

North Carolina Infant-Toddler Program ***SYSTEM OF PAYMENTS NOTIFICATION***

The lead agency for the North Carolina Infant-Toddler Program (ITP) is the Early Intervention Branch of the Women's and Children's Health Section in the NC Division of Public Health. On the local level, the Children's Developmental Services Agencies (CDSAs) administer activities for the ITP. This written notice is to inform you of the ITP's System of Payments. This document is a summary of the ITP's Fees, Billing and Reimbursement Policy and other related information which can be located for review at the Program's website, www.bearly.nc.gov, Resources / Publications Section.

ITP SLIDING FEE SCALE (SFS):

- The ITP uses a Sliding Fee Scale (SFS) to determine a family's ability or inability to pay for ITP services.
- A copy of the ITP SFS and Fee Schedules are available at the Program's website (www.bearly.nc.gov).
- No family can be denied ITP services due to inability to pay.

"NO COST TO FAMILY" SERVICES:

- The following ITP services are provided at no cost to all families, regardless of the family's determined ability to pay:
 - child-find activities, evaluation and assessment, service coordination, administrative and coordinative activities related to the development, review, and evaluation of the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) and implementation of procedural safeguards.
- All services provided to a family before Initial IFSP development (enrollment) are "No Cost to Family" Services.

"CHARGEABLE" SERVICES:

- "Chargeable Services" are all other ITP services, other than those listed above as "No Cost to Family".
- The family cost share (SFS percentage) is applied to all chargeable ITP services, consented to by the family, on the IFSP.

INCOME VERIFICATION / SFS DETERMINATION:

- Family size and family adjusted gross income are used to determine the SFS percentage or cost share.
- Verification documents are requested at referral and annually after enrollment.
- If a family is determined unable to pay for ITP services, the SFS% will be established at 0%.
- If a family declines to provide needed family size and income verification information, their SFS percentage will be established at 100%.
- A family will be informed of their SFS% by CDSA staff in order to consider the cost of IFSP services when choosing to accept or decline services.
- As described in *the North Carolina Infant-Toddler Program Notice of Child and Family Rights*, a family may contest the determination of any fee at any time.
- Monthly Maximum - A family's monthly cost share for the services consented to on the IFSP should not exceed 5% of the family's monthly gross income. The CDSA will inform the family of their monthly cap amount.

HARDSHIP ADJUSTMENT:

- A family may apply at any time for consideration of a hardship adjustment to their SFS percentage if their financial situation changes or they are impacted by any extraordinary medical expenses.

CONSENT FOR USE OF PRIVATE INSURANCE AND MEDICAID:

- "No Cost to Family" Services - With written consent, the ITP will bill private insurance and/or public insurance (Medicaid) for these services. If consent to bill is not provided, the ITP must still make available the "no cost to family" services, for which the parent has provided consent to receive, without delay or denial and at no cost to the family.
- Chargeable Services - With written consent from the family to bill private insurance and / or public insurance (Medicaid), the ITP will bill these sources for the ITP services.
 - When an ITP service is not covered by an insurance benefit plan, the family cost share (SFS percentage) will be applied to the ITP Rate (Medicaid Rate) for chargeable services.
 - When an ITP service is covered by insurance, the family cost share (SFS percentage) will be applied to any insurance plan assigned balance after plan benefits payments are made. A family will not be charged an amount above the ITP rate (Medicaid rate).

MEDICAID:

- The ITP cannot require a child to be enrolled in Medicaid to receive ITP services.
- If a child is enrolled in Medicaid, parent consent must be obtained prior to the point an ITP provider would disclose personally identifiable information to Medicaid for billing purposes.
- A parent has the right to withdraw consent at any time to disclose personally identifiable information to Medicaid for billing purposes.
- Use of Medicaid for Early Intervention Services in North Carolina DOES NOT result in any of the following:
 - 1) Decrease in available lifetime coverage or any other insured benefit for that child or parent under that program,
 - 2) Child's parents paying for services that would otherwise be covered by public benefits or insurance program,
 - 3) Increase in premiums or discontinuation of public benefits or insurance for the child or parent, or
 - 4) Loss of eligibility for the child or the child's parents for home and community-based waivers based on total health-related cost.
- If a child is covered by public insurance (Medicaid) and private insurance, Medicaid policy requires that private insurance be billed first. If the private insurance is billed, the insurance company may send the Explanation of Benefits (EOB) and payment to the family rather than directly to the provider. If a family receives payment, all checks and paperwork must be turned over to the ITP service provider for payment.

PRIVATE INSURANCE:

- A parent must provide written consent in order for the ITP to use private insurance to pay for a child's early intervention services. There may be costs associated with billing private insurance for ITP services. Examples of insurance plan assigned balances for which the family may be responsible are co-pays, premiums, deductibles, and co-insurance.
- A parent has the option of choosing not to bill private insurance and paying directly for chargeable services at the ITP rate (Medicaid rate).
- If a parent elects to consent to use private insurance to pay for ITP services:
 - The parent must provide written consent before the ITP can use private insurance to pay for a child's early intervention services.
 - The parent's written consent is required anytime there is an increase (in frequency, length, duration, or intensity) in the provision of services on the IFSP.
- If insurance is billed, the insurance company may send the Explanation of Benefits and payment to the family rather than directly to the provider. If this happens, all checks and paperwork must be turned over to the ITP service provider for payment.

CDSA FEE COLLECTION POLICY:

All payments for services provided by the CDSA and authorized ITP providers are due within 30 days of the invoice date, and families are expected to pay within this time period. If payment is not made for three months from initial invoice without arrangements for a payment plan, the CDSA is obligated to initiate collection procedures. This includes 1) notifying the North Carolina Attorney General's Office of the past due account, and 2) the CDSA is obligated to file delinquent accounts with the North Carolina Department of Revenue, subject to Debt Setoff Collection Against Individual Income Tax Refunds Policy in accordance with G.S. 105A Setoff Debt Collection Act. This means that funds from individual tax refunds may be withheld against any unpaid debt to the CDSA for services provided.

REASON ITP REQUESTS SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER:

The ITP has worked to minimize the use of Social Security Numbers within its practices. The ITP is required to request the Social Security Number of the adult who is financially responsible for a child referred to or enrolled in the ITP. The ITP requests a parent's Social Security Number to fulfill its legal obligations to the State under N.C.G.S. 105A-3 and N.C.G.S. 147-86.21 in the event there is a need to collect a debt that is owed to this Agency. Federal and State law protects the privacy and security of Social Security Numbers and the ITP will not disclose Social Security Numbers for any other purpose than debt collection, or otherwise as required by law.

PRIVACY POLICY

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of children and parents who receive services from the ITP. Information concerning a child or family member is confidential and must not be exchanged among service providers without written authorization from the parent, except under special circumstances where this release is allowable by law such as a health or safety emergency, under court order, or as an allowable child find activity. The agency, however, may release confidential information to its own employees who have a legitimate need for access to the information.

Frequently Asked Questions

Costs for Infant-Toddler Program (ITP) Services

1. What will it cost my family to participate in the Infant-Toddler Program? How will my portion of the cost be determined?

Some families may share in the cost of early intervention services based on a sliding fee scale (SFS) that considers adjusted gross income (AGI) and family size. The sliding fee scale percentage sets the family's ability to pay or share in the cost. The sliding fee scale percentage will be determined before a child enrolls in the ITP and is reviewed each year.

2. What do I need to provide to determine my portion of the cost?

You will need to provide information about your family unit to your service coordinator. This includes all who live in your household, their ages, and their family relationship to you and your child. You must also submit financial documents to the Children's Developmental Services Agency (CDSA) business office to verify the AGI of your family. Verifying enrollment in another state program, such as Medicaid, may be sufficient to set your SFS percentage. On the *North Carolina Infant-Toddler Program Family Notification for Verification of Income* form, you will find information about the documents needed to verify your income, the required timeline, and the name of your CDSA business office contact. Choosing not to submit financial documents sets your SFS percentage at 100%. That means you will be responsible for paying for all chargeable services.

3. Is there a cost for Infant-Toddler Program services?

Many services are provided at no cost to all families. These services which are at no cost to families are child find activities, service coordination, evaluation and assessment, development and review of the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), and activities to ensure family rights. Families may have costs for all other services. Your service coordinator will review each service on the IFSP and notify you if the service may have a family cost.

4. Will my health insurance be billed?

Your family's private insurance will be billed for services, with your consent. If you consent, the SFS percentage will be applied to any base charges that your insurance plan assigns to the family. They include co-pays, co-insurance, or deductibles. Some health insurance plans pay for early intervention services based on your child's covered benefits. If the service is not a covered benefit, the base charge for the service will be the ITP rate (which is the Medicaid Rate). The SFS percentage will be applied to the base charge. Medicaid or other public funding sources will be billed as appropriate, with your consent.

5. What if my family's financial situation changes after the cost share is determined?

If your family experiences an unplanned event such as loss of employment or income or extensive medical expenses, you may request a financial review and hardship adjustment. Your service coordinator can assist you with this process.