the cluster Family to Family Parent Liaison. They will inform families about the Parent Liaisons and make referrals as appropriate.
9. TRANSITION- The SPOE will initiate transition activities for children referred to First Steps at thirty (30) months of age or older and will convene a transition meeting in conjunction with the IFSP.
10. TRANSITION- SPOE will electronically disseminate the Part B child find activity information semi-annually per State instruction.
11. TRANSITION – A transition meeting will be held for every enrolled First Steps child in accordance with State federal program guidelines. Every child will have a completed transition packet*.

12. ADMINISTRATION – Files for all enrolled children must contain documentation to support the family’s income and private insurance. The SPOE must ensure that the information is maintained and regularly reviewed, at a minimum annually or as changes occur, to ensure current and accurate information.

13. ADMINISTRATION – The service coordinators must comply with RMS requests in a timely manner and update information, including submitting staff information and changes, etc.

14. ADMINISTRATION - The service coordinators must meet with families for a face-to-face contact for a minimum of one (1) time per quarter for at least thirty (30) minutes or more often as needed by family. Service Coordinators must contact the family on a monthly basis via phone, e-mail, letter and document all contact using state required or cluster forms.

The signatory below attests to the development and implementation of strategies designed to meet the above minimum requirements.

Signature of Authorized Individual

Date Signed

* These outcomes are APR indicators that the State reports to OSEP

Due by March 15, 2009 [pick up item from earlier submission checklist]

- Copies of all contracts/sub-contracts
- Activities Calendar for 2008 – 2009 Identify maintenance activities and specific activities based on concerns or issues in cluster and data; Subsequent calendars should highlight significant activities and any outcomes resulting from them.
- LPCC Signature page
- Complete staffing list with job descriptions
- Strategic Actions Plans
 - **Provider Recruitment/Retention: Cluster must submit an action plan outlining activities that have been and will be utilized to increase providers or maximize the number of existing providers. The activities will need to reflect the issues in your cluster.**
 - **Referrals for child under 1 year: Cluster must submit an action plan outlining specific activities that will be developed and completed to enhance child find activities for children under the age of 1 year.**
 - Cluster must submit a detailed action plan outlining the SPOE's monitoring and supervision of intake and ongoing service coordinators. At minimum, this plan must include:
 - A template document which details the components of supervision being reviewed with staff, with the following:
 - date (including the start and end time of the supervision)
 - signatures of the supervisor and staff verifying the document
 - current caseload review (detail of # of ongoing, # of intake for those coordinators who act as both)
 - due dates of activities and upcoming meetings
 - family contacts reviewed
 - Caseload activities summarized (should also include any resources or supports utilized by the coordinator)
 - A proposal for how the supervision will be documented and maintained at the SPOE for review
 - A suggested timeline for implementing the supervision plan and frequency of supervision with staff (must note planned face to face time and any phone time)

If any of the following change, please submit within 30 days of a change.

- Memorandum of Agreements (MOAs)
- By-laws (must include clear policy regarding conflict of interest, conflict resolution, definition of council membership and voting privileges, and loyalty/confidentiality clause)
- LPCC Membership List(s) (include names and affiliation)
- Job Descriptions
- Cluster Contact List