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1.0 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

- 1.1.1. The purpose of this procedure is to provide instructions to ensure eligible children receive timely assessment, appropriate early intervention services, continuity of services, and transition supports and services from Connecticut Birth to Three System regardless of temporary or chronic homelessness, in order to maintain compliance with.


2.0 REFERENCES

2.1 Associated Documents

- 2.1.1. Evaluation and Assessment Procedure
- 2.1.2. Exiting and Transitioning Procedure
- 2.1.3. Transfer Between Programs Procedure
- 2.1.4. Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)
- 2.1.5. Early Intervention (EI) Record
- 2.1.6. Family Handbooks and Videos Procedures
- 2.1.7. Form 3-1, Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)
- 2.1.8. Form 3-8, Approval to Include Local School District
- 2.1.9. Notification to School Districts Procedure

2.2 Source Information

- 2.2.1. Connecticut Birth to Three Children Who Are Homeless Procedure. Effective Jan. 1, 2006. Revised June 16, 2021.

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3.0 INSTRUCTIONS

3.1 Identification of Homelessness


3.1.1. **APPLY** all procedural safeguards and Birth to Three procedures to a child and their parents who meet the homeless criteria, regardless of whether or not parent(s) define their family as homeless, as follows:

1. The federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 2002 Title X, Part C of the No Child Left Behind Act, Sec. 725 defines homeless children as “individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence...” including those who:

- are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason.
- are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative accommodations.
- are living in emergency or transitional shelters.
- are abandoned in hospitals.
- are awaiting foster care placement.
- have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.
- are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus, train stations, or similar settings.
- migratory children who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described above.

3.1.2. **PROVIDE** any additional assistance to homeless children who are either:

- Transferring programs.
- Waiting for initial assignment to a program.

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NOTE

The purpose for doing this step is to alert the receiving service coordinator(s).

3.1.3. With parent agreement, **WHEN** homelessness is identified,

THEN Service Coordinator (s) **DOCUMENT** such in the child's record.

1. **UNDERSTAND** this information is for receiving Service Coordinator(s) to take extra measures for:

- Ensuring completion of visits.
- Managing no-shows without a quick exit.
- Ensuring transition plan is current.

3.2 Evaluation and Assessment


3.2.1. **COMPLETE** eligibility evaluation or assessment using same tools for children identified as homeless, as those referred to or enrolled in Connecticut Birth to Three System.

1. **USE** the following tools for evaluation:

- Timelines
- Evaluation tools
- Criteria
- Personnel involved

2. **REFER** to the following procedures and resources for more information:

- Evaluation and Assessment Procedure
- Transfer Between Programs Procedure
- Exiting and Transitioning Procedure
- Family Handbooks and videos

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3.2.1 (continued)

3. **COMPLETE** evaluations or assessments in the child’s natural environment.

a. **UNDERSTAND** natural environments vary with every child and may include any of the following:

- Homeless shelter
- Domestic violence shelter
- Substance abuse rehabilitation shelter

b. **KNOW** Department of Children and Families (DCF) and parent may mutually choose location for evaluation or assessment.

c. **DISCUSS** and **CONSIDER** the following when choosing a location:

- Level of distractions.
- Familiarity and comfort for the child.
- Privacy and safety.
- Confident the testing situation permits a valid indication of the child’s current abilities and areas of need.


3.3 Early Intervention Services (EIS) and Placement

3.3.1. **PROVIDE** eligible infants and toddlers with same types of supports and services that the following indicate as appropriate:

- Parent values and priorities
- Child's needs
- Research-based practices

3.3.2. **ENSURE** Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) is developed and implemented **PER** Individualized Family Service Plan Procedure.

3.3.3. **PROVIDE** support and services in a natural setting where children without disabilities live, learn, and play, unless child's early intervention outcomes will **NOT** be achieved in a natural environment.

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3.3.4. **IF** homeless families reside in a shelter,

THEN OBTAIN parental permission to include shelter staff on IFSP team, if necessary.

1. **UNDERSTAND** and **RESPECT** the following:

- a. Parents may be more concerned about securing housing and other basic needs for themselves and their child rather than about any particular developmental progress or regression the child is displaying.
- b. Parent may not see themselves as homeless despite meeting the federal definition, particularly parents who share housing.
- c. When discussing family goals during IFSP development or review, the parent may or may not choose to list "find and secure stable housing" on the IFSP. Since the word homeless is often stigmatizing, it may be best to avoid it entirely, focusing instead on accessing appropriate community services to meet family outcomes.


3.4 Continuity of Services on Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP)

3.4.1. Service Coordinator (s) **ENSURE** parents understand the importance of informing coordinator ahead of time of anticipated change in address.

1. **IF** parent and child's address is expected to change to a location the provider program does **NOT** serve,

THEN PERFORM the following:

- a. Quickly **FOLLOW** Transfer Between Programs procedure to prevent or reduce gaps in supports and services.
- b. **FACILITATE** parent's choice of a Birth to Three program serving their new town.

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3.4.1. (continued)

2. **IF** families who relocate precipitously due to unforeseen events and missing scheduled visits, such as:

- Eviction
- Domestic violence
- Who do not give prior notice of relocation

THEN PERFORM the following:

a. Using reasonable effort, **OBTAIN** parent and child's new contact information

(1) **CONSIDER** using the following strategies for obtaining contact information:

- **CALL** secondary phone numbers (cellular or office).
- **CALL** extended family members whose information was provided at intake.
- **CONTACT** community agency staff for whom a release of information has been granted.

(2) **IF** reasonable efforts are made in obtaining contact information **AND** the following conditions are met:

- Contact with a parent was **NOT** achieved.

THEN FOLLOW Exiting and Transitioning Procedure.

3.5 Communication with School Districts

3.5.1. Service Coordinator(s) **DISCUSS** transition with a parent.

1. **RECOGNIZE** the following laws and regulations mandate protections and services for homeless children and youth.

- McKinney-Vento Act Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a)
- Individuals With Disabilities Act (IDEA)

2. **FOLLOW** Exit and Transition Procedure.



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- 3.5.2. Service Coordinator (s) **REQUEST** parental consent to contact any applicable school district’s McKinney-Vento Coordinator identified on State Department of Education website.
 - 1. **KNOW** districts are encouraged to explore the family's current situation **AND** examine feasibility of enrolling child in the school district where the family was last considered permanently housed.

- 3.5.3. Service Coordinator (s) **PROVIDE** parents with additional information regarding the McKinney-Vento Act and its provisions.
 - 1. **OBTAIN** necessary information from the State Department of Education website at www.ct.gov.
 - a. **TYPE** Homeless Education in the search box.
 - 2. **OBTAIN** additional assistance from Connecticut State Coordinator of Education for Homeless Children and Youth at State Department of Education, if necessary.

END of Instructions

4.0 REVISION HISTORY

Location	Description of Change
All	New Human Factored Procedure in New Template.