



Services for Children With Developmental Delays: A Comparison

The early intervention (EI) services a child receives before age 3 years may differ from the special education services they receive through the public school system. Both services have their own “language.” It is important to support families through the transition process from EI to the public school system. It is important to encourage families to participate in the transition process.

	Colorado Early Intervention (CO EI)	Special Education through Public Schools
Goals	Focus is on supporting family in meeting the needs of their child with a <u>delay of disability</u>	Focus is on a child and his/her educational needs
Age	Covers children birth-2 years. Eligibility determined by medical condition or by significant developmental delay	Covers children 3-21 years
Service Coordination	Each eligible infant or toddler and their family must be provided with one service coordinator	Under Special Education law, teachers and service providers may be identified for service coordination, but there is no requirement
Services	Services and supports are documented in an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP); services and supports may be provided by a variety of agencies	Special education and related services are documented in an Individualized Learning Plan (IEP); all services are the responsibility of the local school district
Location	Requires services and supports to be provided in “natural environments”	Requires special education and related services to be provided in “least restrictive environment”
Fees	Families may be assessed fees for services and supports based on ability to pay. The state department of education is “payor of last resort.”	Special education and related services provided at no cost to the child (“Free Appropriate Education”)
Recipients of Services	Recipients of services and supports may be the infant/toddler and/or the child’s family	Recipient of special education and related services is the child only.
Assessment	Parents may obtain their own assessment at their own expense when they disagree with the assessment results or the appropriateness of the assessment tool used.	Parents may obtain an independent educational evaluation (IEE) at school district expense if they disagree with the accuracy or appropriateness of the school district’s assessment, unless the district requests a due process hearing to prove the accuracy or the appropriateness of its assessment.
Dispute Resolution	Dispute resolution through administrative complaint process, mediation or due process hearing. After using these, parents may file a civil court action, but are not entitled to recover their attorney’s fees and costs.	Dispute resolution available through all of the same processes as used by the CO EI. Attorney’s fees incurred for due process hearing or civil action may be awarded to parents under certain circumstances.
Procedural Safeguards	Procedural safeguards include prior written notice of meetings, confidentiality of information, right to decline some services or supports without jeopardizing others, transition planning, right to examine agency records related to the child and obtain copies at a reasonable cost, written consent before assessment or initiation of services and supports, right to have outside evaluation obtained at parent expense be considered by IFSP team and included in child’s record.	Procedural safeguards include prior written notice of meetings, confidentiality of information, right to examine school district records related to child and obtain copies at reasonable cost, written consent required before initial assessment and placement, extended school year services if child requires them, transition planning, right to decline a service on the IEP without jeopardizing other services, right to have outside evaluations obtained at parent expenses considered by IEP team and included in child’s record.

Adapted from: Long, M.J. (Ed.). (1999). First Steps to Discovery: A Parent Guide to Colorado’s Early Childhood Services Under Part C and B of the Individuals With Disability Education Act. Denver: The Legal Center.

For online help understanding acronyms and definitions, visit:

<http://www.nectac.org/~pdfs/pubs/acronyms.pdf>

http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/resource_TOOL_dict/onlinedictionary_table.php?letter+ALL