

Three Pathways to Identification

This document describes 3 distinct pathways of how a child suspected to have a Visual Impairment may be identified. CDW, LEAs, and the **Division for the Visually Impaired (DVI)** should demonstrate a strong partnership in each pathway that keeps children and families at the center of the process, striving to make this a more integrated and straightforward experience for them.

Pathway 1: NEW REFERRALS (Including sub-pathways described in Scenarios 1 and 2)

Referrals for Children not currently receiving Part C or Part B Services who **may be eligible for a Special Education classification under Visual Impairment**

CDW Responsibilities

- If referral is made to CDW a Family Service Coordinator (FSC) is assigned to begin the birth mandate process.
- **First**, the FSC contacts the responsible LEA's Child Find Coordinator for 619 to determine mutually agreeable dates/times to offer the parent the initial home visit (The LEA representative attending the home visit could be any of the following: the Child Find Coordinator, the Psychologist, the Educational Diagnostician, Special Education Coordinator or a representative knowledgeable about 619 and hearing loss).
- **Next**, within two business days, the FSC contacts the parent to schedule the initial home visit (to take place within the first week to 10 days) and explains the role of the LEA when there is a Visual Impairment concern.
- **If necessary, the FSC may need to communicate again with the LEA and parent to finalize the date/time of the initial visit-** for greater efficiency and effectiveness this visit may be conducted with staggered times, such that the LEA representative joins after the FSC has completed their components.
- If child has the established condition of Visual Impairment, with parent consent, an interim IFSP is developed as soon as possible to begin Early Intervention.

LEA Responsibilities

- If referral goes to LEA first, then LEA contacts CDW to refer the child.
- The LEA will ensure that a representative from the responsible LEA attends the initial home visit (The LEA representative attending the home visit could be any of the following: Child Find Coordinator for 619, the Psychologist, the Educational Diagnostician, Special Education Coordinator or a representative knowledgeable about 619 and vision loss). *The LEA representative may participate by teleconference as an alternative option to attending in person.*
- If for some reason the LEA cannot participate in the initial visit (**which should be the exception**), they should communicate with the family ASAP to obtain consent to evaluate to assure compliance with timely evaluation.

***A concern about possible Visual Impairment is shared either verbally by the referral source or shared in a written document by the referral source.**

Birth Mandate Referral Process for Children with Visual Impairment

INITIAL HOME VISIT

Shared CDW and LEA Responsibilities

- CDW and LEA provide and explain **Parental Rights and Procedural Safeguards (Document in the Prior Written Notice (PWN) that the Rights and Safeguards were given to the parent at the initial home visit]**.
- CDW and LEA explain their roles, responsibilities, and services.
- CDW and LEA explain the evaluation/assessment process for eligibility under Part C or Part B services, respectively.
 - CDW explains their Multidisciplinary evaluation/assessment process as well as eligibility under established condition- see IDEA Federal Regulations- Section 303.320 (<https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2011-09-28/pdf/2011-22783.pdf>).
 - LEA explains their evaluation/assessment process to determination eligibility under a Visual Impairment classification- see Delaware Administrative Code Title 14, section 925 2.0 (<http://regulations.delaware.gov/AdminCode/title14/900/925.shtml>).
 - CDW and LEA discuss any evaluations/assessments already completed and determine need for additional evaluation/assessments.

CDW Responsibilities

- CDW proposes to evaluate/assess the child for Part C eligibility and documents in the **PWN** to the parent.
- If child meets eligibility criteria for established condition, CDW must still conduct the multidisciplinary evaluation within time lines.
- If parent agrees to the multidisciplinary evaluation family provides written consent to conduct the evaluation (**Consent to Evaluate for Part C**).

LEA Responsibilities

- LEA proposes to evaluate/assess the child for Part B eligibility and documents in the **PWN** to the parent.
- If parent agrees to evaluation, parent provides written consent to conduct the evaluation/assessment (**Permission to Evaluate for Part B**).

EVALUATION/ASSESSMENT PROCESS

CDW Responsibilities

- CDW conducts the multidisciplinary evaluation/assessment and must convene an IFSP meeting within **45 calendar days (Notice of Meeting)**.
- Upon completion of the CDW multidisciplinary evaluation/assessment, if the child is eligible for Part C services, the team will develop an IFSP. CDW will document the IFSP team decisions in a PWN and the parent will provide written consent for the provision of early intervention services (Consent for Provision of Early Intervention Services).
 - **Meanwhile, (Scenario 1, Pg. 3)** the LEA continues their evaluation/assessment process **OR**,
 - **(Scenario 2, Pg. 4)** the LEA has completed its evaluation/assessment within the same timeframe as CDW allowing the teams to convene together *(The latter is best practice. Try to aim for one meeting so the parent does not have to go to two meetings.)*

LEA Responsibilities

- LEA conducts evaluation/assessment and must convene an eligibility meeting **within 45 school days or 90 calendar days, whichever comes first**.
- In the event that an LEA does not have the internal capacity to conduct the evaluation/assessment, the LEA may utilize an external vendor for parts of or the whole evaluation/assessment.
- If the LEA chooses to utilize **DVI** or another vendor for the evaluation or consultation for the purpose of determining eligibility, the LEA is responsible for obtaining parental consent (**Consent to Release Information form**) to release information between the LEA and DVI or the vendor.

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Scenario 1: CHILDREN THAT HAVE AN IFSP (refer back to previous page Evaluation/Assessment Process Box - third bullet under CDW Responsibilities)

CONDUCT **JOINT IFSP/IEP MEETING** TO REVIEW RESULTS OF BOTH EVALUATIONS/ASSESSMENTS AND TO DETERMINE PART B ELIGIBILITY UNDER THE CLASSIFICATION OF HEARING IMPAIRMENT. (CDW and LEA are reviewing the LEA evaluation together for the first time)

If DVI is involved, they need to be included on the Notice of Meeting.

CDW Responsibilities

- CDW attends the Part B 619 eligibility meeting.
- Discusses results of evaluation/assessment with family/parent and the LEA.
- CDW provides a copy of the **Multidisciplinary Evaluation/Assessment and the IFSP to the LEA prior to this meeting.**

LEA Responsibilities

- LEA sends parent **Notice of Meeting**. LEA includes CDW on the invitation and provides CDW a copy of **Notice of Meeting**.
- Discuss results of evaluation/assessment with parent and CDW
- LEA documents the data, discussions and team decisions of Visual Impairment classification in the **Evaluation Summary Report (ESR)**.
- If eligible under the Visual Impairment classification, team discusses potential service options through Part C or Part B.
- Parent decides if they want an IFSP (Part C) or an IEP (Part B).

CDW Responsibilities if Part C is chosen

- Parent and CDW amend IFSP if needed.
- **CDW documents the parent's decision to continue with Part C in PWN.**
- CDW will still provide transition notification to the LEA and SEA to ensure timely transition planning for Part B under the normal process for children potentially eligible for Part B (not less than 90 days before the child's third birthday and not more than 9 months prior to the third

CDW Responsibilities if Part C is declined

- Parent signs Consent for Provision of Early Intervention under Part C, declining EI at this time.
- CDW documents in PWN that Part C is offering services but parent is declining and opting to begin Part B services under the Birth Mandate. classification of Visual Impairment.

LEA Responsibilities if Part B is chosen

- Parent signs **Consent for Initial Provision of Special Education and Related Services**. agreeing to Part B services
- Parent and LEA develop the **IEP**.
- LEA documents decision that parent is accepting Part B services and is declining Part C in PWN .

LEA Responsibilities if Part B is declined

- Parent signs Consent for Initial Provision of Special Education and Related Services declining Part B services at this time.
- LEA includes in their **PWN** that Part B is offering services and that at this time, parent is declining an IEP.

Birth Mandate Referral Process for Children with Visual Impairment

Scenario 2: CHILDREN THAT DO NOT YET HAVE AN IFSP (refer back to previous page Evaluation/Assessment Process Box - fourth bullet under CDW Responsibilities).

CONDUCT JOINT IFSP/IEP MEETING TO REVIEW RESULTS OF EVALUATIONS/ASSESSMENTS AND DETERMINE ELIGIBILITY FOR PART C AND PART B UNDER THE CLASSIFICATION OF A VISUAL IMPAIRMENT.

(CDW and LEA are reviewing the CDW and LEA evaluations for the first time).

CDW Responsibilities

- FSC coordinates meeting date with the LEA and parent.
- CDW sends parent **Notice of Meeting** (same date and time as LEA) CDW includes LEA on the invitation and provides LEA a copy of **Notice of Meeting**.
- CDW discusses results of evaluation/assessment with parent and LEA.
- CDW provides a copy of the **Multidisciplinary Assessment to the parent and LEA prior to this meeting.**

LEA Responsibilities

- LEA sends parent **Notice of Meeting** (same date and time as FSC) LEA includes CDW on the invitation and provides CDW a copy of **Notice of Meeting**.
- LEA discusses results of evaluation/assessment with parent and CDW.
- LEA documents the data, discussions and team decisions of Visual Impairment classification in the **Evaluation Summary Report (ESR)**.
- If eligible under the Visual Impairment classification, team discusses potential service options through Part C or Part B.
- Parent decides if they want an IFSP (Part C) or an IEP (Part B).

CDW Responsibilities if Part C is chosen

- Parent and CDW develop IFSP.
- **CDW documents the parent's decision to continue with Part C in PWN.**
- CDW will still provide transition notification to the LEA and SEA to ensure timely transition planning for Part B under the normal process for children potentially eligible for Part B (not less than 90 days before the child's third birthday and not more than 9 months prior to the third birthday).

CDW Responsibilities if Part C is declined

- Parent signs Consent for Provision of Early Intervention under Part C, declining EI at this time.
- CDW documents in PWN that Part C is continuing to offer services, but parent is now declining Part C and opting to begin Part B services under the Birth Mandate classification of Visual Impairment.

LEA Responsibilities if Part B is chosen

- Parent signs **Consent for Initial Provision of Special Education and Related Services** agreeing to Part B services.
- Parent and LEA develop the **IEP**.
- LEA documents decision that parent is accepting Part B services and opting to discontinue Part C participation in PWN.

LEA Responsibilities if Part B is declined

- Parent signs **Consent for Initial Provision of Special Education and Related Services** declining Part B services at this time.
- LEA includes in their PWN that Part B is offering services and that at this time parent is declining an IEP and has chosen to continue with Part C services.

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Pathway 2: CHILDREN WITH MDA OR AN IFSP

- CDW completes the multidisciplinary evaluation/assessment and there is now a concern about a Visual Impairment (no IFSP yet)
- For children with an IFSP already receiving Part C services, and over time a concern about a Visual Impairment has emerged.

CDW Responsibilities

- *FSC discusses concern with the family/parent. Parent signs consent to forward Early Intervention records that family agrees to share (which may include evaluation/assessments) to the LEA (**Consent to Release Information**) and DVI.
- CDW completes their Referral Form and sends to the LEA and DVI, (copying the DDOE Field Agent), CDW shares the Multidisciplinary evaluation and assessment and IFSP (if there is one) with the LEA and DVI.
- CDW continues with IFSP services **or** develops an IFSP (while the LEA completes the evaluation/assessment for VI).
- If the child is not found eligible for Part B services at the eligibility meeting held by the LEA **or** the parent declines Part B services, CDW continues providing IFSP services under Part C.
- If parent agrees to Part B services, CDW completes **PWN** indicating that parent is now declining continuation in the Part C program.

LEA Responsibilities

- LEA contacts the parent and explains the evaluation/assessment process for the Visual Impairment classification.
- LEA proposes to evaluate/assess the child for Part B eligibility and documents in the **PWN** to the parent along with providing the Procedural Safeguards/Parental Rights.
- If parent agrees to evaluation, parent provides written consent to complete the evaluation and eligibility determination process (**Permission to Evaluate for Part B**). LEA compliance timeline for eligibility begins when LEA receives the signed consent.
- The LEA may utilize the DVI or an external vendor (with parental consent) for parts of or the whole evaluation.
- LEA completes the Evaluation Summary Report at the eligibility determination meeting which must be done within 45 school days or 90 calendar days whichever comes first.
- LEA sends parent, CDW and DVI **Notice of Meeting**.
- At the LEA eligibility meeting, LEA documents the data, discussions and team decisions of a Visual Impairment classification in the **Evaluation Summary Report (ESR)**.
- If eligible under the Visual Impairment classification, team discusses potential service options through Part C or Part B.
- If family chooses an IEP, parent signs consent (**Consent for Initial Provision of Special Education and Related Services**) agreeing to Part B services.
- The IEP team which includes the parent will develop the IEP
- LEA documents decisions in **PWN**.
- If parent chooses to stay with Part C, the transition process will proceed following the regular timeline and process.

Pathway 3: LATE REFERRALS TO PART C

Children nearing 33 months of age who are more than 90 days away from the third birthday and who are not currently receiving Part C or Part B services, and the parent contacts CDW with concerns for possible Visual Impairment. (refer back to page 1 for what this means)

Shared CDW and LEA Responsibilities

- If child is found eligible based on established condition, CDW must immediately notify the SEA/LEA in writing (via the CDW Referral Form) to ensure, an IEP is in place by the child's third birthday and that there is a concern regarding the child's vision. (This is considered a notification of a child in Part C who is potentially eligible for Part B-therefore no parental consent is required in Delaware)
- If referral/eligibility for Part C is 90 days or less before child's third birthday, **a transition conference is not required**, however, it is best practice to hold/ invite the LEA to the IFSP meeting to insure timely identification and access to services for the child.
- If referral/ eligibility for Part C is 90 days or less before the child's third birthday, **an IEP is not required to be in place by age 3**; however, LEAs must strive to have an IEP developed as soon after age 3 as possible if the child is found eligible.
- **Follow process described in Pathway#1** - if parent confirms they wish to have CDW remain involved.
- If parent declines to go any further with CDW given that the child will soon be turning three, then LEA follows the state special education regulations for timely evaluation and identification, just as with any other referral.
- **PWN** must be sent by both Parts C and B based on their proposed actions.

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Important Notes

Child cannot have an IFSP and IEP simultaneously. This means a child **cannot** continue with Service Coordination from CDW while receiving services from the LEA through an IEP.

Whether a child receives an IEP or an IFSP is determined individually. A child's classification does not necessarily lead to an IEP over an IFSP or vice versa.

A timely transition conference must occur before the child turns 3 years of age (transition from Part C to Part B).

If a parent initially contacts the DVI, they will provide the family with contact information for CDW and the LEA to initiate a referral.

Should you have any additional questions please contact:

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