

Guidance on the Implementation of PA Chapter 14: §14.123

The Bureau of Early Intervention Services (BEIS) has heard some concerns from preschool Early Intervention programs on the new requirement in Chapter 14 related to Evaluation at §14.123(c)

Specifically, §14.123(c) states, ***“Parents may request an evaluation at any time, and the request must be in writing. The school entity shall make the Permission to Evaluate Form readily available for that purpose. If a request is made orally to any professional employee or administrator of the school entity, that individual shall provide a copy of the Permission to Evaluate Form to the parents within 10 calendar days of the oral request.”***

The concerns BEIS has received are related to the timeline established for providing the Permission to Evaluate form and the difficulty programs may encounter in meeting that timeline. In order to assist preschool Early Intervention programs with the implementation of the Chapter 14 requirement, the BEIS has established some guiding principles around the obligation to provide an evaluation to a child. These guiding principles are currently being practiced by local preschool Early Intervention programs and should continue:

- Parents should not be experiencing any difficulties at the local level in receiving an evaluation for their child when the parent has requested one
- Some parents may not understand or know exactly how to ask for an evaluation. Just because they do not ask in the right words, does not mean they have not asked for an evaluation.
- All Early Intervention staff at the local preschool Early Intervention program should be able to receive a request for an evaluation from a parent and ensure that the information is provided to the appropriate staff for timely evaluation services.

A number of scenarios that local programs may encounter have been reviewed and the BEIS has provided some guidance on the procedures local programs should follow to ensure that children and their parents receive timely evaluations. Please keep in mind these are guidelines preschool Early Intervention programs can use to assist in making a determination on whether a child should be offered a developmental screening or provided an evaluation. The additional information that is gathered during conversations with parents or the referral source is what should be used in making the final decisions.

What if.....	Screening or Evaluation
A child is presented to the preschool Early Intervention program with any completed screening tool, such as, the Ages and Stages questionnaire from a local Children and Youth Agency, local hospital or any other source.	The preschool program should issue the Permission to Evaluate within 10 days. When permission is received, begin the process for evaluation. There may be some extenuating circumstances that would allow the preschool program to do an additional screening of a child, for example, the screening received may not have addresses all developmental domains. However, in most situations, a screening received by the preschool program from another source that result in some developmental concerns for the child should move the child and family into the evaluation process
A child is presented to the preschool Early Intervention program with existing evaluations from a medical center or diagnostic center.	The preschool program should issue the Permission to Evaluate immediately or within 10 days. Continue the process for evaluation by reviewing existing documentation and determining if additional testing is needed.
A referral is received from an early care and	The preschool program can offer a developmental

<p>education program.</p>	<p>screening for the child. However, if after describing the process for a developmental screening and the family still requests an evaluation, the preschool program should issue the Permission to Evaluate within 10 days. When permission is received, begin the process for evaluation.</p> <p>If a family chooses a developmental screening and once the screening is completed, the Permission to Evaluate form should be issued immediately after it has been determined that the child needs further evaluation.</p>
<p>A parent calls the preschool program or CONNECT with significant developmental concerns regarding their child.</p> <p>A significant developmental concern would be a concern that has been described in such a way that the early intervention staff person receiving the referral would suspect that the child is already experiencing some form of developmental delay and by their professional judgment would indicate the an evaluation would be needed rather than a screening.</p>	<p>The preschool program should issue the Permission to Evaluate within 10 days from receiving the referral from CONNECT. When permission is received, begin the process for evaluation.</p>
<p>A parent calls the preschool program or CONNECT with general developmental concerns regarding their child</p>	<p>The preschool program can offer a developmental screening for the child. However, if after describing the process for a developmental screening and the family still requests an evaluation, the preschool program should issue the Permission to Evaluate within 10 days from when the family contacted the preschool program. When permission is received begin the process for evaluation.</p> <p>If a family chooses a developmental screening, the screening should take place within 30 days. Once the screening is completed, the Permission to Evaluate form should be issued immediately if it has been determined that the child needs further evaluation.</p>