

ELIGIBILITY AND ENROLLMENT POLICY

This policy establishes the eligibility criteria and enrollment process for Board programs. The policy is based on rules established by the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD), the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) and the Ohio Department of Health (ODH). The Erie County Board of DD (Board) believes that Erie County citizens with disabilities should enjoy timely and appropriate access to services.

The Superintendent shall establish, revise and keep current the procedures to be utilized in the implementation of this policy. The Superintendent/designee shall ensure compliance with these procedures. All revisions and changes will be shared with Board when made.

Superintendent Signature: Carrie Beier Date: 10/15/2020

Implemented: 11/18/04

Board Approval: 11/18/04, 7/17/14, 10/18/18, 10/15/2020

Reviewed: 12/15/05, 1/18/07, 7/17/14, 10/9/18, 10/15/2020

Revised: 12/15/2005, 1/18/2007, 7/17/2014, 10/9/18, 10/15/2020

Cross Reference:

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- I. It is the policy of the Board that only those individuals eligible for services will receive them.
- II. If an individual qualifies for Board operated programs or services, all reasonable efforts shall be made to accommodate and meet any special needs of the individual, given available Board resources. Whenever capacity limits enrollment, a waiting list shall be maintained by the Board in accordance with Board policy and the rules set forth by the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD).
- III. When a person who has been determined eligible for county board services after July 1, 1991 moves to or wants to move to another county in Ohio, that person may be considered to be eligible in the new county. Erie County, however, may review the person's eligibility. During the review, the person continues to be eligible to receive services according to the County Board's plan and priorities.
- IV. All persons who were eligible for services and receiving services from programs offered by the Erie County Board on July 1, 1991, shall continue to be eligible for those services and as long as they continue to receive and need services. All persons who were eligible for Service and Support Administration (SSA) services and receiving SSA services on January 10, 1992, shall continue to be eligible for SSA services as long as they are continuing to receive and in need of those services.

V. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- A. Must be a resident of Erie County. A resident is defined as an individual who currently lives within the geographic boundaries of Erie County, with the exception of those individuals who are living within a public or private institution or in a home subject to licensing by the Department of Jobs and Family Services, Department of Mental Health or the Department of Developmental Disabilities located within Erie County.
- B. Must meet guidelines under the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) rules for persons birth up to age three (3) with a developmental disability.
- C. Must meet guidelines under the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) rules for person three (3) through five (5) with a developmental disability.
- D. Must meet guidelines of the Children's Ohio Eligibility Determination Instrument (COEDI). The assessment tool prescribed by the State of Ohio to determine substantial functional limitations for persons age six (6) through fifteen (15) with a developmental disability.
- E. Must meet guidelines of the Ohio Eligibility Determination Instrument (OEDI). The assessment tool prescribed by the State of Ohio to determine substantial functional limitations for persons age sixteen (16) and over with a developmental disability.
- F. Developmental Disability means a severe, chronic disability that is characterized by all of the following:
 - 1. It is attributable to a mental or physical impairment or a combination of mental and physical impairments, other than a mental or physical impairment solely caused by mental illness as defined in division (A) of section 5122.01 of the Ohio Revised Code;

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2. It is manifested before age twenty-two (22);
3. It is likely to continue indefinitely; and
4. It results in one of the following:
 - a) In the case of a person under three (3) years of age, at least one developmental delay or a diagnosed physical or mental condition that has a high probability of resulting in a developmental delay.
 - b) In the case of a person at least three (3) years of age but under six (6) years of age, have an evaluation completed by or for the school district for preschool special education with at least two developmental delays.
 - c) In the case of a person six (6) years of age or older, a substantial functional limitation in at least three of the following areas of major life activity, as appropriate for the person's age: self-care, receptive and expressive language, learning, mobility, self-direction, capacity for independent living, and if the person is at least sixteen years of age, capacity for economic self-sufficiency.
 - d) It causes the person to need a combination and sequence of special, interdisciplinary, or other type of care, treatment, or provision of services for an extended period of time that is individually planned and coordinated for the person.

VI. REFERRAL PROCESS (birth up to 3 years of age)

- A. Referrals may be made by calling 800-755-GROW or online at www.helpmegrow.ohio.gov. All referrals for individual's prenatal to three (3) years of age will be forwarded to the Help Me Grow Statewide Central Intake Coordinator.
- B. A Help Me Grow Statewide Central Intake Coordinator will enter the referral information into the Early Intervention Database System. As soon as the referral is assigned to Erie County, the Manager of Children's' Options assigns a Service Coordinator to the family to coordinate the eligibility process. Infants and toddlers in the Early Intervention Help Me Grow Program shall be evaluated and/or assessed at a minimum of annually according to the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities rules.
- C. Specifically, regarding the Early Intervention program, once all records have been received and necessary evaluations completed, the assigned evaluators will make a determination as to whether or not the individual is eligible for or continues be eligible for Early Intervention services.
- D. Those referred to the Early Intervention program will have their eligibility determined within 45 days of initial program referral.

VII. REFERRAL PROCESS (3 through 5 years of age)

- A. Referrals may be made by phone, walk-in or in writing. All referrals for individuals three (3) years through five (5) years of age shall be forwarded to the Individual and Family Supports Department.
- B. The referral is entered into the database. Within seven (7) days, the Individual and Family Support (IFS) Specialist or designee shall contact the parent or custodial

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guardian to explain the process of eligibility. The IFS Specialist/designee will make the parent or custodial guardian aware that the eligibility policy is available upon request.

- C. Within three (3) working days of the initial referral, the following items shall be sent to the parent or custodial guardian by the IFS Specialist/designee:
 - 1. A cover letter describing the intake process;
 - 2. An application for enrollment;
 - 3. Applicable releases of information;
 - 4. And, if requested, the Eligibility and Enrollment policy.
- D. If the completed application and applicable releases are not returned within ten (10) working days from the date mailed, the IFS Specialist/designee shall contact the parent or custodial guardian to determine if additional assistance is needed.
- E. If no application or release is received within this timeframe a letter will be mailed to the parent or custodial guardian along with another application and consent releases. If this is not received within an additional ten (10) working days, the referral will be returned, and no further attempts will be initiated. This process should not exceed twenty (20) days.
- F. When the completed applications/ releases are returned, the IFS Specialist/designee/ will send the release to the appropriate parties to gather information needed to determine eligibility. If no information is received after ten (10) working days, the IFS Specialist/designee will contact the school to request records.
- G. If collateral information is not received within this time frame, the IFS Specialist/designee will contact/ follow-up with the school with three (3) attempts in 30 days. If collateral information is not received, the referral will be closed.
- H. Evaluation information and/ or existing written information shall be reviewed within three (3) working days of receipt.
 - 1. For children ages three (3) to five (5), record reviews will be completed to determine eligibility through multi-factored evaluation.
- I. Once all records have been received, the referral packet will be given to the Individual and Family Supports Manager who will make a determination as to whether or not the individual is eligible for services.
- J. If the individual is determined eligible for services, the Individual and Family Supports Manager/ designee will send out the eligibility letter to the parent or custodial guardian and include the following:
 - 1. Civil Rights policy;
 - 2. Administrative Resolution of Complaints Policy.
- K. For those individuals who are determined not to be eligible for the Board's programs and services, the Board shall send a letter notifying the parent or custodial guardian of the decision along with a copy of the following:
 - 1. Civil Rights policy;
 - 2. Administrative Resolution of Complaints Policy;
 - 3. Erie County Community Resource Guide (a list of alternative services).
- L. Eligibility may be re-determined if a change occurs in the individual's function level as new information is obtained relative to the individual's disability status. The Board reserves the right to deny requests for redetermination when there is no new

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information available or there have been no significant changes to the individual's functioning level as related to the developmental disability. The individual has a right to due process should this occur.

- M. The Erie County Board shall complete eligibility determination within forty-five (45) calendar days of the request for services and/or after all necessary information has been received from the referring party or application. All attempts to obtain delayed information should be documented and maintained in the individual's central record. If delayed information cannot be obtained within fifty (50) days from the original request the referral will be closed.
- N. Copies of all letters, release and records received, original evaluations and documented contacts shall be maintained in the individual's official record. Documents used to determine eligibility shall be maintained indefinitely.

VIII. REFERRAL PROCESS (6 years of age and older)

- A. Referrals may be made by phone, walk-in or in writing. All referrals for individuals six (6) years of age and older shall be forwarded to the Individual and Family Support Department.
- B. Within seven (7) days, the IFS Specialist/designee shall contact the individual (or their designee) to explain the process of eligibility. The IFS Specialist/designee will make the individual aware that the eligibility policy is available upon request.
- C. Within three (3) working days of the initial referral, the following items shall be sent to the individual (or their designee) by the IFS Specialist/designee:
 - 1. A cover letter describing the intake process;
 - 2. An application for enrollment;
 - 3. Applicable releases of information;
 - 4. And, if requested, the Eligibility and Enrollment policy.
- D. If the completed application and applicable releases are not returned within ten (10) working days from the date mailed, the IFS Specialist/designee shall contact the individual (or their designee) to determine if additional assistance is needed.
- E. If no application or release is received within this timeframe a letter will be mailed to the individual (or their designee) along with another application and consent releases. If this is not received within an additional ten (10) working days, the referral will be returned, and no further attempts will be initiated. This process should not exceed twenty (20) days.
- F. When the completed applications/ releases are returned, the IFS Specialist/designee will send the release to the appropriate parties to gather information needed to determine eligibility. If no information is received after ten (10) working days, the IFS Specialist/designee will contact the doctor and/or school to request records.
- G. If collateral information is not received within this time frame, the IFS Specialist/designee will contact/ follow-up with the doctor and/or school with three (3) attempts in 30 days.
 - 1. If another doctor is contacted, then the time period (Steps F & G) will start over.
 - 2. The maximum of 90 days (from the first attempt) will be allowed for getting the diagnosis, no matter the number of doctors contacted.

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3. If collateral information is not received, the referral will be closed.
- H. Evaluation information and/ or existing written information shall be reviewed with the IFS Manager within three (3) working days of receipt.
- I. If all required collateral documentation is present and the individual has a qualifying diagnosis, the referral packet will be sent to the Clearwater Council of Government (COG).
- J. The COG will follow their policy and procedure regarding administering the OEDI and COEDI.
- K. Once all records have been received and necessary evaluations completed, the assigned evaluator will make a determination as to whether or not the individual is eligible for services.
- L. The individual's file will then be forwarded to Individual and Family Supports Manager for review and signature.
- M. If the Individual and Family Supports Manager does not concur with the eligibility decision, the Manager shall:
 1. Contact the Manager of Program Operations at the COG and explain the disagreement.
 2. The Manager of Program Operations at the COG will review the completed eligibility and provide feedback to the Individual and Family Supports Manager.
 3. If there are changes to the COEDI/OEDI evaluation tool following self-review this will be forwarded to the Individual and Family Supports Manager or designee.
 4. If the Individual and Family Supports Manager still does not concur with the eligibility decision, they may choose to give a provisional eligibility.
 5. When a provisional eligibility is determined, the individual will be eligible for services for a limited period of time. A month before the provisional eligibility period expires a redetermination will be completed.
- N. If the individual is determined eligible for services and the Individual and Family Supports Manager concurs with the decision, the Manager/ designee will send out the eligibility letter to the individual (or their designee) and include the following:
 1. Civil Rights policy;
 2. Administrative Resolution of Complaints Policy.
- O. For those individuals who are determined not to be eligible for the Board's programs and services, the Board shall send a letter notifying the individual (or their designee) of the decision along with a copy of the following:
 1. Civil Rights policy;
 2. Administrative Resolution of Complaints Policy;
 3. Erie County Community Resource Guide (a list of alternative services).
- P. Eligibility may be re-determined if a change occurs in the individual's function level as defined by the OEDI or COEDI or new information is obtained relative to the individual's disability status. The Board reserves the right to deny requests for redetermination when there is no new information available or there have been no significant changes to the individual's functioning level as related to the developmental disability. The individual has a right to due process should this occur.

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- Q. The Erie County Board shall complete eligibility determination within forty-five (45) calendar days of the request for services and/or after all necessary information has been received from the referring party or application. All attempts to obtain delayed information should be documented and maintained in the individual's central record. If delayed information cannot be obtained within one hundred and ten (110) days from original request the referral will be returned to the Board and closed.
- R. Copies of all letters, release and records received, original evaluations and documented contacts shall be maintained in the individual's official record. Documents used to determine eligibility shall be maintained indefinitely.

IX. RECORD KEEPING

- A. All demographic information will be entered in the state data keeping system and Erie County Board data keeping system.
- B. The evaluator will forward the completed eligibility file to the Individual and Family Support Department.
- C. All information on individuals found to be eligible or ineligible shall be maintained indefinitely after the determination is made.

X. DUE PROCESS

- A. Eligibility determinations are subject to the Board's Administrative Resolution of Complaints process.
- B. An individual who wishes to appeal a decision may, at their request, be assisted by an advocate to speak on their behalf. If the individual has difficulty in reading or writing, an oral appeal may be put in writing by the designee of the Director of Individual and Family Supports or an advocate selected by the individual.