

1300: REFERRAL

Primary referral sources are required to refer any child suspected of having a developmental delay no later than seven days after identification. (34 CFR §303.303(a)(2)(i)). The state must specify in its application for Part C federal funds that their Part C child find system requires referrals no later than 7 days from identification.

The primary referral sources include, but are not limited to: parents, guardians, other family members, friends, hospitals, physicians, childcare programs, local educational agencies, education cooperatives, public health facilities, other social service agencies and any other health care providers.

Referrals to SoonerStart can be made by phone, email, fax, letter, or in person. The following information must be included on the referral page of EdPlan for the referral to be complete:

- child's name
- date of birth
- ethnicity
- race
- address
- telephone number
- parent's name
- reason for the referral

Referral sources are also encouraged to provide:

- additional person to contact
- parent's email address
- child's native language/interpreter needed
- referral source name and contact information (If the child is a CAPTA referral (in DHS custody), the DHS caseworker name and email address is needed)
- supporting documentation for referral

Children who are known to be in the custody of DHS upon referral must be identified in the EdPlan by noting that they are a CAPTA referral. When entering the referral source information, the referral source will be marked as "Department of Human Services" even if the DHS caseworker was not the person making the referral. The title of the person making the referral (foster parent, caseworker, etc.) will then be captured in the field marked "Referral Source Title". After noting DHS as the referral source the question "Is this a CAPTA (Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act) referral?" should be answered "yes".

Supporting documentation may include medical records of an automatic qualifying diagnosis or a release of information to contact the referral source back for follow up. Parents/legal guardians should

be encouraged to provide or obtain copies of needed medical documentation on or before the Initial IFSP meeting. If medical documentation is received with the referral, the specific pages identifying the child's automatic qualifying diagnosis are uploaded by the Resource Coordinator into the Documents of EdPlan. The medical records are then released to the parent or destroyed.

Referral sources are encouraged to talk with the parents before referring a child to SoonerStart. However, parental consent is not required to make a referral. Parental consent is needed to confirm the referral, conduct screenings and/or evaluations and determine eligibility.

A "confirmed" referral which starts the 45 day timeline is considered to be made when both of the following criteria have been met:

- SoonerStart office receives demographic/contact information from a referral source regarding a child with a suspected or identified developmental delay and
- Parents are verbally notified of the referral.

If the parent/guardian is the referral source, the referral is confirmed on the same date of the referral (referral date and confirmation date are the same). EdPlan is searched to determine if the child is currently receiving or has previously received early intervention services from SoonerStart. If the referred child has previously received services, the SoonerStart EIU may want to obtain records or transfer information from the previous EIU (See Section 2503: Re-Referral/Re-Activation Procedures and Section 2504: Transfer Procedures for further information). The REIC assigns the child to a Resource Coordinator within two (2) working days from the date the referral was received from the referral source. As part of processing the referral, an assigned SoonerStart staff member will mail the **Systems of Payments - Notification to Parents (Appendix M)** to all families.

The SoonerStart referral is required to be entered into the PHOCIS database when the referral is received by clerical support staff. If the Resource Coordinators receive and enter new referrals into EdPlan, the RCs should provide the referral information to the designated SoonerStart clerical support staff request that it be entered into PHOCIS.

The SoonerStart Resource Coordinator contacts the family to complete the Intake Process within ten (10) working days of the confirmed referral. The Resource Coordinator must make at least three (3) attempts to contact the family with at least one written attempt (other contact attempts may be by phone). If the Resource Coordinator is not able to contact the family within the ten (10) working days or if the family declines the referral, the referral is cancelled and inactivated in EdPlan. No letter is required to be sent to the family. If the family contacts SoonerStart again, the child's record is reactivated and a new referral is entered in EdPlan with a new referral date.