

<b>UTAH DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES POLICY AND PROCEDURES</b>		
<b>Baby Watch Early Intervention Program Policy: 1.A.5</b>	<b>Page 1 of 4</b>	
<b>TOPICAL MONITORING</b>		
<p><b>RATIONALE:</b> To strengthen relationships and communication between Baby Watch and local early intervention (EI) programs through focused topical monitoring activities, including off-site and on-site monitoring activities</p> <p><i>Related Policies, Applicable Standards, Statutes:</i>  Baby Watch Policy 1.A.4: General Supervision System for Monitoring Implementation of Part C  34 CFR § 303.400: <i>General responsibility of lead agency for procedural safeguards</i>  34 CFR § 303.700: <i>State monitoring and enforcement</i>  34 CFR § 303.702: <i>State use of targets and reporting</i>  20 U.S.C. 1435(a)(10)(A)  Section 616 and 642 of the 2004 IDEA Amendments</p>		
<b>Original Effective: 7/01/2013</b>	<b>Revision: February 2023</b>	<b>Next Review Due: 3 years after</b>

**I. DESCRIPTION**

Baby Watch’s topical monitoring process, including selection of focus areas, selection of participating local EI programs, and activities carried out by Baby Watch and local EI programs before, during, and after on-site visits

This policy supersedes any previous department policy governing this subject matter. It does not supplant any existing federal, state, or department laws/policies to which the department shall adhere.

**II. DEFINITIONS**

**Baby & Toddler Online Tracking System (BTOTS):** The secure database used by Utah EI programs and providers to record service information. BTOTS is designed to track EI activities, encourage compliance with state and federal regulations, and support compliance and monitoring with statewide child information.

**Compliance Indicators:** SPP/APR results indicators set by OSEP that assess compliance at 100%, and measure early intervention activities compared to state-determined targets.

**Corrective Action:** EI program activities to successfully address any findings of noncompliance identified by the Baby Watch Early Intervention Program.

**Corrective Action Plan:** Formal written documentation developed by an EI program to outline activities and timelines to correct instances of noncompliance identified by the Baby Watch Early Intervention Program.

**Correction of Noncompliance:** A formal verification by the Baby Watch Early Intervention Program that an EI program has successfully addressed all instances of noncompliance.

**DHHS or department:** Utah Department of Health and Human Services and collectively all its operational units.

**Noncompliance:** A finding of failure to meet Baby Watch Early Intervention Program requirements, as determined through off-site or on-site monitoring.

**Off-site Monitoring:** Any Baby Watch Early Intervention Program oversight activities of EI programs that do not happen at local EI program site(s).

**On-site Monitoring:** Any Baby Watch Early Intervention Program oversight activities of EI programs that happen at local EI program sites(s).

**OU:** Operational units within DHHS, including divisions, offices, or standalone operations whose director reports to the executive director, a deputy director, an assistant deputy director, or a division director.

**Topical Monitoring :** A review of selected focus areas in local EI programs as part of the State General Supervision System. The purpose of topical monitoring is to identify noncompliance, low performance, training and technical assistance needs, improvement strategies and incentives or sanctions.

**Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA):** As described in the 2011 NAEYC Training and Technical Assistance Glossary, the provision of targeted and customized supports by a professional(s) with subject matter and adult learning knowledge and skills to develop or strengthen processes, knowledge application, or implementation of services by recipients.

### III. POLICY

- A. Selection of Focus Areas for Topical Monitoring
  1. The Baby Watch Early Intervention Program shall select topical monitoring focus areas each year based on its review of program data on federal and state indicators.
    - a) The-Baby Watch Early Intervention Program may collaborate with stakeholders to determine focus areas based on systemic noncompliance or low performance across the state, concerns raised by stakeholders or local EI program staff, and requests from local EI programs for assistance
    - b) Focus areas may be used for consecutive years, as determined appropriate by the Baby Watch Early Intervention Program
  2. The Baby Watch Early Intervention Program shall select those local EI programs to participate in topical monitoring that:

- a) Are in noncompliance or have low performance within a selected focus area(s)
  - b) Have questionable BTOTS data quality or reliability
  - c) Have unique circumstances
  - d) Have compliance or high performance in the focus areas to determine evidence-based practices
3. Local EI programs shall be notified of their selection for topical monitoring.
- B. Pre-Visit Topical Monitoring Activities
- 1. Prior to an on-site topical monitoring visit, Baby Watch staff may conduct several activities:
    - a) A review of BTOTS data
    - b) A review of submitted materials
    - c) Surveys or interviews with program staff
    - d) Surveys or interviews with parents from the local EI program
    - e) Review of purposes of topical monitoring and plans for the on-site visit with EI program staff
    - f) Review of any additional resources relevant to the focus area(s) in the selected EI program
- C. On-Site Topical Monitoring Visit
- 1. Topical monitoring includes a site visit to each local EI program in which Baby Watch staff may:
    - a) Verify data and/or materials reviewed prior to the on-site visit
    - b) Review additional data, which may include child files
    - c) Conduct interviews or focus groups with program staff
    - d) Conduct one-on-one interviews and/or focus groups with parents
    - e) Observe service provision
    - f) Investigate any potential causes of noncompliance or low performance identified through pre-visit activities
    - g) Investigate any potential evidence-based practices
    - h) Debrief EI program staff of any potential corrective actions and T/TA related to the topical monitoring
- D. Post-Visit Topical Monitoring Activities
- 1. Following the on-site visit, Baby Watch staff will develop and submit a report to the local EI program detailing:
    - a) Topical monitoring activities conducted
    - b) Findings of noncompliance and recommendations to improve quality. Items listed as noncompliance will include identified requirements for correcting the noncompliance as soon as possible, but in no case later than one year from identification and required corrective action
    - c) Areas of potential evidence-based best practice

2. Baby Watch will follow up with the local EI program to ensure:
  - a) Correction of any identified noncompliance
  - b) Improved performance
  - c) Implementation of any required actions
3. Baby Watch will conduct additional off-site and on-site visits as needed.
4. Baby Watch staff will review the data to determine the need for:
  - a) Statewide T/TA
  - b) Additional EI program participation in topical monitoring with the same focus in the following year
  - c) Any revisions to the topical monitoring approach and materials
5. Local EI programs will:
  - a) Develop and submit an improvement plan to address noncompliance or low performance
  - b) Provide progress reports for corrective action or improvement plans to Baby Watch

#### **IV. EXCEPTIONS**

Baby Watch may make exceptions to this policy as necessary.