

# Maryland's Early Intervention & Preschool Special Education System Personnel Standards Guide



Maryland State Department of Education  
Division of Early Intervention and  
Special Education Services  
200 W. Baltimore St.  
Baltimore, MD 21201  
[www.marylandpublicschools.org](http://www.marylandpublicschools.org)  
July 2019



Please note: This document will be in a final format in November 2019.

# Ultimate goals for early intervention and preschool special education:

***For children... to enable young children to be active and successful participants during the early childhood years and in the future in a variety of settings – in their homes with their families, in child care, preschool or school programs, and in the community.***

***For families... to enable families to provide care for their child and have the resources they need to participate in their own desired family and community activities.***

An outcome is a benefit experienced as a result of participating in services provided to children and families. We measure outcomes for children and families to know if early intervention services are effective and meeting the national goals for **ALL** children and families.

## ***Early Childhood Outcomes include:***

- ***Child has positive social-emotional skills and relationships***
- ***Child acquires and uses (functional) knowledge and skills***
- ***Child uses appropriate behaviors to meet their needs***

## ***Family Outcomes include:***

- ***Family knows their rights***
- ***Family effectively communicates their child's needs***
- ***Family helps their child develop and learn***

Child and family outcomes are connected and interrelated. A positive outcome experienced by the family serves to promote the child outcomes and outcomes achieved by the child benefit the family

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## MISSION & VISION

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), Division of Early Intervention & Special Education Services (DEI/SES) provides leadership, support, and accountability for results to Local School Systems, Public Agencies, and stakeholders through a seamless, comprehensive system of coordinated services to children and students with disabilities, birth through 21, and their families.

Through its strategic plan, *Moving Maryland Forward*, the Division continues to focus efforts on the development of a birth to kindergarten seamless and comprehensive system of coordinated services within the framework of a larger birth through 21 service delivery system. The ultimate goal of the birth to kindergarten system is to narrow the school readiness gap for young children with developmental delays and disabilities before they enter kindergarten. *Moving Maryland Forward* promotes family partnerships, evidence-based practices, strategic collaboration, data-informed decisions, and professional learning among all public and private partners to ensure access to learning opportunities that support high expectations for all children to help realize this goal. Utilization of these strategies is the key to building family capacity and improving results for young children.

The Division's goal of providing high-quality, effective services is accomplished through the implementation of a comprehensive system of personnel development. Toward this end, the Division is devoted to developing and maintaining highly effective early intervention and preschool special education leaders, service coordinators and service providers through the implementation of a statewide system of differentiated tiers of general supervision and performance support. The DEI/SES provides monitoring and technical assistance to 24 Local Lead Agencies/Local School Systems and Public Agencies, the Maryland School for the Blind (MSB) and the Maryland School for the Deaf (MSD). Local birth to kindergarten systems are composed of local departments of education, health, social services, and other public and private providers identified by each jurisdiction. The early intervention/preschool special education workforce is interdisciplinary and comprised of professionals from a variety of fields. The DEI/SES recognizes early childhood special education as a profession requiring distinct knowledge and skills in addition to discipline-specific competencies.

The fields of early intervention and preschool special education require practitioners and programs to stay abreast of the evidence specific to early childhood special education in order to put research into practice and continue improving services to young children and families. The continued evolution of the field may not be adequately addressed through pre-service training programs exclusively. Therefore, the process of establishing personnel standards provides a consistent knowledge base that builds the capacity of all early intervention and preschool special education providers, regardless of discipline, in the key principles and evidence-based practices to support positive outcomes for children and their families. Additionally, the process recognizes the need for ongoing support through "refresher" professional learning opportunities and reflective coaching to ensure implementation of recommended practices with fidelity.

*The State and local Infants and Toddlers Programs/local School Systems have roles and responsibilities to fulfill the requirements of a comprehensive system of personnel development. Local policies may be required in addition to the standards outlined here.*

All states are required to compare the entry-level academic degree requirements stipulated by all State agencies that promulgate personnel standards applicable to professions and disciplines in which personnel provide early intervention and preschool special education services. In Maryland, the State Boards of Examiners and the State Board of Education promulgate personnel standards applicable to early intervention and preschool special education service providers. Currently, entry-level academic degree requirements are consistent between the two promulgating agencies.

There are three primary components of an effective, comprehensive birth to kindergarten system of services. Recruiting and retaining highly qualified staff is only one component and will be ineffective on its own without the leadership and infrastructure to support it.

Therefore, the first part of this Guide provides **leadership and infrastructure considerations** for planning and implementing a comprehensive birth to kindergarten system of services, including the systemic practices necessary to support implementation of evidence-based practices.

The second part of this Guide outlines the **REQUIRED personnel standards for early intervention** service coordinators and service providers (34 CFR §303.119).

The third part of this Guide outlines **RECOMMENDED personnel standards for preschool special education** teachers and related service providers.

**The purpose of this document is to assist:**

- local Birth to Kindergarten systems in implementing policies and procedures related to personnel standards;
- early Intervention and preschool special education providers in meeting personnel standards; and
- institutions of higher education in reviewing curricula for consistency with personnel standards.

In an effort to ensure continuous quality improvement through an effective, comprehensive statewide system of personnel development, the MSDE, DEI/SES will annually reassess Maryland's Early Intervention and Preschool Special Education System Personnel Standards and revise as appropriate.

Leadership plays a critical role in creating and maintaining a work culture that promotes the implementation of evidence-based practices and acknowledges the need to support personnel as programs and practices change and evolve. It is the responsibility of local Infants and Toddlers Programs/local School Systems to ensure entry level degree requirements for all early intervention and preschool special education personnel. Therefore, policies and procedures should be in place that guide the recruitment and retention of highly qualified personnel, including a Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) point of contact for local Infants and Toddlers Programs. Recruitment and hiring practices must include a mechanism to verify degree and licensing status, as applicable, as well as experience relevant to the position. At a minimum, potential/newly hired early intervention/preschool special education personnel should demonstrate competence in the following areas:

- Child Development (typical and atypical)
- Evaluation and (Child & Family) Assessment Procedures and Instruments
- Family Partnerships
- Early Intervention Strategies and Specially Designed Instructional Practices
- Equity/Cultural Competence

Local programs may need to provide supplemental training to new hires if the knowledge and experience related to these topics, specific to birth to five populations, is lacking.

### **Ongoing Coaching and Professional Learning Opportunities**

The MSDE, DEI/SES has identified Reflective Coaching, following high quality training, as a Key Strategy for effective scaling up and full implementation of evidence-based practices to improve child and family outcomes. The research synthesis on coaching practices draws on theories and practices from adult learning, behavioral, and goal-focused approaches. Rush and Shelden (2011) offer this evidence-based definition of coaching:

*An adult learning strategy in which the coach promotes the learner's (coachee's) ability to reflect on his or her actions as a means to determine the effectiveness of an action or practice and develop a plan for refinement and use of the action in immediate and future situations.*

High quality training is a proven-effective development tool and provides the rationale, knowledge, and inspiration to change. However, it takes time for people to process new information and put it into practice. Ongoing coaching provides the real-life application support and accountability. One study looked at the results of only training vs. training with follow-up coaching. Training produced 23% better performance, but training with follow-up coaching produced 88% better performance. Combining high quality trainings and ongoing reflective coaching is a powerful combination.

## High Quality Professional Development

The [Observation Checklist for High Quality Professional Development Training](#) may be used to assist in planning high quality training activities and in providing ongoing feedback and coaching to trainers. The checklist may also be completed by an observer to determine the level of quality of professional development training. Completed checklists are shared with trainers through reflective dialogue with the purpose of systemic improvement. Checklists should be maintained on file.

## Fidelity of Practice

Specific evidence-based practices fidelity checklists are used to track progress towards capacity building through reflective self-assessment, observation, and coaching. Local programs should determine methods for collecting and analyzing data from fidelity checks to inform policy and practice.

## Regular Reflective Coaching

Coaching is an ongoing and cyclical process. Regularity is a crucial factor in effective coaching practices. The ongoing coaching sessions are: scheduled **monthly** (recommended), or no less than once every other month, for at least the first 12 months; individual or in groups; in person or via phone or webinar (scheduled by the coach or programmatically as part of existing teaming structures); and used to review practices in a safe space that allows for thoughtful reflection and planning together. The use of fidelity checks (self-assessment and observed) guides conversations and reflections. Reflective coaching is not evaluative in nature.

Coaching sessions are conducted to review the training information, answer questions, provide guidance and encouragement, and refine personal/program action plans. Coaching interactions should incorporate the five key characteristics of coaching: joint planning, observation, action, reflection, and feedback. There should be **documentation** of coaching sessions to include, at a minimum: who was involved (individuals or teams), topic/EBP discussed, date, and delivery method (ie. phone, webinar, in person).

## Annual Professional Learning Opportunities – REQUIRED FOR ALL

All states are required to report the effectiveness of early intervention and preschool special education programs annually through the measurement of child outcomes to the United States Department of Education. In Maryland, the Child Outcomes Summary (COS) process is used to meet these federal requirements. All new staff are required to complete (2017) COS training and competency checks as outlined in the *Guide to B-K COS Process Training and Support* (see Appendix B). In addition, programs are required to **ANNUALLY**, utilize the *COS Team Collaboration (COS-TC) Quality Practices* tool for continued reflection and improvement of teaming practices to ensure statewide consistency and fidelity.

The COS-TC Quality Practices includes:

- Checklists for Quality Practices
- Descriptions and Examples
- Video Clip Activities



The field of early intervention/preschool special education continues to evolve, thus professional development is a never-ending journey. Beyond the annual COS Quality Practices activities, the MSDE, DEI/SES may identify training topics/activities through regional/statewide Professional Learning Opportunities to be completed by all early intervention and preschool special education personnel. This may include activities such as watching a webinar, reading a journal article, completing a reflective checklist, etc. These activities may involve individual reflection as well as team/group reflection and even cross-system training.

The MSDE, DEI/SES also recognizes that local programs have annual professional development requirements. The DEC Recommended Practices (8 topic areas) are **highly recommended** to be included with local annual training requirements. DEC RPs tools include:

- Performance Checklists
- Practice Guides for Practitioners and Families
- Online Modules (to be built in to professional development activities)

### **Infrastructure Considerations**

In addition to professional learning opportunities and the expectation of implementation, the program infrastructure needs to support implementation with fidelity. Program leaders need to fully understand the evidence-based practice model in its entirety, beyond the professional learning that needs to occur. This may include:

- The need for shifting of staff time and resources (e.g. ensure all providers are able to complete evaluations and assessment versus only select team members, or reducing caseloads of personnel identified as coaches).
- The need to develop or modify program policies and procedures (e.g. program-wide policy regarding universal screening of all children for social emotional development, or defined teaming behavior requirements to support transdisciplinary or primary service provider approaches).
- The need to examine and potentially modify practice protocols (e.g. requiring an additional visit with families to separate evaluation and assessment activities).

Successful programs that have a positive impact on child and family outcomes address each of the professional development, leadership, and infrastructure components for effective implementation. Consider the DEC Recommended Practices in Leadership as well as Implementation Science Resources for more information. The MSDE, DEI/SES Birth-Kindergarten liaison assigned to each jurisdiction can also provide additional information, resources, and coaching to support local system development.



## DATA-INFORMED DECISION MAKING

The MSDE, DEI/SES holds and maintains licenses for a statewide database to capture and report data related to birth to kindergarten personnel standards. Local Infants and Toddlers Programs (LITPs), Maryland School for the Blind (MSB), and Maryland School for the Deaf (MSD) are required to enter ALL current early intervention staff into the database and their progress towards achieving and maintaining personnel standards. Additionally, to support a seamless birth to kindergarten system of services for young children with disabilities and their families, the statewide database includes recommended preschool special education personnel standards. While it is not required to enter preschool special education staff, at this time, in the statewide database, the fields are available and can be accessed through the single log-in provided to each LITP.

LITPs must report annually, through the Consolidated Local Implementation Grant (CLIG) process, the number of staff employed/contracted in their early intervention program and the status of personnel standards requirements for each. It is the responsibility of local programs to ensure staffing lists are current and up-to-date. Additionally, local programs need to identify policies and procedures to ensure timely and accurate data entry and reporting.

Maryland's Early Intervention & Preschool Special Education System Personnel Standards database includes the following:

- Personal Demographics
- B-K Hire Information
- Early Intervention Personnel Standards Completion/Verification
- Early Intervention Requirements if Previously Met Suitable Qualifications
- Early Intervention Personnel Standards Requirements (checklist)
- Early Intervention Highly Recommended Training
- B-K Supplemental State/National Trainings/Certifications
- B-K Required Annual Training
- Preschool Special Education Personnel Standards Recommendations

Please reference the *MD's Early Intervention & Preschool Special Education System Personnel Standards Database User's Guide* (to be released mid-July) for technical support in utilizing the statewide database.

The MSDE, DEI/SES provides oversight regarding the requirement of LITPs, MSB, and MSD, to document and report data related to the required early intervention personnel standards. Specific State and local report capabilities within the statewide database assist all programs to meet the early intervention personnel standards requirements. Annually, the MSDE, DEI/SES Birth to Kindergarten liaison will review local early intervention personnel standards meeting requirements during the CLIG process. Additionally, this requirement will be formally reviewed and documented through the comprehensive monitoring process beginning in SFY 2021.

## EARLY INTERVENTION PERSONNEL STANDARDS REQUIREMENTS

Each state participating in Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) must establish qualifications to assure that persons providing early intervention services are adequately prepared as defined in 34 CFR §303.119. The term “early intervention” refers to required services provided to eligible infants and toddlers with special needs and their families. The Maryland Infants and Toddlers Program (MITP) is a comprehensive statewide, family-centered program that is coordinated by the MSDE, DEI/SES in collaboration with many interagency partners. The MITP recognizes that appropriate supports and services that increase parents’ and caregivers’ abilities to enhance their child’s development will lead to improved outcomes for children and families. Local Infants and Toddlers Programs (LITPs) constitute the service delivery component of the statewide early intervention system.

Regulations to Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) require that:

1. Early Intervention services are provided by qualified personnel who have met State approved or recognized certification, licensing, registration, or other comparable requirements that apply to the areas in which the individuals are conducting evaluations or assessments or providing early intervention services [(34 CFR §303.13(a)(7)], and
2. Statewide systems have policies and procedures related to personnel standards (34 CFR §303.119).

The MSDE, DEI/SES has established policies relating to the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards pursuant to COMAR 13A.13.02.08(l) and 34 CFR §303.119. **There are two components to Maryland’s Personnel Standards for Early Intervention Service Providers.**

All personnel providing early intervention services to eligible children and their families shall meet:

1. **Professional Entry-Level Degree Requirements:** The highest requirements in the State that apply to the profession or discipline in which a person is providing early intervention services, and
2. **Personnel Standards:**
  - a. Consistent initial orientation and training;
  - b. Additional State and/or national certifications relevant to early intervention; and
  - c. Ongoing support to implement evidence-based practices with fidelity through reflective coaching and annual professional learning opportunities.

Although the State of Maryland currently does not promulgate professional standards for dedicated service coordinators in the early intervention program, individuals who provide service coordination are required to meet the qualifications specified in 34 CFR §303.34 and COMAR 13A.13.01.03(B)(58) as well as personnel standards and ongoing support as described in this document. Additionally, service coordination that is to be reimbursed by Medical Assistance must be provided by individuals who meet the requirements specified in the Maryland Department of Health’s Medical Care Program regulation COMAR 10.09.40, Early Intervention Services Case Management.

## 1. PROFESSIONAL ENTRY-LEVEL DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

It is the responsibility of local Infants and Toddlers Programs/local School Systems to ensure entry level degree requirements for all early intervention and preschool special education personnel. Therefore, policies and procedures should be in place that guide the recruitment and retention of highly qualified personnel, including a Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) point of contact for local Infants and Toddlers Programs. Recruitment and hiring practices must include a mechanism to verify degree and licensing status, as applicable, as well as experience relevant to the position. At a minimum, potential/newly hired early intervention personnel should demonstrate competence in the following areas:

- Child Development (typical and atypical)
- Evaluation and (Child & Family) Assessment Procedures and Instruments
- Family Partnerships
- Early Intervention Strategies and Specially Designed Instructional Practices
- Equity/Cultural Competence

Local programs may need to provide supplemental training to new hires if the knowledge and experience related to these topics, specific to birth to five populations, is lacking.

## 2. PERSONNEL STANDARDS REQUIREMENTS

The process of being highly qualified for early intervention service coordinators/providers builds on the applicable entry-level degree requirements by providing a consistent messaging and approach to all early intervention personnel, regardless of discipline or time working with eligible children and their families. This is accomplished through:

- a. A standard initial orientation and training plan;
- b. Acknowledgement of any relevant supplemental State and/or national certifications beyond degree requirements; and
- c. Ongoing coaching and professional learning opportunities to support implementation of evidence-based practices in early intervention/early childhood special education.

### A. MITP Initial Orientation and Training Plan – REQUIRED FOR ALL

All personnel serving eligible children and families need to be grounded in the foundational principles and practices of early intervention, understand effective development, implementation, and evaluation of the IFSP process, and the evidence-based teaming and coaching practices that support the process. Therefore, to ensure a consistently prepared early intervention workforce, the following professional learning activities are required:

#### *Foundations of Early Intervention*

- Universal Online Part C EI Curriculum modules:
  - Mission & Key Principles
  - Foundational Pillars of Early Intervention
    - Family Centered Practices
    - Children’s Learning
    - Natural Environments
    - Adult Learning
    - Quality Teaming

### *IFSP Development, Implementation, Evaluation*

- MD IFSP Process & Document Training (2018)
- Universal Online Part C EI Curriculum module:
  - Authentic Assessment
  - Assessment Webinars (Naomi Younggren):
    - Keep It Real, Make Way for Authentic Assessment
    - Authentic Assessment and the Connection to the COS Process
- DEC Recommended Practices Online Modules and Performance Checklists (ECTA):
  - Assessment
  - Environment
  - Family
  - Instruction
  - Interaction
  - Transition
- Family Capacity-Building Online Module (ECTA)
- COS Competency Requirements
  - DaSy Online Modules
  - Observation of coworker COS rating process #1
  - Observation of coworker COS rating process #2
  - MD Birth-K COS Training (~10 hours, face-to-face)
  - Complete and pass MD COS Competency Check (after training)
  - National COS Competency Check (when available)
  - COS Process Record Review #1
  - COS Process Record Review #2
  - COS Process Record Review #3

### *Teaming and Coaching Practices*

- Teaming & Coaching Webinars (Rush & Shelden):
  - Teaming
  - Natural & Inclusive Learning Practices
- Coaching video clips (MAH website)
- DEC Recommended Practices Online Module and Performance Checklist:
  - Teaming & Collaboration

*Service Coordination* (applicable to all providers fulfilling service coordination roles/responsibilities)

- Local Service Coordination Training to include the MITP Service Coordination Handbook

See **Appendix A** for the *MITP Personnel Standards (Orientation & Training) Checklist*, including timelines.

**Please document completed personnel standards requirements in the database.**

## B. Supplemental State and/or National Certifications – Optional

The MITP recognizes the additional certifications and endorsements that early intervention personnel may acquire to further develop their own professional practices and improve the quality of service delivery. Examples include:

- Routines-Based Interview
  - National
  - State
  - Local Trainer/Coach
  - Local Implementer
- Routines-Based Intervention (Home Visiting)
  - National
- Pyramid Model (SEFEL)
  - State Trainer
  - Local Coach
- Reflective Coaching
  - State – Master Coach
- Infant & Early Childhood Mental Health Certificate Program
- Infant Mental Health Endorsement

## C. Ongoing Support

### *Regular Reflective Coaching*

Coaching is an ongoing and cyclical process. Regularity is a crucial factor in effective coaching practices. The ongoing coaching sessions are: scheduled **monthly** (recommended), or no less than once every other month, for at least the first 12 months; individual or in groups; in person or via phone or webinar (scheduled by the coach or programmatically as part of existing teaming structures); and used to review practices in a safe space that allows for thoughtful reflection and planning together. The use of fidelity checks (self-assessment and observed) guides conversations and reflections. Reflective coaching is not evaluative in nature.

Coaching sessions are conducted to review the training information, answer questions, provide guidance and encouragement, and refine personal/program action plans. Coaching interactions should incorporate the five key characteristics of coaching: joint planning, observation, action, reflection, and feedback.

### *Annual Professional Learning Opportunities*

All states are required to report the effectiveness of early intervention and preschool special education programs annually through the measurement of child outcomes. In Maryland, the Child Outcomes Summary (COS) Process is used to meet these federal requirements. All new staff are required to complete (2017) COS training and competency checks as outlined in the *Guide to B-K COS Process Training and Support (see Appendix B)*. In addition, programs are required to **ANNUALLY**, utilize the *COS Team Collaboration (COS-TC) Quality Practices* tool for continued reflection and improvement of teaming practices to ensure statewide consistency and fidelity.

The COS-TC Quality Practices includes:

- Checklists for Quality Practices
- Descriptions and Examples
- Video Clip Activities

Annual professional learning opportunities can assist practitioners to use the checklists, descriptions, examples, and videos to learn, reflect, and plan around the five areas of quality practices, which include: Planning for the COS, Explaining the COS Process to Families, Understanding Child Functioning, Building Consensus for a High-Quality COS Rating, and Interactive Practices.

The field of early intervention/preschool special education continues to evolve, thus professional development is a never-ending journey. Beyond the annual COS Quality Practices activities, the MSDE, DEI/SES may identify training topics/activities through regional/statewide Professional Learning Opportunities to be completed by all early intervention personnel. This may include activities such as watching a webinar, reading a journal article, completing a reflective checklist, etc. These activities may involve individual reflection as well as team/group reflection and even cross-system training.

The MSDE, DEI/SES also recognizes that local programs have annual professional development requirements. The DEC Recommended Practices (8 topic areas) are **highly recommended** to be included with local annual training requirements. DEC RPs tools include:

- Performance Checklists
- Practice Guides for Practitioners and Families
- Online Modules (to be built in to professional development activities)

#### **D. Early Intervention Providers Who Previously Met Personnel Standards (Prior to February 15, 2019)**

To ensure all personnel serving eligible children and families are grounded in the foundational principles and practices of early intervention, local early intervention providers who previously met personnel standards requirements through the verification of suitable qualifications process, must complete the following requirements:

##### *Foundations of Early Intervention*

- Universal Online Part C EI Curriculum module:
  - Mission & Key Principles

##### *IFSP Development, Implementation, Evaluation*

- MD IFSP Process & Document Training (2018)
- Child Outcomes Summary (COS) Completed Training Plan, including the COS Competency Check

**Please document completed personnel standards requirements in the database.**

# PRESCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION PERSONNEL STANDARDS *RECOMMENDATIONS*

High quality, effective personnel training and standards are essential for supporting positive outcomes for young children with developmental delays and disabilities and their families. In Maryland, the State Boards of Examiners and the State Board of Education promulgate personnel standards applicable to early childhood special educators and related services providers. In addition to being grounded in the foundational principles and practices of preschool special education, educators and providers who work with eligible preschool children and families need to understand effective development, implementation, and evaluation of the IEP process, and the evidence-based teaming and coaching practices that support natural and inclusive learning practices. Therefore, to ensure a consistently prepared preschool special education workforce, the following professional learning activities are **highly recommended**:

## **Foundations of Early Childhood Special Education**

- Goal & Key Principles Underlying the IEP Process

## **IEP Development, Implementation, Evaluation**

- DEC Recommended Practices Online Modules and Performance Checklists (ECTA):
  - Assessment
  - Environment
  - Family
  - Instruction
  - Interaction
  - Transition
- Assessment Webinars (Naomi Younggren):
  - Keep It Real, Make Way for Authentic Assessment
  - Authentic Assessment and the Connection to the COS Process
- COS Competency Requirements
  - DaSy Online Modules
  - Observation of coworker COS rating process #1
  - Observation of coworker COS rating process #2
  - MD Birth-K COS Training (~10 hours, face-to-face)
  - Complete and pass MD COS Competency Check (after training)
  - National COS Competency Check (when available)
  - COS Process Record Review #1
  - COS Process Record Review #2
  - COS Process Record Review #3

## **Teaming and Coaching Practices**

- Teaming & Coaching Webinars (Rush & Shelden):
  - Teaming
  - Natural & Inclusive Learning Practices
- Coaching video clips (MAH website)
- DEC Recommended Practices Online Module and Performance Checklist:
  - Teaming & Collaboration



## Regular Reflective Coaching

Coaching is an ongoing and cyclical process. Regularity is a crucial factor in effective coaching practices. The ongoing coaching sessions are: scheduled **monthly** (recommended), or no less than once every other month, for at least the first 12 months; individual or in groups; in person or via phone or webinar (scheduled by the coach or programmatically as part of existing teaming structures); and used to review practices in a safe space that allows for thoughtful reflection and planning together. The use of fidelity checks (self-assessment and observed) guides conversations and reflections. Reflective coaching is not evaluative in nature.

Coaching sessions are conducted to review the training information, answer questions, provide guidance and encouragement, and refine personal/program action plans. Coaching interactions should incorporate the five key characteristics of coaching: joint planning, observation, action, reflection, and feedback.

## Annual Professional Learning Opportunities - REQUIRED

All states are required to report the effectiveness of early intervention and preschool special education programs annually through the measurement of child outcomes. In Maryland, the Child Outcomes Summary (COS) Process is used to meet these federal requirements. All new staff are required to complete (2017) COS training and competency checks as outlined in the *Guide to B-K COS Process Training and Support (see Appendix B)*. In addition, programs are required to **ANNUALLY**, utilize the *COS Team Collaboration (COS-TC) Quality Practices* tool for continued reflection and improvement of teaming practices to ensure statewide consistency and fidelity.

The COS-TC Quality Practices includes:

- Checklists for Quality Practices
- Descriptions and Examples
- Video Clip Activities

The field of early intervention/preschool special education continues to evolve, thus professional development is a never-ending journey. Beyond the annual COS Quality Practices activities, the DEI/SES may identify training topics/activities through regional/statewide Professional Learning Opportunities to be completed by all preschool special education personnel. This may include activities such as watching a webinar, reading a journal article, completing a reflective checklist, etc. These activities may involve individual reflection as well as team/group reflection and even cross-system training.

The MSDE, DEI/SES also recognizes that local programs have annual professional development requirements. The DEC Recommended Practices (8 topic areas) are **highly recommended** to be included with local annual training requirements. DEC RPs tools include:

- Performance Checklists
- Practice Guides for Practitioners and Families
- Online Modules (to be built in to professional development activities)

## Appendix A: MITP Personnel Standards Checklist REQUIRED FOR EARLY INTERVENTION PROVIDERS

### Foundations of Early Intervention

[Universal Online Part C EI Curriculum](#) modules: may be completed at self-pace or with facilitator<sup>1</sup>  
found at: <http://universalonlinepartceicurriculum.pbworks.com/w/page/79643207/Online%20Curriculum>

Approx Time	Topic/Activity	Written Materials	Due From Hire Date	Date Completed
~30 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mission &amp; Key Principles<sup>1</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Looks Like/Doesn't Look Like</li> <li>EI/PSE Foundations</li> </ul>	3 months	
~30 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foundational Pillars of Early Intervention                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Family Centered Practices</li> <li>Children's Learning</li> <li>Natural Environments</li> <li>Adult Learning</li> <li>Quality Teaming</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Early Intervention Workbook	3 months	
	<a href="#">DEC Recommended Practices</a> found at: <a href="http://www.dec-sped.org/dec-recommended-practices">http://www.dec-sped.org/dec-recommended-practices</a>	DEC Recommended Practices with Examples	3 months	

### IFSP Development, Implementation, Evaluation

Approx Time	Topic/Activity	Written Materials	Due From Hire Date	Date Completed
~4 hrs	<a href="#">2018 MD IFSP Process &amp; Document Training</a> found at: <a href="http://demo.ifsp.tech/">http://demo.ifsp.tech/</a>	MD IFSP Process & Document Guide	3 months	
~1 hr	Universal Online Part C EI Curriculum module: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Authentic Assessment<sup>1</sup></li> </ul>		6 months	

Approx Time	Topic/Activity	Written Materials	Due From Hire Date	Date Completed
~1.5 hrs each	Authentic Assessment Webinars <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://marylandlearninglinks.org/early-childhood-plo-resource-authentic-assessment/">Keep it Real</a>: Make Way for AA found at: <a href="https://marylandlearninglinks.org/early-childhood-plo-resource-authentic-assessment/">https://marylandlearninglinks.org/early-childhood-plo-resource-authentic-assessment/</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://marylandlearninglinks.org/authentic-assessment-child-outcomes-connection-webinars/">AA, Child Outcomes, &amp; Connection</a> found at: <a href="https://marylandlearninglinks.org/authentic-assessment-child-outcomes-connection-webinars/">https://marylandlearninglinks.org/authentic-assessment-child-outcomes-connection-webinars/</a></li> </ul>	Webinar PPTs	12 months	
	<a href="http://olms.cte.jhu.edu/olms2/mdcos-gateway">Child Outcomes Summary (COS)</a> found at: <a href="http://olms.cte.jhu.edu/olms2/mdcos-gateway">http://olms.cte.jhu.edu/olms2/mdcos-gateway</a>			
~12 hrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COS Training Plan Components</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training Materials</li> </ul>	2 months	
~1 hr	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COS Competency Check (MD)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Age Anchoring Guidance Document</li> </ul>	12 months	
~1 hr	DEC Recommended Practices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online Modules<sup>2</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <a href="https://rpm.fpg.unc.edu/module-2-transition">Transition</a> found at: <a href="https://rpm.fpg.unc.edu/module-2-transition">https://rpm.fpg.unc.edu/module-2-transition</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Transition Module handouts	18 months	
~20 min	<a href="http://ectacenter.org/decrp/fcb.asp">Family Capacity-Building Module</a> found at: <a href="http://ectacenter.org/decrp/fcb.asp">http://ectacenter.org/decrp/fcb.asp</a>		24 months	

## Teaming & Coaching Practices

Approx Time	Topic/Activity	Written Materials	Due From Hire Date	Date Completed
~1.5 hrs each	<a href="#">Teaming &amp; Coaching Webinars</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence-Based Teaming Practices</li> <li>• Natural &amp; Inclusive Learning Practices</li> </ul> Found at: <a href="https://marylandlearninglinks.org/early-childhood-plo-resource-evidence-based-teaming-practices/">https://marylandlearninglinks.org/early-childhood-plo-resource-evidence-based-teaming-practices/</a> (password: ECPLO2017)  <a href="https://marylandlearninglinks.org/nlep-coaching-webinar/">https://marylandlearninglinks.org/nlep-coaching-webinar/</a>	OT, PT, SLP Articles Webinar handouts/PPTs	3 months	
~10-20 min ea.	Rush & Shelden <a href="#">coaching videos</a> on Making Access Happen website found at: <a href="https://medium.com/mah-coaching-support">https://medium.com/mah-coaching-support</a>		12 months	

Approx Time	Topic/Activity	Written Materials	Due From Hire Date	Date Completed
~1 hr	DEC Recommended Practices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online Modules<sup>2</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <a href="https://rpm.fpg.unc.edu/module-4-teaming">Teaming &amp; Collaboration</a> found at: <a href="https://rpm.fpg.unc.edu/module-4-teaming">https://rpm.fpg.unc.edu/module-4-teaming</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Teaming & Collaboration Module handouts	24 months	

**Service Coordination (for all personnel fulfilling service coordinator roles & responsibilities)**

Approx Time	Topic/Activity	Written Materials	Due From Hire Date	Date Completed
	Local Service Coordination Training	MD Service Coordination Handbook (2018)	6 months	

<sup>1</sup>The Universal Online Part C EI Curriculum modules (Mission & Key Principles, Foundational Pillars of EI, and Authentic Assessment) may be completed as self-paced online modules or in face-to-face training with a facilitator.

<sup>2</sup>The DEC Recommended Practices Online Modules are designed for professional development facilitators to incorporate into face-to-face training. Content may be tailored to fit within professional development activities.

**Annual Training Requirements:**

1. Programs utilize the [COS Team Collaboration \(COS-TC\) Quality Practices](#) for continued reflection and improvement of teaming practices. The COS-TC Quality Practices includes:
  - Checklists for Quality Practices
  - Descriptions and Examples
  - Video Clip Activities
 Found at: <http://ectacenter.org/eco/pages/costeam.asp>
2. MSDE PLO-Related requirement
3. DEC Recommended Practices (8 topic areas) are **highly recommended** to be included with local annual training requirements. DEC RPs tools include:
  - Performance Checklists
  - Practice Guides for Practitioners and Families
  - Online Modules (to be built in to professional development activities)

## Appendix B: MD Guide to B-K COS Process Training and Support (2017)

### **Guide to *Birth to Kindergarten* Child Outcomes and Child Outcomes Summary (COS) Process Training and Support**

The Maryland Early Childhood Intervention and Education System of Services is committed to providing effective services for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers with developmental delays and disabilities and their families. As a result of participating in services, young children will have improved: social-emotional skills, including social relationships; acquisition and use of knowledge and skills to engage in activities; and use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs and gain independence. This requires a competent workforce trained in understanding the three early childhood outcomes and in implementing the COS Rating Process with fidelity. The ENHANCE Research Project (2016) concluded that when implemented as intended, the COS process produces ratings that are valid for accountability and program improvement purposes. This guide provides a consistent plan for initial and ongoing training and support for all early childhood special education personnel as well as supplemental resources for additional support and/or to share with families and community partners.

#### **Initial Training**

The ENHANCE Research Project recommends 12 hours of training for personnel new to the COS process. The MSDE outlines the following components of a comprehensive training and follow-up coaching protocol to ensure consistent processes and procedures across the state.

1. New employees complete [ECTACenter/DaSy online modules](http://dasyonline.org/DaSyCOS2015) (within 2 weeks of hire) at: <http://dasyonline.org/DaSyCOS2015> (~2 hours)
2. New employees observe at least 2 real-time COS rating processes with co-workers.
3. On-site face-to-face training conducted (individually or in groups) (within 60 days of hire) using the MD Birth-K COS Trainer Support site. Training must be in person and takes ~10 hours to complete.
4. Personnel need to complete and pass the MD COS Competency Check, including the knowledge assessment questions. If they do not pass, the supervisor/training team need to develop a follow-up training plan to address areas still needing development.
5. Personnel need to pass the COS Competency Check (COS-CC) Level I and Level II (when available).
6. Supervisor/Training team reviews at least the first three records of new personnel completing the COS process to monitor documentation of authentic assessment, age-anchoring practices, and evidence and justification of COS rating. Feedback and reflection shared with the new employee.

Training Plan Component	Date Completed	Comments/follow-up
DaSy Online Modules		
Observation of coworker COS rating process #1		
Observation of coworker COS rating process #2		
MD Birth-K COS Training (~10 hours, face-to-face)		
Complete and pass MD COS Competency Check (after training)		
National COS Competency Check (when available)		
COS Process Record Review #1		
COS Process Record Review #2		
COS Process Record Review #3		
Additional Training:		

Employee Name \_\_\_\_\_ Jurisdiction \_\_\_\_\_ Hire Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Ongoing Fidelity and Refresher Training

Annually, programs utilize the COS Team Collaboration (COS-TC) Quality Practices for continued reflection and improvement of teaming practices.

The COS-TC Quality Practices includes:

- Checklists for Quality Practices
- Descriptions and Examples
- Video Clip Activities

The [COS-TC Quality Practices and Trainer's Guide](http://ectacenter.org/eco/pages/costeam.asp) can be accessed on the ECTA Center website:

<http://ectacenter.org/eco/pages/costeam.asp>

**Additional Case Studies and Training Resources** may be used to supplement the initial face-to-face training. Examples of when/how to use them include:

- During 1:1 coaching or supervision sessions for additional or clarifying information
- As part of team professional development and/or group discussions



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This document was developed using grant funding provided to the Maryland State Department of Education from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS)/Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

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Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.  
State Superintendent of Schools

Justin M. Hartings, Ph.D.  
President  
State Board of Education

Carol A. Williamson, Ed.D.  
Deputy State Superintendent for Teaching and Learning

Marcella E. Franczkowski, M.S.  
Assistant State Superintendent  
Division of Early Intervention and Special Education Services

Larry Hogan  
Governor

Maryland State Department of Education  
200 West Baltimore Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

[MarylandPublicSchools.org](http://MarylandPublicSchools.org)