

Rhode Island Early Intervention Statewide Referral Process  
Updated: 2/23/22

*This guidance has been updated to reflect our current process. Please use the terminology STATEWIDE CENTRAL REFERRAL PROCESS in all conversations with families, referral sources and others in the community.*

**Step 1: EI Provider forwards all referrals to EOHHS \***

**For paper referrals (that come in via fax or email):**

Forward to EOHHS by:

- Secure Email to: [Jennifer.kaufman@ohhs.ri.gov](mailto:Jennifer.kaufman@ohhs.ri.gov)
- Secure Fax to: (401) 462-2939 Attn: Early Intervention

**For phone referrals:**

Complete the **Statewide Referral/Demographic form** with as much information as you have available on and forward to EOHHS via:

- Secure Email to: [Jennifer.kaufman@ohhs.ri.gov](mailto:Jennifer.kaufman@ohhs.ri.gov)
- Secure Fax to: (401) 462-2939 Attn: Early Intervention

**For family self-referral via voicemail or 1:1 contact:**

When you speak with a family either by receiving the call directly, or when making a return call in response to a voicemail, you can utilize the **suggested** script to explain to the caregiver how their referral will be processed.

*“Thank you for contacting Early Intervention. Unfortunately, the EI system in Rhode Island is facing a significant state-wide fiscal crisis, affecting our ability to fully staff our programs and accept referrals immediately. The State (EOHHS) has set up a centralized referral process to help us monitor EI program openings across RI in order to match you with a program who serves your community as soon as possible. Currently this process is taking about 3-4 weeks.”*

In speaking with a family, you have two options:

**Option 1:** Provide the family with the EOHHS central referral phone number (401-462-3425) or central email ([Jennifer.kaufman@ohhs.ri.gov](mailto:Jennifer.kaufman@ohhs.ri.gov)) and ask them to leave their name, number and information and someone will contact them.

**Option 2:** Document as much referral information as you have available on the **Statewide Referral/Demographic form**. Be sure to document:

- That you spoke directly with the family about the waitlist process by checking yes/no at the top of the **Statewide Referral/Demographic form**. The family’s preference to either be matched with the first provider in their community who has an opening, or wait for a specific provider who serves their community.

Forward **Statewide Referral/Demographic form** to EOHHS by:

- Secure Email to: [Jennifer.kaufman@ohhs.ri.gov](mailto:Jennifer.kaufman@ohhs.ri.gov)
- Secure Fax to: (401) 462-2939 Attn: Early Intervention

\*NOTE: Exceptions to “keep” a referral: sibling referrals and internal-agency referrals for families who are already involved in a long-term program within your agency. This is not a requirement, but rather an option if the provider wishes to provide continuity of care for a family.

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<b>Step 2: EOHHS processes referral</b>	
<b>For families who have not had direct contact</b>	EOHHS will contact the family to explain the statewide referral process and how referrals will be managed. Families will be given the option to be matched with the first provider in their community who has an opening, or they can choose to wait for a specific provider who serves their community.
<b>Family information added to Statewide Referral List</b>	EOHHS will enter the referral information into the Welligent system as part of the statewide referral process.  (Note: EOHHS is entering family demographics information along with any notes gathered when talking with families)
<b>Step 3: Ongoing outreach to families</b>	
<b>All families should receive at least one direct contact from either the program or EOHHS</b>	<p><i>When the provider takes a call:</i> Using the <b>Statewide Referral/Demographic form</b>, providers should indicate if they have spoken with the family/referral source (top right hand corner of the form).</p> <p><i>When the referrals come directly to EOHHS or provider has indicated they have not spoken with referral source:</i> EOHHS/Jenn Sanchez will call the family to explain the Statewide referrals process and record any important information the family may share.</p>
<b>Step 4: Referrals assigned to providers</b>	
<b>Provider informs EOHHS that they can accept new referrals</b>	At the discretion of the individual EI providers, referrals will be sent. Confirmation of openings can be made by emailing Jenn Kaufman @jennifer.kaufman@ohhs.ri.gov
<b>EOHHS assigns referrals to EI provider</b>	<p>Referrals will be assigned with consideration of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial referral Date</li> <li>• Family Choice</li> <li>• Catchment Area of Provider</li> </ul> <p>Referrals will be sent to provider as soon as possible via secure email from EOHHS.</p>
<b>EI Provider responds to new referrals</b>	<p>The provider will process the referral as usual. The provider should use the day the referral is received at their agency as the referral date to begin their 45-day timeline.</p> <p>NOTE: EOHHS will still report to OSEP 45-day timeline requirements based on the initial receipt of the referral in accordance with federal guidelines for reporting. Providers, however, will only be held responsible during this time based on the date they accept the new referral at their program. (example: Child referred to statewide referral process 1/2/22, but agency assigned the referral on 1/20/22. The IFSP meeting was held on 2/20/22. This will be reported to OSEP as over 45 days, but the provider will be considered within 45 days during the focused monitoring process.</p>

We appreciate everyone's patience and cooperation during these trying times. We are making progress!