

EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES POLICY

I. INTENT

It is the intent of San Andreas Regional Center to partner with Local Education Agencies as identified in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to ensure that eligible infants and toddlers receive early intervention assessment and prescribed services within mandated time lines.

II. DEFINITION

Early Intervention Services means those services designed to meet the developmental needs of each eligible infant or toddler under the age of 36 months and the needs of the family related to the infant or toddler's development. Services may include: assistive technology, audiology, family training, counseling, home visits, health services, medical services for diagnostic purposes, nursing services, nutrition services, occupational therapy (OT), physical therapy (PT), psychological services, respite, service coordination, special instruction, speech and language services, vision services and transportation and related costs.

Early Intervention Programs occur in such places as the home, where the parent receives instruction with the infant, as well as child care centers, school settings, or private infant programs where the child and parent interact with other infants and parents. To the maximum extent appropriate to the needs of the child, early intervention services must be provided in natural environments, including the home and community settings in which children without disabilities participate.

Local Education Agency (LEA) means the school district in which the infant or toddler resides, the county office of education, or the Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) that is responsible for providing early intervention services to infants or toddlers with disabilities.

Funded capacity means the number of eligible students (infants and toddlers) that the California Department of Education requires an LEA to serve in order to maintain funding for its classes, programs and services in a given year.

Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) means a plan written by San Andreas Regional Center and/or the LEA for providing early intervention services to eligible infants or toddlers under 36 months and their families.

III. POLICY

San Andreas Regional Center shall fund early intervention services for infants and toddlers identified as children with exceptional needs when the LEA has reached its funded capacity for early intervention services, San Andreas Regional Center shall provide those services for infants and toddlers who are eligible for San Andreas services. As long as an LEA is operating below its funded capacity, the LEA shall fund those services for infants and toddlers who are eligible. San Andreas shall be the payer of last resort. After all other public and private sources for payment have been reviewed to determine if a referral shall be made by the service coordinator and/or the parent. Referrals may include, but not be limited to, California Children Services, Medi-Cal, or private insurance providers that may have responsibility for payment. This review shall not delay the provision of early intervention services specified in the IFSP. Early intervention services specified on the IFSP shall begin as soon as possible. Use of private

insurance for required early intervention services shall be voluntary. San Andreas Regional Center may cover deductibles or co-payment costs in order to access private insurance benefits.

San Andreas shall ensure that all initial referrals received by the regional center or the LEA shall be completed within forty-five (45) days of the date of referral. San Andreas and LEAs shall use existing information whenever possible to determine continued eligibility and to minimize delay in the provision of appropriate early intervention services.

IV. PURCHASE OF SERVICE (POS) STANDARD

San Andreas and the LEAs shall arrange, provide, or purchase early intervention services required by the IFSP as soon as possible. They shall not place an infant or toddler on a waiting list for early intervention services state in the IFSP. Early intervention services are provided with no cost to the family.

San Andreas may continue providing or purchasing services for a child who has been determined eligible for regional center services until the beginning of the next school term after the child's third birthday, if it is during a time period when the LEA special education preschool program is not in session. San Andreas shall not continue to provide services to a child who is 3 years old and who has been found ineligible for regional center services.

V. EXCEPTION PROCESS

The executive director has full discretion to authorize service purchases which are exceptions to the board-adopted purchase of service policies. The executive director has designated different members within the organization who may authorize a director's exception. They are called the director's designees.

The first formal discussion of a request for service takes place at the planning team meeting. If the request falls within the service policy, the request is granted.

If the request for service is not consistent with the policy, the service coordinator starts the exception review process by exploring the basis for the request. A time line for the director's exception review is set by agreement between the consumer/family and the service coordinator but the time line may not exceed fifteen (15) days. Within that time, another planning team meeting will be convened. In the meantime the coordinator presents the information to the manager to determine whether a director's exception may be warranted.

At the scheduled planning team meeting the decision will be made. The director's designee will attend the planning team meeting if necessary.

If the exception is granted, the service coordinator amends the person-centered individual program plan, notifies the consumer/family, and gives a copy of the amended plan to the consumer/family.

If the exception is not granted, the service coordinator promptly informs the consumer/family that it has not been granted, informs the consumer/family of their appeal rights, and sends a notice of action and a fair hearing form.

San Andreas will ensure compliance with regulations by incorporating appropriate Early Intervention Services procedural safeguards as outlined in Cal. Code Regs., tit., 17, sections 52160 through 52174.

VI. NOTICE OF ACTION

If a decision is made to deny, reduce, or cancel the service without the agreement of the consumer or the consumer's representative, a Notice of Action will be sent.

Adopted: 3-15-04