



NANCY BARGMANN
DIRECTOR

State of California—Health and Human Services Agency
Department of Developmental Services

1215 O Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

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GAVIN NEWSOM
GOVERNOR

February 8, 2024

Melissa Gruhler, Executive Director
Far Northern Regional Center
1900 Churn Creek Road #114
Redding, CA 96002

Dear Ms. Gruhler:

This letter is to convey the results of the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) remote review of the Early Start Program at Far Northern Regional Center (FNRC). This review was conducted through DDS' Self-Assessment Monitoring (SAM) system on August 4, 2023, through September 19, 2023, to ensure that California meets Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requirements.

FNRC completed a self-assessment of 60 records through SAM. This consisted of 30 regular records and 30 transition records. DDS verified the documentation and the findings for each of the 60 records. DDS identified finding(s) of noncompliance in the following areas:

- Initial assessments including a child's unique strengths and service needs in all five developmental domains (including hearing, vision, and health), must be completed prior to the initial Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP),
- IFSPs include services to meet the child and family needs,

The details of the findings are in the enclosed monitoring report.

Required Action:

The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) requires the state lead agency, DDS, to verify correction of noncompliance based on the individual child level (prong 1) and the systemic level (prong 2) as soon as possible, and no later than one year from the date of this letter. A plan, signed by you, addressing the systemic level (prong 2) areas of noncompliance is required to be submitted to DDS within 30 days from the date of this letter. As part of the plan of correction, FNRC should identify and address the root cause of noncompliance on each outstanding finding. Identifying the root cause ensures that corrective actions are meaningful and effective. Please forward the required evidence of clearance on each of the outstanding individual findings (prong 1) as soon as it is available (if applicable). DDS will require FNRC to provide subsequent records to clear the systemic level findings. In addition, please see recommendations listed on page 5 of the monitoring report.

Melissa Gruhler Executive Director
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Thank you for your cooperation during the monitoring review of the Early Start program at FNRC and your commitment to serve children and families. If you have any questions, please contact Nathaniel Taleon, Chief, Part C Federal Reporting and Monitoring Section, at (951) 374-0174, or by email at Nathaniel.Taleon@dds.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Original Signed By

MARICRIS ACON
Deputy Director
Children, Adolescents, and Young Adult Services Division

Enclosure

cc: Cali McKinzie, FNRC Board Chair
Micki Rodstrom, FNRC
Chere Sullivan, FNRC

**EARLY START MONITORING REPORT SUMMARY
FAR NORTHERN REGIONAL CENTER**

DATE OF REVIEW: AUGUST 4, 2023 – SEPTEMBER 19, 2023
FINAL REPORT DATE: February 8, 2024

ITEMS AT 100% COMPLIANCE				
	REQUIREMENT	RECORDS IN COMPLIANCE	TOTAL RECORDS REVIEWED	COMPLIANCE PERCENTAGE
R2	Initial evaluation determined the infant's or toddler's level of functioning in all developmental domains, including hearing, vision, and health. 34 CFR, Sections 303.21, 303.24, 303.310, 303.321 and Title 14, California Early Intervention Services Act (CEISA) Section 95014	30	30	100%
R4	Written notice of the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) meeting. 34 CFR, Section 303.342(d)(2)	30	30	100%
R7	The IFSP included the frequency and length for all early intervention services. 34 CFR, Section 303.344(d)(1)(i)	30	30	100%
R8	Early intervention services are provided in the natural environment or the IFSP contains an appropriate justification when services are not provided in a natural environment. 34 CFR, Sections 303.26, 303.126 and 303.344(d)(1)(ii)	30	30	100%
T1	The IFSP included timely transition steps and services. 34 CFR, Sections 303.209(d) & (e) and 303.344(h)	30	30	100%
T2	Timely referral to Local Educational Agency (LEA). 34 CFR, Sections 303.209(b) and 303.401(d)	30	30	100%
T3	Transition Conference occurred in a timely manner and the LEA was invited to the transition meeting. 34 CFR, Section 303.209(c)(1)	30	30	100%

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CLEARED FINDINGS

Findings cleared prior to the issuance of the report. No further action is required.

		ORIGINAL RECORDS IN COMPLIANCE	TOTAL RECORDS REVIEWED	ORIGINAL COMPLIANCE PERCENTAGE	SUBSEQUENT RECORDS IN COMPLIANCE	TOTAL SUBSEQUENT RECORDS REVIEWED	SUBSEQUENT COMPLIANCE PERCENTAGE
R1	Obtained written parental consent for evaluation/assessment. 34 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Sections 303.321(a) and 303.420(a)(2)	28	30	93.33%	█	█	100%
R5	Initial IFSP meeting was conducted within the 45-day timeline. 34 CFR, Sections 303.310 and 303.342(a)	28	30	96.67%	█	█	100%
R6	Timely provision of services 34 CFR, Sections 303.344(f)(1) and 340.420(b)(2) Title 17, California Code of Regulations (CCR), Section 52109(b)	29	30	90.00%	█	█	100%
O2	IFSP includes present levels of child's development in all five domains (including health, hearing, and vision). 34 CFR, Section 303.344(a)	29	30	96.67%	█	█	100%

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NONCOMPLIANCE

Far Northern Regional Center must clear findings on both the child-specific and systemic levels. Systemic level findings must be cleared as soon as possible but no later than one year from the final report date. **A Plan of Correction and subsequent review are required to clear these items.**

REQUIREMENT		RECORDS IN COMPLIANCE	TOTAL RECORDS REVIEWED	COMPLIANCE PERCENTAGE	PRONG 1 (CHILD-SPECIFIC)	PRONG 2 (SYSTEMIC)
					OUTSTANDING	OUTSTANDING
R3	Initial assessment for service planning identified unique strengths and service needs in all five developmental domains, including hearing, vision, and health, prior to the initial IFSP. 34 CFR, Sections 303.21, 303.24, 303.310, 303.321 and Title 14, CEISA Section 95014	20	30	66.67%	X	X
O1	IFSP includes services necessary to meet needs of child & family. 34 CFR, Sections 303.344(d)(1) and (e)	27	30	90.00%		X

Key:

R – “Regular” corresponds to the Regular Review Tool item, followed by the number of the Regular Review Tool item (ex.- R1 refers to the Regular Review Tool item number 1).

T – “Transition” corresponds to the Transition Review Tool item, followed by the number of the Transition Review Tool item (ex.- T3 refers to the Transition Review Tool item number 3).

O – “Other” refers to an additional finding, not included in the Regular or Transition review tools.

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OUTSTANDING INDIVIDUAL FINDINGS (PRONG 1)

#	UCI	Item 3 Assessment
13	██████	X
14	██████	X
15	██████	X
18	██████	X

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RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering what is outlined above, DDS recommends FNRC to align practices/procedures related to assessments.

For further information, the department encourages FNRC to further review available technical assistance resources related to the IFSP. These resources include but are not limited to:

- Early Start Service Coordinator's Handbook: [Service Coordination Handbook – Early Start Neighborhood](#)
- Educational and Developmental Intervention Services – IFSP Process Guidance Handbook: [EDISIFSPProcessGuidanceHandbook.pdf \(ectacenter.org\)](#)

As required by 34 CFR Sections 303.321, 303.24, 303.310, 303.321 and Title 14, CEISA Section 95014.