

Chapter 6



COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

Arizona Early Intervention Program

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6.0.0 Comprehensive System of Personnel Development**6.1.0 Authority:** 20 U.S.C. 1431 § 635; 34 C.F.R. § 303.118**6.2.0 Policy****6.2.1 Overview**

1. DES/AzEIP coordinates and maintains a comprehensive system of personnel development known as the AzEIP Professional Development, Learning and Sustainability System, which directly coordinates with the General Supervision System (Chapter 2) and the Technical Assistance System (Chapter 5). The AzEIP Professional Development, Learning and Sustainability System includes:
 - A. Training for personnel to implement innovative strategies and activities for the recruitment and retention of early intervention service providers;
 - B. Promoting the preparation of early intervention service providers who are fully and appropriately qualified to provide early intervention services in AzEIP; and
 - C. Training providers to coordinate transition services for children in AzEIP and their families who are transitioning to an early childhood program, including a special education preschool, Head Start; and training personnel to support families in participating fully in the development and implementation of child's and family's Individualized Family Service Plan.
2. In addition, DES/AzEIP may collaborate with other training systems, such as Arizona's Parent Training and Information Center (Raising Special Kids) and other early education agencies to ensure training of families and other stakeholders on the provisions of IDEA, Part C.

6.2.2 AzEIP Service Providing Agencies

1. The AzEIP Service Providing Agencies:
 - A. Support coordinated in-service training and continuing professional development opportunities to ensure that the early intervention personnel, whether employed or contracted, are appropriately knowledgeable and skilled in the delivery of early intervention services, and understand the basic components and requirements of AzEIP;
 - B. Establish and maintain consistent, statewide personnel qualifications for all employed or contracted early intervention providers;
 - C. Monitor employees and contractors to ensure adherence to the personnel requirements; and
 - D. Use a flexible combination of methods to ensure that personnel are trained, by collaborating to:

- (1) Provide training directly to personnel;
- (2) Develop and share training across agencies;
- (3) Contract with knowledgeable individuals or organizations to provide training; and
- (4) Sponsor or endorse existing conferences or training events that promote the knowledge and skills of early intervention personnel and/or the awareness and understanding of AzEIP.

6.2.3 General Supervision

1. DES/AzEIP monitors compliance with the Professional Development System requirements through the General Supervision System and implements Corrective Action Plans when a program or agency has not complied with the requirements.
2. AzEIP's Technical Assistance System also coordinates with the Professional Development, Learning and Sustainability System, providing ongoing guidance and assistance to early intervention professionals to enhance their knowledge, confidence, and performance.

6.2.4 Preservice Professional Preparation

1. The AzEIP Professional Development, Learning and Sustainability System promotes varied approaches to extend the appropriate knowledge, skills, and understanding of AzEIP to preservice professional preparation programs. The AzEIP Professional Development, Learning and Sustainability System provides technical assistance and guidance to assist universities and college programs to successfully integrate the identified requirements for professional knowledge, skills, and understanding of AzEIP into course work and curricula.
2. Pre-service training programs may request approval from DES/AzEIP to offer a pre-service training program as a mechanism to fulfill certain AzEIP Standards of Practice requirements. (See Section 6.4.0 for information about the Standards of Practice) Upon completion, graduates of AzEIP-approved pre-service training programs will have satisfied the agreed-upon requirements for the AzEIP Standards of Practice.

6.2.5 Collaboration with Part B

1. DES/AzEIP's professional development system is consistent with the comprehensive personnel development system for Part B, as appropriate.
2. DES/AzEIP and ADE work jointly to ensure consistent training for Part C and Part B personnel on the requirements of the Transition Intergovernmental Agreement and the Child Find Intergovernmental Agreement.

6.3.0 Personnel Qualifications Policy – 34 C.F.R. § 303.119**6.3.1 General**

1. AzEIP personnel qualifications apply to personnel who are providing early intervention services to children and their families.
2. The personnel qualifications include two components: educational qualifications and the Standards of Practice and are established for the following personnel categories:
 - A. Core team members: developmental special instructionists; occupational therapists; physical therapists; and speech-language pathologists;
 - B. Service Coordinators; and
 - C. Other Team members: psychologists, social workers, and other Part C early intervention service providers.
3. The State of Arizona maintains professional licensure, certification, and/or registration for many of the disciplines used in the provision of early intervention services. This licensure, certification, and/or registration are independent of AzEIP.

6.3.2 Service Coordinators

1. Educational qualifications for Service Coordinators, include one the following requirements:
 - A. A minimum of a Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood, Early Childhood Special Education, Family Studies, or meeting the proscribed professional requirements and rules of professional conduct for that discipline or profession [as noted in 6.3.3(4)].
 - B. A Bachelor's degree in a closely related field (e.g., Psychology, Social Work, Elementary Education, or Sociology) with review of coursework and approval by DES/AzEIP; or
 - C. For Service Coordinators, if hired in the AzEIP system as a Developmental Special Instructionist or Service Coordinator before July 1, 2001, documentation of continued satisfactory work in the AzEIP system in the same position (i.e., Developmental Special Instructionist or Service Coordinator) from that date of hire.
2. Approval for Service Coordinators with a bachelor's degree in a closely related field requires a minimum of six courses related to the work of a Service Coordinator. Three of those courses must be specifically focused on early childhood development, including atypical development, education of exceptional children, and/or assessment and evaluation of infants and toddlers. An example of courses includes, but is not limited to: early childhood development; family relationships, infant and toddler mental health; early childhood psychology, and cultural competence for child and family relationships.

6.3.3 Core Team Members

1. Educational qualifications for developmental special instructionists, include the following requirements:
 - A. A minimum of a Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood, Child Development, Early Childhood Special Education, Special Education with an Early Childhood Endorsement, Family Studies; or
 - B. For developmental special instructionists, if hired in the AzEIP system as a developmental special instructionist or before July 1, 2001, documentation of continued satisfactory work in the AzEIP system in the same position (i.e., developmental special instructionist or service coordinator) from that date of hire.
 - C. For developmental special instructionists, if hired, and approved with a related degree to provide services as a DSI prior to July 1, 2016, documentation of continued satisfactory work in the AzEIP system in the same position (i.e., developmental special instructionist) from that date of hire.
3. Approval for a Master's degree to bill as a developmental special instructionist requires:
 - A. A Master's degree in one of the fields listed in 6.3.2.1.A.; or
 - B. A minimum of five courses in the graduate program related to the work of a Developmental Special Instructionist. An example of courses includes early childhood development, family relationships, infant and toddler mental health, early childhood psychology and cultural competence for child and family relationships.
4. When a Core Team member or Service Coordinator is employed or contracted as a professional to deliver services for which the State of Arizona has enacted or authorized certification, licensing, registration, or other comparable requirements through legislation or practice act, the core team member shall also meet the proscribed professional requirements and rules of professional conduct for that discipline or profession.
 - A. Occupational Therapist (OT) – Current, valid Arizona license from the Arizona Board of Occupational Therapy Examiners to practice occupational therapy.
 - B. Physical Therapist (PT) – Current, valid Arizona license from the Arizona State Board of Physical Therapy to practice physical therapy.
 - C. Speech/Language Pathologist (SLP) – Current, valid Arizona license from the Arizona Department of Health Services to practice as a Speech-Language Pathologist. (If a speech-language pathologist is completing a Clinical Fellowship Year (CFY), he or she must possess a valid, temporary Arizona license and documentation of an approved supervision plan under a Speech-Language Pathologist who has a current, valid Arizona license and the American Speech and Hearing Association Certificate of Clinical

Competence (CCC).

5. The roles and responsibilities of core team members implementing the AzEIP team-based early intervention services require independence and the ability to make changes with the families to the recommendations and strategies for the family to achieve their outcomes. Individuals are responsible for knowing and complying with the AzEIP personnel qualifications as provided in these policies, including complying with and maintaining any applicable State or other licensure requirement.
6. A Core Team member, who meets the requirements stated in 6.3.3, may act as a Team Lead, and may also act as a Service Coordinator (i.e. dual role service coordinator). EIPs may use the dual-role service coordinator approach, provided that all core team members must be available for this role.

6.3.4 Other Team Members

1. When a team member is employed or contracted as a professional to deliver services for which the State of Arizona has enacted or authorized certification, licensing, registration, or other comparable requirements through legislation or practice act, the team member shall also meet the proscribed professional requirements and rules of professional conduct for that discipline or profession.
2. The AzEIP Personnel Table at the end of this policy chapter lists the early intervention services along with the qualified personnel to provide those services.

6.3.5 Ongoing Efforts to Recruit Personnel

1. The State of Arizona makes ongoing good-faith efforts to recruit and hire appropriately and adequately trained personnel to support families of children who are AzEIP eligible. In geographic areas of the State where there are significant, documented shortages of personnel that meet the State's qualifications, hiring the most qualified personnel available who are making satisfactory progress toward completing the Bachelor's degree requirements is permitted in those exceptional circumstances under the following conditions:
 - A. The employer or contractor, along with the individual, develops and completes a written plan to obtain the course work necessary to meet the Bachelor's degree requirement within three years from the date of hire into the AzEIP system and submits to AzEIP for review and approval;
 - B. The documentation of the individual's progress in completing the plan shall be annually reviewed and updated by the employer/contractor with documentation maintained in the personnel file to continue employment/contracting;
 - C. While in the process of completing the requirements of the Bachelor's degree and/or AzEIP Standards of Practice, the employer/contractor shall review quarterly, at a minimum, ten percent of the Service Coordinator's caseload using the Child File Audit tool, in order to maintain quality

assurance;

- D. A final evaluation of the individual's knowledge of early intervention and skills in delivering early intervention services will be conducted if he/she has not completed the degree requirement at the end of the three year period from the initial hire date. This evaluation shall consider the documentation of job performance; demonstration of annual progress in completing the degree plan; individual circumstance which prohibits the completion of the degree plan; and successful completion of the AzEIP Standards of Practice. Should the employer/contractor determine that individual should be retained, the employer/contractor may apply to the DES/AZEIP office for an extension to complete the Bachelor's degree to retain the individual; and
 - E. All of the above documentation must be maintained in the individual's personnel file to be reviewed during monitoring.
2. The above provision shall not enable the State or any of its providers to hire or employ individuals in positions requiring professional licensure, certification, or registration, unless they comply with the licensure, certification, or registration requirements appropriate for their field.

6.4.0 Standards of Practice

6.4.1 General Policy

1. The AzEIP Standards of Practice describes the basic knowledge required to provide early intervention services. The knowledge component involves individuals demonstrating knowledge in three content areas (see Section 6.4.2), which provides a foundation for early intervention practice.
2. The implementation of early intervention knowledge by the Core Team members, Service Coordinators and other team members is overseen by DES/AZEIP through the integrated monitoring activities of the General Supervision system. Through review of data, interviews, observations, self-report and onsite activities, DES/AZEIP assesses the skills of early intervention professionals and implements the appropriate technical assistance and program improvement activities to ensure compliance and performance requirements are met.
3. Core Team members and Service Coordinators have three years from the date of hire into early intervention in Arizona to complete the knowledge components of the Standards of Practice.
4. Other team members may complete the Standards of Practice, but are not required to do so.
5. After completion of the knowledge component of the Standards of Practice, a Certificate of Completion for the Standards of Practice will be issued to the individual, a copy of which must remain in the individual's personnel file.
6. DES/AZEIP's oversight of the implementation of early intervention practice by Core Team members and other team members is ongoing as part of its General Supervision requirements.

6.4.2 Knowledge Component Policy

1. Core Team members and Service Coordinators demonstrate knowledge in the following content areas:
 - A. Foundations of the Arizona Early Intervention Program (includes the AzEIP mission and key principles, and laws and policies that govern AzEIP);
 - B. Initial Eligibility and Ongoing Functional Assessment (includes the determination of eligibility, the difference between evaluation and assessment and how to collect information to facilitate planning meaningful child and family assessment in natural environments); and
 - C. Development and Implementation of the Individualized Family Service Plans (includes an introduction to the IFSP process, a description of how to develop and review the IFSP, and providing evidence-based early intervention services using coaching.
2. Core Team members and Service Coordinators demonstrate knowledge by completing the AzEIP Modules for the content areas listed in 6.4.2.1.
3. Service Coordinators are additionally required to complete the AzEIP service coordinator module, which covers the following topic areas:
 - A. Building relationships with families by listening and asking good questions;
 - B. Facilitating the IFSP process; and
 - C. Coordination the provision of services, including transitions.

6.5.0 Provider Registry

6.5.1 Policy

1. Early Intervention Programs ensure that all staff (employed and contracted) are registered and current in the AzEIP data system within one week of hire or termination of employment/contract.
2. Early Intervention Core Team, Service Coordinators and other team members must register in the Provider Registry prior to providing early intervention services in the AzEIP data system within one week of hire or termination of employment/contract.