

Professional Conduct

Bureau of Child Development Services (BCDS) - First Steps

In order to maintain the highest standards and quality of care, the Division of Family Resources is outlining minimum standards of practice. Providers are expected to maintain the utmost professional behavior while representing the First Steps system.

- Providers are expected to meet and maintain all licensing, credentialing and ethical codes as established by individual licensing agencies as well as through First Steps.
- Services will only be provided when skilled intervention is necessary.
- Services may only be provided with the parent or other primary caregiver present and actively involved.
- Services provided must be designed to assist the child or family in addressing outcomes as outlined in the IFSP.
- Services should be provided as established on the IFSP and as scheduled with the parent/caregiver.
- Providers are required to notify parents/caregivers in advance of missed or late sessions. If advance notice is not possible due to unforeseen circumstances, immediate notification is required. Lack of notification of missed or late sessions, similar to a no-call, no-show, may be grounds for termination of the provider agreement.
- Providers (including the Service Coordinator) may not bring children/minors or other individuals not directly involved in the provision of care of the child, to early intervention services or the residence of the child or family. Doing so would be considered a breach in confidentiality and would interfere with the provider's ability to perform their job. Parents may not be requested to waive this policy. With prior consent of the family, therapy students gaining required practical experience, and who are supervised by the specialist level therapist, are excluded from this provision.
- No provider in the system may solicit business from parents or caregivers.
- Providers may not solicit business for their agency, other providers, spouse or immediate family.
- Providers may not sell or market products while representing First Steps.
- Providers may not lobby to families within the system, while representing First Steps.
- Behaviors and attitudes must portray the values of the First Steps system and that of family centered care. Services shall be family-centered, inclusive and culturally competent.
- Providers must maintain professional relationships and boundaries with families served within the First Steps system. Providers may not provide services to members of their immediate family or individuals in which a professional relationship would be compromised.