

**INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT
DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
AND
DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH
FOR PART C OF THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT**

Review and Renewal of Agreement

This agreement between the Department of Mental Health (DMH) and Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) shall be automatically renewed annually, on July 1, unless one of the parties notifies the other party in writing thirty (30) days before the renewal date that revisions are needed or the agency does not wish to renew the agreement. Revisions can be made throughout the year upon agreement of both parties. The agreement is effective upon the signatures of each agency representative.

Purpose of Agreement

This agreement concerns the Missouri provision of appropriate early intervention service as defined by state and federal regulations implementing the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part C. This agreement is entered into to maximize resources, reduce duplication of services, and provide a statewide system of early intervention services that is coordinated, comprehensive, and multidisciplinary in nature. In Missouri, the statewide system of early intervention services is known as First Steps. This agreement delineates statewide responsibilities of DESE and DMH and the regional responsibilities of the DESE contracted System Points of Entry (SPOE) and the Regional Offices for Developmental Disabilities (RO).

State Level Agency Responsibilities

Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)

1. Serve as the lead agency for Part C.
2. Develop and maintain the infrastructure for the First Steps system including:
 - Contracting for the Central Finance Office (CFO).
 - Contracting for SPOE.
 - Developing and implementing the First Steps Child Data System.
 - Developing and implementing the training and credentialing system for early intervention providers and service coordinators.
3. Implement the General Supervision requirements of IDEA, Part C.
4. Coordinate State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC) meetings four (4) to six (6) times per year.

Department of Mental Health (DMH)

1. Maintain active participation in the SICC.
2. Provide statewide leadership that encourages strong partnerships at the regional and state level to enhance the First Steps system.

Regional Responsibilities

A. DMH Regional Office Responsibilities(RO)

1. DMH Regional directors, or their designees, and SPOE directors shall develop a joint plan for coordination of First Steps in the SPOE region. At a minimum, the plan should address communication between directors, or their designees, and the process to coordinate the provision and timely assignment of service coordinators for children two and one-half to three years of age who are eligible for services from the Division of Developmental Disabilities.
2. Children below two and one-half years of age for whom the SPOE service coordinator requests resource assistance and who is required to have an open case with the RO to receive respite care, will be assigned to a supervisor for resource consultation.
3. To accept children from the ages of two and one-half years of age to five years of age who were eligible for the First Steps programs as automatically eligible for Regional Office services and not require the child/family to participate in intake and assessment.
4. Assign staff to participate in the Regional Interagency Coordinating Council (RICC).
5. Assist the SPOE with child find activities by promoting child find activities and making referrals to First Steps system.

B. System Point of Entry (SPOE) Responsibilities

1. Educate families about the philosophy and beliefs of the First Steps system.
2. Conduct all intake and evaluation functions for children referred to First Steps.
3. The SPOE service coordinator shall facilitate, monitor, and supervise the initial IFSP team meeting(s) and is considered the offeror of services for purposes of the First Steps system.
4. The SPOE shall develop and maintain a system for collection, storage, and inventory procedures; and, if determined appropriate, redistribution of used Assistive Technology (AT) equipment purchased by the First Steps system and no longer needed for the child. This includes AT used by children who were service coordinated by DMH service coordinators.
5. Identify members and coordinate meetings for the RICC.

Resolution of Interagency Disputes

In the event that the ROs and SPOEs are unable to resolve any regional disputes in a timely manner, then DESE will use the following procedures:

- Staff in each agency's central office shall review the nature of the dispute and attempt a resolution.
- In the event that resolution is unsuccessful, the DD Division Director and the Assistant Commissioner for Special Education will resolve any outstanding disputes.
- If that resolution is unsuccessful, the Director of DMH and the Commissioner of DESE will render a decision. If the two agencies cannot resolve the issue, the parties involved may refer the dispute to the Governor for a final decision.

For the State of Missouri

Signed:



Interim Commissioner, Department of Elementary
and Secondary Education

6/23/09
Date



Director, Department of Mental Health

6/29/09
Date