

UTRGV - PSJA - EHS - CC Partnership Program



EASTER SEALS PROGRAM COLLABORATIVE AGREEMENT

I. Purpose of Agreement

The intent of this agreement is to institute a working procedure between Easter Seals Agency and the UTRGV-PSJA-Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership (UTRGV-PSJA-EHS-CCP) Program for the provision of services to children eligible for Early Intervention Services in compliance with federal and state laws and regulations. This agreement will address the following core areas:

1. The services that will be provided by each agency.
2. The assurance that eligible children for Early Intervention Services will receive appropriate services in a natural environment, in community settings where children without disabilities participate.
3. The coordination of services with interagency planning that will eliminate duplicate services and best utilize available resources.
4. The recognition of the legal requirements of both parties and arrangements for collaborative efforts where families, communities, and programs mutually benefit from partnership.
5. The sharing of information regarding children who will be served by both the UTRGV-PSJA-Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership Program and the Easter Seals (contingent upon parent signing the Authorization for Release and Exchange of Information and sign the Agency to Agency Referral).
6. The service provider will complete the progress notes for EI services after every service provided to the child at campus.

II. Program Mandates:

This agreement is being executed in part to fulfill congressional mandates:

- The Equal Opportunity Act Amendments _P.L. 92-424
- Rehabilitation Act of 1973- P.L. 93-112.
- Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007 (R.L. 101-134) requiring Head Start Programs to recruit, enroll, and provide services to children with disabilities, and congressional mandates.
- The Education of Handicapped Children Act of 1975 and amendments P.L. 94-424, P. L. 94-142.
- The Education Handicap Act of 1990- P.L. 94-101-476.
- Individuals with Disabilities Act P.L. 102-119 Part C.
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) of 2004, which allow for statewide development and implementation of multidisciplinary program of Early Intervention Services for infants, toddlers, and their families and the development of interagency agreements to expedite the delivery of services to eligible children.

UTRGV - PSJA - EHS - CC Partnership Program



A) The UTRGV-PSJA-Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership Program Responsibilities

- At least ten percent (10%) of total enrollment slots will be filled by children with disabilities who are eligible for services in accordance with Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS) 1305 and 1308.5.
- All enrolled children will receive a Health and Developmental screening in accordance with HSPPS 1308.6.
- Any child from birth to three, who is suspected of having a delay, medical diagnosis, or disability, will be referred to the Easter Seals Agency for screening and/or assessment, with parents' written consent.
- Share and implement the procedural safeguards that have been established by Easter Seals to ensure the rights of children and families in the UTRGV-PSJA-EHS-CCP Program setting and any issues regarding the confidentiality of records.
- Coordination will occur with other local community agencies in order to provide services to children with disabilities.
- Will complete and submit the attached addendum agency to agency referral form for every child and family that is referred to the Easter Seals Agency.
- Will complete and submit the attached addendum authorization for release and exchange of information form for every child and family that will be referred to the Easter Seals Agency.

B) Easter Seals Responsibilities

- Provide a timely Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) evaluation to determine if referred children qualify for Early Intervention Services.
- Develop and Implement an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) for eligible children and their families.
- Coordinate with other Community Service Agencies to provide services to eligible children and their families.
- For children enrolled in Early Intervention Services and who no longer need the services will be administered an evaluation prior to dismissal.
- Develop, implement, and share with the UTRGV-PSJA-EHS-CCP Program the procedural safeguards to ensure the rights of families in Early Intervention Services and issues regarding the confidentiality of children's records.
- With parent's written consent, hold all transition meetings, evaluations, assessments, reviews, Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) meetings, dismissals, and direct services at the UTRGV-PSJA-EHS-CCP Program Campuses/Centers.
- All service providers will complete the attached addendum progress note after every service provided to the child at the UTRGV-PSJA-Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership Program Campuses.

UTRGV - PSJA - EHS - CC Partnership Program



III. Service Implementation

In the formulation of this agreement for Easter Seals Agency and the UTRGV-PSJA-EHS-CCP Program mutually agree to work cooperatively in providing services to children with disabilities. Such concerted efforts in providing services include the following activities listed below:

1. Child Find

Easter Seals Agency will:

- a. Establish a public awareness program about its services.
- b. Through collaborative efforts of the Medical Community, Social Services Agencies and local educational agencies, implement a comprehensive child find system to seek out children who may have a disability.
- c. Provide the UTRGV-PSJA-EHS-CCP Program with information on EI criteria used to determine eligibility.
- d. Review all referrals from the UTRGV-PSJA-EHS-CCP Program.

The UTRGV-PSJA-EHS-CCP Program will:

- a. Distribute EI information during program recruitment.
- b. Provide the EI agency with information on the UTRGV-PSJA-Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership Program eligibility criteria.
- c. Inform parents of their rights regarding evaluation and services.
- d. Inform parents of the referral process and obtain written parental consent to evaluate.
- e. Complete screenings within the first 45 days of attendance utilizing age appropriate screening and assessment instruments
- f. Ensure to implement and share procedural safeguards.

2. Assessments

Easter Seals Agency will:

- a. Assess and/or evaluate eligible children from birth to 2 years nine months of age who are referred by the UTRGV-PSJA-EHS-CCP Program.
- b. With written parent's consent, conduct a family assessment/evaluations or identification of support services or other programs to enhance the families' ability to meet the developmental needs of the child.

The UTRGV-PSJA-EHS-CCP Program will:

- a. Hold a Staffing with parents of children with suspected disabilities. If staffing results concur with the initial findings, the child will be referred for further evaluation.

UTRGV - PSJA - EHS - CC Partnership Program



- b. Obtain written parent's consent before the child is referred to the Easter Seals Agency.
- c. Depending on elapsed time between referral and evaluation, if necessary, initiate the evaluation process in accordance with regulation 45CFR 1308.6.

3. Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)

Easter Seals Agency will:

- a. Hold Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) meetings in the development of an IFSP for the family seeking services.
- b. Invite the UTRGV-PSJA-EHS-CCP Program to participate in the IDT meetings as advocates for the family and Head Start, with parent's written consent.
- c. Review the IFSP at least every 6 months or as requested by parents to ascertain progress or modify as deemed necessary.
- d. Hold IFSP meetings at the UTRGV-PSJA Early Head Start and Child Care Partnership Program, with the parent's written consent.

The UTRGV-PSJA-EHS-CCP Program will:

- a. Attend and participate in IDT meetings and assist in the formulation of an IFSP.
- b. Encourage parents to participate in IDT meetings and writing of IFSP's.

4. Individual Family Service Plan Review:

Easter Seals Agency will:

- a. Provide electronic copies of IFSP and Comprehensive Evaluation Reports to the UTRGV-PSJA-Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership Program for children who are receiving services with written parent's consent.
- b. Inform the UTRGV-PSJA-EHS-CCP Program of any changes to services as primarily indicated in the IFSP, with written parent's consent.
- c. Review child's progress toward identified goals every 6 months or as deemed necessary.
- d. Complete the monthly progress note form provided by the UTRGV-PSJA-EHS-CCP Program with a copy for those children receiving services with parent's written consent.

The UTRGV-PSJA-EHS-CCP Program will:

- a. Provide parent(s) with a copy of the monthly progress note for those children receiving Easter Seals and UTRGV-PSJA-EHS-CCP Program services.
- b. Assist parents in the understanding of their child's IFSP and encourage their participation in the reviews and teacher conferences.

UTRGV - PSJA - EHS - CC Partnership Program



5. Transitioning Services:

Easter Seals Agency will:

- a. Meet with the UTRGV-PSJA-EHS-CCP Program staff to discuss transitioning children to their next educational setting when deemed necessary at least six months before a child turns three years of age or prior to child transitioning to the next educational setting.
- b. The assigned Family Services Coordinator will coordinate transition services to another agency to expedite the process and services to children.
- c. With parent's written consent, transition meetings and activities will be held at the UTRGV-PSJA-EHS-CCP Program.

The UTRGV-PSJA-EHS-CCP Program will:

- a. Coordinate with various agencies, including PSJA ISD to discuss transitioning of the UTRGV-PSJA-EHS-CCP Program children to Head Start, Pre-Kinder, Child Care Partnerships, or other educational placement.
- b. Devise a transition plan that will address placement options along with names of contacts, possible site visits by the child, and time frames for completion.

6. Resolving Concerns:

In order to have a mutually satisfactory process to resolve concerns.

When concerns arise, the partners agree to:

- a. Address their differences in a timely, open and honest manner.
- b. Attempt to resolve concerns at the staffing level at which they occur.

The Disabilities Program Manager is the primary contact at the UTRGV-PSJA-EHS-CCP Program. Easter Seals Agency agrees to assign their ECI Site Manager at Easter Seals as the contact person for their designated service delivery area.

Both agencies will abide by State and Federal laws regarding the Family Education Right and Privacy Act (FERPA).

UTRGV - PSJA - EHS - CC Partnership Program



This Agreement will become effective on _____ following the signing of the agreement and remain in effect until terminated by either party. This agreement will be reviewed annually and updated as needed to address services.

Easter Seals

Name: _____

Title: Executive Director

Signature: _____

Date: _____

UTRGV- PSJA-EHS-CCP Program

Name: _____

Title: UTRGV- PSJA-EHS-CCP Director

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Easter Seals

Name: _____

Title: ECI Site Manager at Easter Seals

Signature: _____

Date: _____

PSJA ISD

Name: _____

Title: PSJA ISD Superintendent

Signature: _____

Date: _____