



Interagency Early Intervention Committees: An Overview

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The crucial need for collaboration among local agencies serving children with disabilities and their families has long been recognized. In 1985, the Minnesota Legislature mandated local communities to work together to better address the complex needs of children with disabilities, ages three to five and their families. This legislation resulted in the formation of Interagency Early Intervention Committees (IEICs) across Minnesota. The legislation has since been further refined and teams are now asked to address the needs of children beginning at birth (to age 5) with disabilities and their families. There are approximately 95 IEICs throughout the state.

How are IEICs formed?

A school district, a group of districts or special education cooperative, in partnership with the county or counties in which the district is located can create an IEIC. An IEIC may be an active component of a Family Service Collaborative, a Mental Health Collaborative or part of another interagency structure (i.e. a Community Transition Interagency Committee).

Critical Questions:

- What are the current geographical boundaries for our IEIC?*
- Are they the most appropriate?*
- Are we linking with other collaborative initiatives in our community?*
- How?*

Who are members of IEICs?

By legislation (M.S. 125A), IEICs must include representatives of local / regional health, education, and county human service agencies, county boards, school boards, early childhood family education programs, current service providers, parents of children with disabilities (under age 12), and other private or public agencies, as appropriate.

Critical Questions:

- Do we have active participation of all mandated members?*
- How often are new members recruited?*
- Do we offer an orientation to new members?*
- Have we formalized our responsibilities for members?*
- How are parents reimbursed for their participation?*

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What must IEICs do?

Legislation directs committees to elect a chair, meet at least quarterly and perform the following duties:

1. Develop public awareness systems designed to inform potential recipient families of available programs and services.
2. Implement interagency child find systems designed to actively seek out, identify, and refer infants and young children with, and at risk of, developing disabilities and their families.
3. Establish and evaluate the identification, referral, child and family assessment systems, procedural safeguard process, and community learning systems to recommend, where, necessary, alterations and improvements.
4. Assure the development of individualized family service plans (IFSPs) for all eligible infants and toddlers with disabilities from birth to three, and their families; and individual education plans (IEPs), individual service plans (ISPs) and individual interagency intervention plans (IIIPs) when necessary to appropriately serve children with disabilities age three and older and their families; and recommend assignment of financial responsibilities to the appropriate agencies.
5. Develop a process for assuring that services involve cooperating agencies at all steps leading to individualized programs.
6. Facilitate the development of a transitional plan if a service provider is not recommended to continue to provide services.
7. Identify the current services and funding being provided within the community for children with disabilities under age five and their families.
8. Develop a plan for the allocation and expenditure of additional state and federal early intervention funds.
9. Develop a policy to enable a member of an interagency early intervention committee to allow another member access to data classified as not public.
10. Participate in needs assessments and program planning activities conducted by local agencies.
11. Review and comment on the early intervention section of the total special education system for the district, the county social service plan and the sections of the community health plan that address the needs of children with special health care needs.
12. Prepare a yearly summary on the progress of the community in serving young children with disabilities and their families including the expenditure of funds, the identification of unmet service needs identified on the IFSPs, and specification of policies impeding the implementation of this section.

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Critical Questions:

- How does our IEIC address these duties?*
- How have things improved for children with disabilities and their families in the past few years?*
- What additional priorities have we identified for our particular community?*
- Have we developed a work plan to address these priorities?*
- Does our meeting schedule support the accomplishment of these activities?*
- Do we use task forces or subcommittees to address specific needs?*
- What decision making structure have we established?*
- Do we have a practical, effective set of "operating principles" or bylaws that assist in establishing a governance structure?*

How are funds allocated to IEICs?

Three categories of funding are currently available to all IEICs on an annual basis. Each IEIC must develop an annual plan which indicates how the funds will be utilized. The categories of funding are:

1. Early Intervention Flow Through Dollars (Fiscal Source Code H)

- Target age group: Children eligible for Early Childhood Special Education under age 3
- Funding source: Federal Discretionary money (Part C, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act - IDEA)
- Funding amount: Based on the number of children with an IFSP from your local area (birth-3) as of December 1. Refer to the Annual Allocation Plan to verify the amount for the current year.
- Intended use:
 - Early Intervention Services where funding is otherwise not available (i.e. service coordination)
 - Services during the pendency of a conflict procedure, or
 - Interagency child find system activities

2. IEIC Funds (Fiscal Source Code I)

- Funding source: Federal discretionary money (Part C; Part B, Section 619, IDEA)
- Funding amount: \$2000/IEIC, plus additional money per eligible child under age 3. Refer to the Annual Allocation Plan to verify the amount.
- Intended use:
 - Outreach and public awareness
 - Stipends for family participation on the IEIC
 - Training or technical assistance, or
 - Meeting expenses

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3. Family Support Funds (Fiscal Source Code J)

Target age group:	Children eligible for Early Childhood Special Education Under age 6
Source of funds:	Federal discretionary money (Part C; Part B, Section 619, IDEA)
Funding amount:	\$2000/IEIC, plus additional money per eligible child under age 6 (as of December 1, annually). Refer to your Annual Allocation Plan to verify the amount.
Intended use:	Provided in the Annual Allocation Plan

Critical Questions:

How are our priorities for funding determined?

Are the operating procedures of our fiscal host “family friendly?”

Are interagency activities in place on a year-round basis?

Are the annual allocation plan and budget shared with the committee members, with written updates provided at each IEIC meeting?

How are we determining the effectiveness of IEIC efforts and activities?

How does the use of these three sources of funding create a unified effort?