

# WV Birth to Three Service Delivery Methods Face to Face and Virtual Service Procedure Codes Questions and Answers

Revised 12/8/2023

## 1. WV Birth to Three is currently in Phase III of the COVID-19 Response, can you tell me about what happened prior to this phase?

**Phase 1-** In March of 2020, Governor Jim Justice announced West Virginia was in a state of emergency due to the COVID pandemic. Within two days, WV Birth to Three quickly developed policies and procedures to ensure that all eligible infants/toddlers and their families were able to receive services.

**Phase 2-** In July of 2021, WV Birth to Three moved to allowing practitioners to serve families either virtually or face to face based on the desire of the family and the availability of practitioners. Everyone was required to follow WV Birth to Three safety protocols to protect the health and safety of the children, families, and our practitioners.

**Phase 3-** In September of 2022, the World Health Organization reported that the world is now moving out of the pandemic as COVID 19 is now endemic- this virus will unfortunately be with us forever. WV Birth to Three determined based on the reopening of schools, childcare, other home visitation programs, restaurants, shops, community events, fairs, and festivals that it is time to move to the next phase of our response- the elimination of phone calls as a method of service delivery. Families will continue to have the option of selecting face to face or virtual services.

In preparation for these changes, revised forms are posted on the website and downloaded for use. The revised forms include: the IFSP, Practitioner Confirmation Form, and Authorization for Teaming Units and Documentation of Transition Conference forms and Activity Notes.

- a. The IFSP was revised to indicate whether the service is to be provided F-F or Virtual. Page 10, Page 10a, and Page 11 of the IFSP and Page 2 of the IFSP Review have been revised to document the appropriate service delivery method. If a practitioner is to provide a service both F-F and Virtual, you will need to identify those separately. Select the appropriate delivery method for each service from the dropdown menu. Authorizations will be issued separately for F-F and Virtual.
- b. The Practitioner Confirmation form and the Authorization for Teaming Units and Documentation of Transition Conference forms were revised and had the option to select Virtual service.
- c. Intervention and Service Coordination Activity notes have been revised to remove the option of Phone Call for delivery method. If a service is provided by phone only between October 10, 2022, and November 30, 2022, please mark it as 'Virtual'.

New procedure codes have been added to authorize Virtual services including Direct Child Service, Evaluation/Assessment, and Teaming ([WV RATES.PDF](#)).

WV Birth to Three added three new procedure codes for each service type to authorize the Virtual delivery methods. Please note, you will begin to see new procedure codes on your authorization for the delivery of virtual services.

**2. I understand that many states are moving back to face to face only. Is WV Birth to Three going to move to only providing face to face services?**

WV Birth to Three continues to offer both virtual and face to face.

**3. Why are we no longer allowed to provide services by phone?**

If you are providing family coaching by phone call as a direct service practitioner, there is not an opportunity to see the child, to see the child and family interacting, to evaluate the quality of the interaction to provide high quality family coaching. Families also cannot see the Intervention Activity Note as you complete it with them. Families play a role in the completion of the note. And as a Direct Service Practitioner, if you have stable internet access, best practice would be to turn on your camera to build rapport with the family.

If you are a Service Coordinator, there is not an opportunity to share documents to assure the family is fully informed before signing consents, the IFSP, reviews, etc. Families also cannot see the Service Coordination Activity Note as you complete it with them. Families play a role in the completion of the note. And as a Service Coordinator, if you have stable internet access, best practice would be to turn on your camera to build rapport with the family.

Here is a wonderful resource highlighting best practices in video conferencing:

[Video Conferencing 101.pdf \(ectacenter.org\)](#)

**4. Why can practitioners call into IFSP and IFSP review meetings?**

Part C of IDEA allows anyone who participated in the evaluation and assessment process to participate in the IFSP meeting by phone. Practitioners who call in only will be authorized to bill at the Service Provider Location rate.

**5. I have families who have limited internet access or phone time, can families call into an IFSP and IFSP review meeting?**

Yes, in those rare instances where a family has limited access and the Service Coordinator is unable to facilitate the meeting face to face, a family may call into the virtual platform using the number provided in the email confirmation. The Interim or Ongoing Service Coordinator will still be required to host the meeting via Zoom, Go to Training, Google Meet or Microsoft teams for the team members' participation. The Service Coordinator and members of the IFSP team who attended the meeting via the virtual platform (not by phone only) will be authorized to bill as having attended virtually. The Interim and/or Service Coordinator should also be assisting the family in exploring technology that will help them in obtaining access.

**6. Is Virtual a delivery method or location?**

Virtual is a delivery method for providing early intervention services as identified on the IFSP. Virtual is also listed as the location on the authorization to document that the service is being provided to the family in their home but virtually not face to face.

**7. Clarify the difference between Virtual and Service Provider Location selections for participation in team meetings?**

The selection of Virtual should be selected when the participant is in the virtual platform, able to see materials shared, and can turn their camera on. The selection of service provider location should be used when the participant calls into the virtual platform, cannot see materials shared during the meeting, and does not have the ability to turn their camera on.

**8. What if there is an area where there is no internet available and there is no SC or direct service practitioner available to provide face to face services either?**

WV Birth to Three is committed to assisting families in accessing services.

Please document what strategies you have used to support the family in accessing the internet such as helping the family set up an email account, learning how to use Zoom, applying for funding to purchase a device etc. As always, we encourage you to reach out to your WV Birth to Three Regional Technical Assistance Specialist for support. Please provide the child's ID number so that we may find a solution for the family. If you do not know who your TA Specialist is, please see the [WVBTT Regional Technical Assistance Specialist Map](#).

**9. Are there resources available to assist families in accessing internet or phone coverage?**

Here is information on a valuable resource for assisting families with access under the [US Department of Education Affordable Connectivity Program](#).

**10. If a practitioner is attending a teaming meeting virtually then loses internet connection and rejoins the meeting by phone call, how does the SC authorize their participation?**

The authorization will reflect the practitioner's participation for much of the time during the meeting. For example, if the practitioner participated by virtual platform for 40 minutes, lost connection, then participated by phone for 20 more minutes until the end of the meeting, the authorization will be entered as virtual. In addition, if the practitioner participated by phone for 30 minutes due to temporary loss of internet, then gained internet access and participated by virtual platform for the remaining 10 minutes, the authorization will be entered as Service Provider Location.

**11. If a family has difficulties with internet connection and cannot join a teaming meeting virtually but can join by phone call, can the teaming continue?**

Yes, a family may call into the virtual platform using the number provided in the email confirmation. The Interim or Ongoing Service Coordinator will still be required to host the meeting via Zoom, Go to Training, Google Meet or Microsoft teams.

**12. What do we tell a family if they have an internet connection and can participate in the IFSP Meeting virtually, but prefer to participate by phone call?**

The Interim or Ongoing Service Coordinator must document that they have informed the family that they do not have to turn on their cameras during the meeting and the importance for the family to be able to see the forms and documents that are being discussed. If the family still does not want to participate virtually, the family may call into the virtual meeting using the number provided in the email confirmation. **The Interim or Ongoing Service Coordinator will still be required to host the meeting via Zoom, Go to Training, Google Meet or Microsoft teams.** The Service Coordinator and members of the IFSP team who attended the meeting via the virtual platform (not by phone only) will be authorized to bill as having attended virtually.

**13. What do we do if an Ongoing Service Coordinator or Direct Service Practitioner is still providing services by phone only after December 1, 2022?**

Please provide the Ongoing Service Coordinator or Direct Service Practitioner's name to your Regional Technical Assistance Specialist as the individual may not be aware of the changes. We will reach out to support them.



**14. A family I serve in ABC County has no internet provider in their area. There are no face-to-face Ongoing Service Coordinators in her area as well. What if we cannot find an OSC to do face to face for family?**

Please document what strategies you have used to support the family in accessing internet such as helping the family set up an email account, learning how to use Zoom, applying for funding to purchase a device etc. As always, we encourage you to reach out to your WV Birth to Three Regional Technical Assistance Specialist for support. Please provide the child's ID number so that we may find a solution for the family. If you do not know who your TA Specialist is, please see the TA Map.

**15. I have families that request to make a phone call instead of a virtual occasionally as they are visiting somewhere that does not have service.**

You will reschedule your visit for when the family is at home.

**16. I have a few families that have internet and CAN do virtual but PREFER phone calls for OSC. Do we just tell them no?**

WV Birth to Three recognizes the importance of a family's having a choice. The Service Coordinator should explain to the family the value of providing services virtually or face to face and that Birth to Three did not provide services by phone prior to the pandemic. If a family would like to speak to someone from the state office, please provide them contact information for the WV Birth to Three Regional Technical Specialist so we may provide the family with more information.

**17. I am concerned about having separate authorizations for virtual and face to face. I have many families that like a mixture of both. What do I do in this situation?**

The IFSP is a legal document detailing the service commitments we are making to the family. Through discussions with the family and team you will determine how services will be provided in a way that will best meet the family's need. Families have the right to fully understand how their services are to be provided. If it is decided that your service will be provided in the home twice a month face to face and you will also provide service virtually twice a month – that is your commitment to the family. You will detail on the IFSP Service Grid page the commitment for intensity/frequency for each service.

**18. What if an unexpected situation on the part of the family should occur such as sickness, family emergency, inclement weather, etc., and the family would like a virtual visit instead of face to face on the day the visit is scheduled?**

If a family shares that there is an unexpected situation (illness, family emergency, inclement weather, etc.) you should cancel and reschedule the appointment with the family. You must honor the service commitment to the family as identified on the IFSP. You should not provide a virtual service to a family if your commitment noted on the IFSP is face to face.

**19. Can I provide face to face and virtual service to a child and family?**

When there is a combination of face to face and virtual on the IFSP, you may not begin to provide services face to face and then change to providing all services virtually because it is more convenient for the practitioner.

**20. What if the Interim or Ongoing Service Coordinator is still completing IFSP meetings by phone call only?**

Interim and Ongoing Service Coordinators should not be facilitating IFSP meetings by phone call only. Please notify your WV BTT Regional Technical Assistance Specialist if this is occurring.

**21. A family would like to switch their service from Virtual to Face to Face. Is an IFSP review meeting required to change the service delivery method if the frequency/intensity is not increasing?**

As there will be a change in Service Delivery and the code for the service authorization, there will need to be an IFSP Review with at least the service coordinator, parent and person delivering the service.

*\* A Service Coordinator may complete an IFSP Review with the parent without team members present when the parent has identified a need for additional service coordination.*

**22. A parent is choosing a new practitioner to deliver their service, the new practitioner will only provide virtual, but the IFSP has the previous practitioner authorized to provide face to face. Is an IFSP Review required to add a new practitioner and to remove the previous practitioner?**

Yes, as it will result in a service delivery method change. A change in *practitioner* is permitted without a review if there is no change in intensity, frequency, method, and location.

**23. A family is on vacation, can I provide virtual services to the family.**

No, WVBTT direct service practitioners and service coordinators should not be providing services to a family on vacation in West Virginia, in another state or country. Vacations are a time of respite for families. Let's honor that.

**24. A family is attending a medical appointment for their child in another state, can I provide services to the family while they are out of state.**

No, WVBTT direct service practitioners and service coordinators should not be providing services to a family while they are out of state.

**25. I have so many questions, who can I talk to?**

As stated in the TA Bulletin and as always, please reach out to your WVBTT Regional Technical Assistance Specialist.