

IDEA/Part C Central Referral

Approved: July 1, 2019

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Who is responsible: Central Referral Team

Receipt of Referrals

All referrals for IDEA/Part C services will be received and processed by the program's Central Referral Team (CRT). The CRT will accept referrals for children birth to 36 months via central referral line and webform. Referrals are processed Monday–Friday during normal business hours (8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m.). Referrals received after hours will be processed the following business day.

Referrals received from the South Carolina Department of Social Services (SCDSS) pursuant to the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) shall be addressed in the same manner as traditional referrals, except for children in out-of-home placements. In the case of an out-of-home placement, the assigned CRT member shall coordinate with SCDSS appointed guardians.

Referral Verification

The CRT member must evaluate referrals on a first-in, first-out basis, per date of referral.

The assigned CRT member will evaluate the referral for completeness. To be deemed complete, a referral must contain:

- Child's first and last name
- Valid contact information, including address, and guardian's phone number or email address.
- Child's date of birth
- Parent's Name
- Referral source contact information
- Reason for referral including any diagnoses or concerns with development

If the minimum requirements above are not included with the referral, the CRT will attempt to contact the referral source and/or the parent to obtain information. Contact attempts must be documented in OnBase. Failure of the referrer or parent to provide complete information within 7 business days of contact will result in the referral being deemed as incomplete and will be documented as withdrawn in OnBase.

The 45-day timeline does not start until a complete referral has been received. Once the referral is validated as complete the CRT will complete the actions listed in the Referral Follow-up section below.

CRT will:

- Contact the family to discuss the referral and schedule the orientation and intake appointment and update the notes section in OnBase (see Documentation Job Aid).
- If Parent does not wish to proceed with intake and an eligibility evaluation, the referral is closed based on parent request and the CRT member sends a Prior Written Notice that the referral will be closed. (See Parent Withdrawal Packet Job Aid).
- Until the child's information is transferred into BRIDGES, document all CRT activities in OnBase notes.

Special Considerations

Reasonable efforts must be made to contact parent in their native language, including use of approved contract interpreters and multilingual staff, including Telelanguage services. Native language contact, however, should not delay attempts to contact and communicate with the family of a referred child.

Homeless children and families: following up with children and families known to be homeless may require non-traditional methods of contact that might include working with local law enforcement officers, soup lines, Salvation Army, homeless shelters, etc. IDEA/Part C and partnering agencies should make efforts to locate and refer these children.

In lieu of the child's natural environment, hospitalized children may be screened and evaluated in an inpatient setting.

Children referred to IDEA/Part C who are identified in MMIS as receiving hospice services may not concurrently receive early intervention services.

CRT may elect to extend the referral an additional 7 business days if there is evidence that the child or family is homeless, has been recently displaced, or for other good cause. Such good cause must be documented in OnBase. If the referral results in eligibility and a late initial IFSP, the delay reason documented by the Intake Coordinator in the BRIDGES communication log. The delay reason will be "Child/Family/Guardian Unavailable".

Referral Follow-up

The initial contact must be conducted in the native language(s) of the family in accordance with the definition of native language. There may be instances when conducting the initial contact in the native language of the family is not possible because, for example, interpreters for a particular language cannot be located. CRT will utilize Language Line for foreign language interpretation.

The CRT members will work referrals from the OnBase Referral Queue, in the order in which they were received. (See OnBase Job Aid)

A CRT member will attempt the initial contact within one business day of receipt of referral. A second attempt will be made within one business day of the first attempt.. All attempts to contact must be documented in OnBase. If the second contact is unsuccessful, document the attempt in OnBase and follow the procedure for no-contact referral closure. If contact with the parent is successful, the assigned CRT member should:

- Explain the purpose of the IDEA/Part C program and the nature of the child's referral.
- Ask the parent if they would like to move forward with screening and/or evaluation.

Once a parent elects to participate in the eligibility process, the assigned CRT member should:

- Inform the family that they will be receiving a packet of information and forms relevant to the Part C program.
- Explain the purpose of the intake visit and possible outcomes.
- Document intake information in OnBase.

Should a parent decline to move forward with the screening, evaluation, and assessment process, the assigned CRT member will document the decision in OnBase and follow the procedure for referral closure due to parent withdrawal in BRIDGES and in OnBase.

CRT Data team will simultaneously update Curam, MMIS, and BRIDGES with referral information (See Curam, MMIS and BRIDGES Job Aid).

Scheduling an Intake and Evaluation Visit

- Once a parent has agreed to schedule an intake and evaluation visit, the intake should be scheduled at the first available date and location that accommodates the family and the IDEA/Part C Eligibility Office in their area.

Some considerations for scheduling visit location are:

- Transportation availability
- Distance from the nearest SCDHHS office with available evaluation rooms
- Child's physical health [see Home Visit Assessment Job Aid]

Note: If the family wants an appointment later than what is offered, document the delay in OnBase Notes.

The assigned CRT member will schedule the intake appointment through the Outlook Scheduler (See CRT Scheduling Job Aid).

The assigned CRT member should then ensure the following tasks are completed:

- An Outlook appointment is added to the relevant local Part C staff's calendar that includes the family's contact information, relevant OnBase document IDs, the child's BRIDGES ID, and time and location of the assessment, interpreter if needed.
- An appointment letter with the date, time, and location, contact information for the assigned Intake Coordinator, and instructions on how to reschedule appointments through CRT is included in the appointment packet.
- The Intake packet will include a service coordination provider choice form that includes a brief explanation of the service and a list of all providers serving that county.
- Intake paperwork is mailed or e-mailed to the family.
- The assigned CRT member will send the Referral Status Update form (referral only) to the referral source. The Intake Coordinator will retrieve all current IDEA/Part C records, including documentation, from OnBase.

Rescheduling an Intake and Evaluation Visit

The appointment letter sent to families contains detailed instructions on how to reschedule appointments [JOB AID].

If a family contacts the local office to cancel/reschedule, inform them that they will be transferred to a CRT member and they will assist the parent with rescheduling the appointment and transfer them to the CRT line at 1-866-512-8881.

CRT will amend the original Outlook appointment to reflect the cancellation and reschedule the family for an intake visit in the same manner as scheduling the original visit, including mailing an updated appointment letter.

If a family fails to show-up to scheduled intake within 30 minutes of the scheduled time, the Intake Coordinator will make one attempted communication (phone call, email, etc.) and send Prior Written Notice explaining to the family that the record will be closed in 7 days if there is no response. If there is no response, the Intake Coordinator will document this in BRIDGES and will close the case. The Intake Coordinator will also update OnBase to reflect the closure (see OnBase Job Aid). If the family calls prior to the 7 days, the Intake Coordinator will inquire as to if the family wants to reschedule the visit and if they do, the family will be transferred to the CRT.

Referral Closure

If the child exits IDEA/Part C at any time prior to completion of an IDEA/Part C eligibility evaluation, CRT and the Intake Coordinator must follow the appropriate procedures for documenting the closure and making best efforts to notify the family of the closure.

Closure of a Referral: Referrals that are closed prior to the eligibility evaluation should receive a complete closure packet.

Closure prior to Scheduling Intake, the assigned CRT member will:

- Mail closure packet to the child's parent.
- If a response is not received within the 7 days, scan and upload the closure letter in OnBase.
- CRT Data team will close the case in CURAM, MMIS, and BRIDGES.
- Document the closure action in OnBase notes and withdraw the referral in OnBase.

Closure after assignment to Intake Coordinator, the assigned Intake Coordinator will:

- Mail a closure packet to the child's parent.
- If a response is not received within the 7 days, scan and upload the closure letter in OnBase and close the case in BRIDGES.
 - Document the closure action in BRIDGES.
 - In OnBase add the appropriate keyword and withdrawal the case from OnBase

| Reason | Prior Written Notice Selection | BRIDGES Closure Reason |
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| Lack of contact | A referral to IDEA/Part C was made for a child, but we have not been able to contact the parent to discuss IDEA/Part C services. | Attempts to Contact Unsuccessful |
| Intake and evaluation appointment not kept | The parent has missed an appointment without contacting IDEA/Part C. | Attempts to Contact Unsuccessful |
| Withdrawal | The parent has notified IDEA/Part C that they are not (or no longer) interested in IDEA/Part C services for the child. | Parent Withdraw |