

Mississippi State Interagency Coordinating Council for Early Intervention

BYLAWS

I. Name

- A. The Mississippi State Interagency Coordinating Council for Early Intervention; hereinafter called the SICC

II. Purpose

- A. The SICC shall function to advise and assist the Part C Lead Agency, the Mississippi State Department of Health, in the following matters:
 - 1. Development and implementation of the policies that constitute the statewide early intervention program;
 - 2. Achievement of full participation, coordination, and cooperation of all appropriate public agencies in the State;
 - 3. Implementation of a statewide early intervention system by establishing a process that includes:
 - a. Seeking information from service providers, service coordinators, parents, and others about any Federal, State, or local policies that impede timely service delivery, and
 - b. Taking steps to ensure that any policy problems identified are resolved.
 - 4. Resolution of disputes (to the extent appropriate as requested);
 - 5. Identification of fiscal and other support for services for early intervention programs;
 - 6. Assignment of financial responsibility to appropriate agencies in accordance with Federal regulations and State law;
 - 7. Promotion of intra-agency and interagency agreements and collaboration regarding child find, monitoring and financial responsibility, and provision of early intervention services;
 - 8. Preparation of annual grant under Part C and amendments to those applications and other grant applications;
 - 9. Development, implementation, and evaluation of efforts which would result in program recommendations; and
 - 10. Preparation and submission of annual report to the Governor and the United States Secretary of Education, on the status of early

intervention programs operated within the State in accordance with appropriate Federal guidelines.

- B. The SICC shall serve as an advocate for children with special needs and their families to programs and agencies providing early intervention services.
- C. The SICC shall advise and assist the Lead Agency, the Mississippi State Department of Health, and the State Educational Agency, the Mississippi Department of Education, regarding the provision of appropriate services for children aged birth to five (5), inclusive.
- D. The SICC shall advise and assist the State Educational Agency, the Mississippi Department of Education, regarding the transition of toddlers with disabilities to services provided under Part B (Section 619) of the Act, to the extent those services are appropriate.
- E. The SICC shall perform other functions as defined in regulations.
- F. The SICC may carry out the following authorized activities:
 - 1. Advise appropriate agencies in the State with respect to the integration of services for infants and toddlers with disabilities and “at-risk” infants and toddlers and their families, regardless of whether “at-risk” infant and toddlers are eligible for early intervention in the Mississippi, and
 - 2. Coordinate and collaborate with the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care for Children described in section 624B(b)(1)(A)(i) of the Head Start Act and 42 U.S.C. 9837b(b)(1), the State Early Childhood Advisory Council (SECAC) of Mississippi, and other State interagency early learning initiatives, as appropriate.

III. Composition of the SICC

- A. The SICC must be appointed by the Governor and reasonably represents the population of the State. Membership shall consist of at least 25 members. Ex-officio members may be appointed by the Executive Committee. The SICC shall be composed as follows:
 - 1. At least 20% must be parents, including minority parents, of infants and toddlers, with disabilities or children with disabilities aged twelve (12) or younger, who have knowledge of or experience with programs for infants and toddlers with disabilities.
 - 2. At least one member must be a parent of an infant or toddler with a disability or a child with a disability aged six (6) or younger.

3. At least 20% must be public or private providers of early intervention services.
4. At least one member must be from the State Legislature.
5. At least one member must be involved in personnel preparation.
6. At least one member must be from the agency responsible for the State governance of insurance, especially in the area of health insurance; and must have sufficient authority to engage in policy planning and implementation on behalf of that agency.
7. At least one member must be from the State Educational Agency responsible for preschool services to children with disabilities and have sufficient authority to engage in policy planning and implementation on behalf of that agency, and a member who is knowledgeable of the needs of homeless/migrant children.
8. At least one member must be from each of the agencies involved in the provision of, or payment for, early intervention service to infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families. Each member must have sufficient authority to engage in policy planning and implementation on behalf of the agency they represent. Agencies represented include:
 - a. Mississippi Department of Mental Health,
 - b. Mississippi State Department of Health,
 - c. Mississippi State Department of Education, Early Childhood Special Education and Federal Programs Division of Special Populations,
 - d. Division of Medicaid,
 - e. Mississippi Department of Human Services, Early Childhood Care and Development
 - f. Mississippi Department of Child Protection Services
 - g. University of Mississippi Medical Center,
 - h. Office of the Governor,
 - i. State Board of Community and Junior Colleges,
 - j. State Institutions of Higher Learning,
 - k. Mississippi Head Start, and
 - l. Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians.
9. The SICC may include other members selected by the Governor. Such members might include parent training center directors,

representatives from local agencies with an interest in early intervention and/or child development, pediatricians or other physicians knowledgeable about the needs of infants and toddlers with disabilities, persons knowledgeable about children who are “at-risk,” and persons who are knowledgeable about children with prenatal and/or perinatal drug exposure.

10. The Governor shall require the SICC to designate a member of the SICC to serve as the Chair of the SICC or the Governor shall designate the Chair. Any member of the SICC who is a representative of the Lead Agency may not serve as the Chair of the SICC. Preference shall be given to a parent of an infant or toddler with a disability or a child with a disability aged six (6) or younger to serve as the Chair.

IV. General Provisions

- A. The terms of all members appointed to the SICC shall run concurrently with the term of the Governor by who they are appointed. The appointment shall stand until reappointment or replacement.
- B. All resignations of members shall be submitted in writing to the Governor and the Chair of the SICC.
- C. Should a vacancy arise prior to the expiration of the term of a member, the SICC shall make recommendations in writing to the Governor concerning the appointment of the new member.
- D. Duly appointed members unable to attend SICC meetings shall name an individual, in writing, as a designee to represent them in official SICC meetings. The written notice of designation shall be submitted to the Lead Agency on or before the date of the SICC meeting. The designee shall be deemed authorized to act on behalf of the SICC member who they are representing and shall exercise all rights and privileges of the member represented.
- E. Each member shall have one vote in matters pertaining to the SICC. All valid votes must be given in person during regularly scheduled meetings. Policy recommendations, position papers, and other major written issues shall be sent via electronic mail to all members two weeks prior to the scheduled meeting for a called vote. A motion will carry based upon a majority of the members present.
- F. Subject to the approval by the Governor, the SICC may use funds:
 1. To conduct hearings and forums;

2. To reimburse members of the SICC for reasonable and necessary expenses for attending SICC meetings and performing SICC duties (including childcare for parent representatives);
 3. To pay compensation to a member of the SICC, if the member is not employed or the member must forfeit wages from other employment when performing official SICC business, as allowed by State Law. The rate of pay will be established by the State Part C Coordinator of the First Steps Early Intervention Program;
 4. To hire staff;
 5. To obtain the services of professional, technical, and clerical personnel, as may be necessary to carry out the performance of its functions under this part.
- G. SICC members shall serve without compensation from funds available under Part C of IDEA, except as indicated in F.3. under this section.
- H. Funds expended at the direction of the SICC will be accomplished in accordance with State law and in accordance to the policies of the Lead Agency, the Mississippi State Department of Health.

V. Officers

A. The officers of the SICC shall be the Chair and the Vice Chair. They shall remain in their positions during their tenure as SICC members.

B. Duties of the Chair.

The Chair shall perform the following duties:

1. Call the meeting to order at the appointed time;
2. Preside at all meetings;
3. Work with the Vice Chair and Lead Agency representatives to identify the business that is to be brought before the SICC;
4. Arrange the meeting agenda to include all business items to be covered during a designated SICC meeting;
5. Announce during the meeting all questions to be resolved by the SICC;
6. Vote on issues that arise in the course of the proceedings and announce the result of the vote;
7. Authenticate by signature, when necessary, all acts, orders, and proceedings of the SICC;

8. Appoint such committees as deemed necessary to carry on the functions of the SICC;
 9. Serve on the Executive Committee; and
 10. Represent the SICC at all Federal, State, and local meetings.
- C. Duties of the Vice Chair.

The Vice Chair shall perform the following duties:

1. Perform such duties as assigned by the Chair;
2. Serve on the Executive Committee; and
3. Assume the responsibilities of the Chair in the absence, death, resignation, or inability of the Chair to perform such duties.

VI. Meetings

- A. The SICC must meet at least quarterly and in such places as it deems appropriate. Meetings shall be held at times the SICC deems as appropriate in the months of January, April, July, and October.
- B. A Quorum shall be constituted of twenty-five percent (25%) of the members of the SICC; however, quorum may be amended by vote of those members present at each meeting at the discretion of the Chair.
- C. The meetings must be publicly announced sufficiently in advance of the meeting date to ensure all interested parties have the opportunity to attend. The meetings must be open and accessible to the general public with multiple means for participation, including virtually, if available.
- D. To ensure the full participation of persons with disabilities, interpreters for persons who are hearing impaired and other necessary services shall be provided by the SICC, upon request. The SICC may use funds under Part C of IDEA to pay for these services.
- E. An agenda will be provided by electronic mail to the SICC members prior to meetings
 1. The agenda will include:
 - a. Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting;
 - b. Reports of special committees;
 - c. Unfinished business;
 - d. New business; and
 - e. Public comments.

2. The agenda items SICC members wish to include shall be submitted to the Executive Committee prior to the meeting.
 - a. The Executive Committee shall consider submitted items for inclusion.
 - b. If there are specific materials associated with the proposed agenda item, they must be submitted to the Lead Agency at least three (3) weeks prior to the meeting so that they can be distributed to all members for review.
- F. Each meeting of the SICC and its committees shall be recorded as the official minutes of the SICC. The minutes shall be kept in writing and should contain, at a minimum, the following:
 1. The kind of meeting (i.e., regular, special, called);
 2. Name of the assembly;
 3. Date and place of the meeting;
 4. Listing of those members present and absent and visitors;
 5. Whether the minutes of the previous meeting were approved;
 6. All motions and actions agreed upon by the SICC; and
 7. Significant details of major discussions concerning SICC related business.
- G. A copy of the minutes will be sent to each SICC member with the meeting announcement. The minutes from the previous meeting will always be the first order of business.
- H. All meetings of the SICC will be conducted according to the procedures outlined in *Robert's Rules of Order Revised*, except where inconsistent with these Bylaws.
- I. SICC members are expected to be present at all SICC meetings or to designate a representative as detailed in section IV.D.

VII. Appearance Before the SICC

- A. No person shall be entitled as a matter of right to appear before the SICC except for official guests invited by the Chair after consultation with the Executive Committee or the total SICC.
- B. Other appearances before the SICC are not a matter of right, and will only be considered if the request is material and relevant to any matters then pending before the SICC.

- C. Any person who desires to be placed on the agenda to address the SICC shall submit such request, including justification, in writing to the Chair.
 - 1. A request to address the SICC should be made at least three (3) weeks prior to the designated SICC meeting at which the person desires to appear and set forth the purpose of such appearance.
 - 2. The request shall be considered by the Executive Committee of the SICC.
 - 3. If the request is granted, any relevant materials provided will be circulated to SICC members at least two (2) weeks before the designated meeting.
- D. An opportunity for public comment will be provided at the end of each SICC meeting. Public comments are not considered a formal appearance before the SICC, cannot result in SICC action without becoming a formal request for appearance, and do not require an official response. Public comments shall become a part of the official meeting minutes.

VIII. Committees

- A. The SICC shall have the following committees: Executive Committee, Personnel Preparation, Public Awareness, Transition, and such other committees as are deemed necessary to perform its functions, duties, and responsibilities as set forth in these Bylaws.
- B. The Executive Committee shall be a permanent committee and shall be composed of the Chair and Vice Chair along with two other members elected by SICC. The State Part C Coordinator of the Early Intervention Program shall be a member of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall be empowered by the SICC to conduct and transact business and to call special meetings of the SICC as the committee determines necessary; however, the Executive Committee's recommendations shall be submitted to the SICC for review and action.
- C. The Chair may appoint and instruct any ad hoc committees necessary to fulfill the functions and responsibilities of the SICC.

IX. Amendments

The SICC shall revise, amend, or restructure the Bylaws of the SICC according to the following criteria:

- A. The SICC shall revise, amend, or restructure the Bylaws of the SICC to reflect changes in Federal and State law, regulations, policies, and/or requirements.

- B. The SICC may revise or amend the Bylaws after due consideration of any and all recommendations submitted by the membership. The following procedural criteria must be implemented to ensure due consideration:
 - 1. All amendments must be submitted in writing to the Executive Committee for review prior to introduction to the SICC.
 - 2. All amendments, after Executive Committee review, will be sent to the SICC membership prior to the meeting of the SICC so that each SICC member is familiar with its language and meaning.
 - 3. Amendments will be adopted by the majority of those voting.
 - 4. All amendments approved by the SICC will be signed by the Chair of the SICC. A final copy of the approved amendment will be sent to each SICC member following the above action.
- C. The SICC and an ad hoc Bylaws Committee shall review the Bylaws every two years and recommend revisions as needed.

X. Conflict of Interest

- A. No member of the SICC may cast a vote on any matter that would provide direct financial benefit to that member or otherwise give the appearance of a conflict of interest under Mississippi State statute.