



First Steps

## ISSUE CLARIFICATION

NUMBER: 02-11-07-042

DATE: November 8, 2002

**TOPIC:** Authorization for Interpreter Services

**RELEVANT SECTIONS OF THE MANUAL:** Service Definitions

**AUDIENCE:** Interpreters  
Service Coordinators

**ISSUE FOR CLARIFICATION:** Procedures to authorize interpreter services through First Steps.

### CLARIFICATION:

The First Steps system is responsible for ensuring that families referred and enrolled in the program are provided with information on their rights and procedural safeguards. For families in which English is not their native language, and/or who do not sufficiently understand English, an interpreter must be utilized at those times that the families receive their rights or explanation of procedural safeguards. This would include times such as; evaluation and eligibility activities as well as during IFSP development meetings. In order to provide these services, the Bureau of Child Development is modifying the manner in which interpreter services are to be authorized.

Effective December 1, 2002, the procedures to authorize interpreter services for families enrolled in First Steps will be as follows:

- Interpreter services for **intake and initial IFSP development** will be authorized by the intake coordinator for activities to coordinate and conduct, intake, eligibility and the initial IFSP. Authorizations should be authorized to mirror the actual time needed for interpreter services. The interpreter will then receive an authorization for the actual minutes allowable for billing purposes. The interpreter shall bill their usual and customary rate.
- For **ongoing interpreter services** the intake at the initial IFSP and the ongoing service coordinator thereafter, should submit a request for data entry for interpreter services for a 3-month period for a maximum amount of \$125. These funds may be utilized as needed for the purpose of interpreter services. The funds may be pulled down at the interpreter's usual and customary rate. These funds however are a maximum rate and are expected to be utilized during the entire 3-month period in the provision of interpreter services. Additional funds will not be made available during this time period, therefore, prior to accepting the referral, the interpreter must agree to the maximum rate of \$125 for the interpreting services for the 3-month time period.

If an interpreter does not provide the service as needed by the families, or utilizes the maximum funds available but does not continue to offer services throughout the time period, the Bureau of Child Development will take administrative action, which may include disenrollment. For those Service Coordinators that have been given a waiver to enroll as an interpreter, they may not be authorized separately for interpreter services, for any family that they are the assigned Service Coordinator.

In addition to the authorization of interpreter services through First Steps, the Service Coordinator and team have an obligation to encourage and assist the family in identifying additional resources for interpreter services.

*Please retain this Clarification in your Implementation/Practice Manual in the designated Section. If you have questions about this document, please contact your First Steps County Consultant.*