



Department of Developmental Disabilities
Division of Policy and Strategic Direction

Mike DeWine, Governor
Jeff Davis, Director

To: Ohio Early Intervention Partners and Stakeholders
From: Kim Hauck, Deputy Director, Division of Policy and Strategic Direction
Date: May 21, 2021
Re: In-person EI activities in home and community settings

During the past year, Ohio's Early Intervention (EI) partners and stakeholders moved quickly to ensure the continuity of services provided through the state's EI system. You worked tirelessly to support families, learned new skills for virtual service delivery, and engaged in creative problem solving. Through your hard work, you continued to provide evaluations, EI services, and increased service coordination to families—positively affecting the developmental trajectory of thousands of children.

On May 12, 2021, Governor Mike DeWine announced that most public health orders would be lifted on June 2. During the past year, the overwhelming majority of EI services have been provided virtually. Since in-person services can now be provided safely in many cases, please use the time leading up to June 2 to determine how your agency will transition to providing services in-person if you have not already done so. As you engage in this planning process, DODD is providing the following guidance:

- If the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) team, which includes the family receiving services, determines that an EI service should be provided in-person, agencies should accommodate this method of service delivery.
- Virtual EI service delivery was an option for service method prior to the pandemic, and it remains a viable option if the IFSP team, which includes the family receiving services, determines that a virtual method is appropriate.
- Some families may not be comfortable with in-person interactions. Therefore, DODD is continuing to allow virtual evaluations consistent with [existing guidance](#) through at least August 31, 2021.
- If a family asks a provider to wear a mask for in-person services, agencies should accommodate this request.
- A family's decision not to receive a COVID-19 vaccination cannot be used to deny EI services.
- Agencies must comply with any relevant state or local public health orders.

- Agencies must have a policy/procedure in place that reflects how the agency will make decisions about service delivery that are consistent and equitable across families and consistent with all relevant EI rules and guidance.

Thank you again for your work this past year to serve children and families. If you have any questions, about the above guidance, please reach out to your EI program consultant.