

QUALITY INCENTIVE PROGRAM (QIP) EARLY INTERVENTION MEASURE, CY 2024

GENERAL INFORMATION AND ELIGIBILITY TO PARTICIPATE

Q1. What is the Quality Incentive Program (QIP)?

A1. The [Quality Incentive Program \(QIP\)](#) is designed to improve consumer outcomes, service provider performance, and the quality of services. Participating service providers that meet or exceed quality measures developed by the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) with input from stakeholders, are eligible for incentive payments.

Q2. What is the Early Intervention quality measure?

A2. The [Early Intervention quality measure](#) is an initiative specifically designed to incentivize service providers to ensure that Early Start children and families receive rapid access to early intervention services.

Q3. Is participation mandatory?

A3. No. Participation in the QIP and any of its quality measures is voluntary.

Q4. Why is my organization being asked to participate?

A4. All qualifying providers early intervention services to a child less than three years of age in the Early Start program are invited to participate in this quality incentive measure. To determine whether your organization is eligible to participate, please review the [regional center correspondence](#) and its [Enclosure C](#).

Q5. What are the eligibility requirements to participate?

A5. To participate in this measure, service providers must meet the following requirements:

1. Provide a service listed in the table of included service codes (see FAQ question #6 below).
2. Begin providing a newly authorized early intervention service to a child less than 3 years of age in the Early Start program between January 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024.
3. Child receiving newly authorized early intervention service has client status 1, 2, or U (Early Start, Active, Provisional).
4. Before authorizing payment and at the time payment of the incentive is made, the provider must meet the eligibility criteria for vendorization under [California Code of Regulations, Title 17, Division 2, Chapter 3, Subchapter 2](#), as evidenced by being a current regional center vendor.

5. Before authorizing payment and at the time payment of the incentive is made, the provider must be compliant with, or implementing a corrective action plan for, the Home and Community-based Services Final Rule and not be subject to a current corrective action plan or sanction by a regional center as identified in the Department's December 1, 2023 [directive](#).

Q6. Which service providers can participate in the Early Intervention quality measure covering calendar year (CY) 2024?

- A6. Early Intervention service providers that begin providing a newly authorized service sometime from January 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024 using any of [these service codes](#).

INCENTIVE AMOUNTS

Q7. What incentive amounts are available for providing rapid Early Intervention services?

- A7. For every newly authorized service, eligible Early Intervention service providers can receive an incentive amount based on the first instance of service according to the [table below](#):

Number of Days from Purchase of Service (POS) Fiscal Authorization by Regional Center to Date of Delivery for First Instance of Service	Incentive Amount	Payment Subcode*
Within 16-20 days	\$100	QE1
Within 11-15 days	\$200	QE2
Within 1-10 days	\$300	QE3

* Regional centers may add up to two characters to the end of the "Payment Subcode"

Q8. Will the incentive payment go to the individual service provider?

- A8. The incentive will be paid to the vendor number associated with the newly authorized Purchase of Service (POS). If you have questions about the information that is associated with your organization, please contact your regional center.

Q9. Is there an incentive for increased frequency or reauthorization of a service that is already being delivered?

- A9. No, the Early Intervention incentive applies only to new authorized (POS) and associated first instance of service by a particular provider.

DETERMINING INCENTIVE PAYMENTS

Q10. What data is being collected from Early Intervention service providers?

- A10. Service providers are not required to submit data to the Department or to regional centers to participate in this incentive. The Department will use data from the Client Master File (CMF), Purchase of Service (POS), and eBilling databases to determine eligible early intervention services provided to a child who at the time of the newly authorized POS is less than three years of age and in the Early Start program. The Department will use these data to determine the length of time from the POS authorization by a regional center for that newly initiated service, to the first date that the corresponding service was provided.

Q11. How will the data be collected?

A11. Three months after the end of each calendar quarter (i.e., July for the quarter ending March 31), DDS will review available data (CMF, POS and eBilling) to determine eligible newly initiated early intervention services to a child, who at the time of the POS authorization is less than three years of age and in the Early Start program.

Q12. Will all POS's authorized under the eligible service codes qualify for an incentive payment?

A12. No, the following circumstances are excluded from receiving an incentive payment:

1. Single (one-time) visit POS authorizations with a total amount invoice of \$100 or less.
2. POS authorizations with subcodes related to non-intervention activity (i.e. mileage reimbursement, travel reimbursements)
3. POS authorizations with subcodes related to copayments, coinsurance, or deductibles
4. For POS authorizations that are "stacked", only one incentive payment will be allocated. Stacked authorizations are identified as having the same consumer, same vendor ID, same service code, same service start date, and varying subcodes.

Q13. What timeline is DDS using to determine incentive payouts?

A13. The tiered incentive amount is based on the length of time between the POS authorization by a regional center to the date of delivery for that corresponding service code and its subcodes. A table of the tiered incentive amounts is provided in [Enclosure A](#).

Q14. What incentive amount can an organization expect if there are multiple service codes for one newly authorized POS?

A14. Please review [Enclosure B](#) of the directive.

Q15. Will my organization be able to review the collected Early Intervention data?

A15. Yes, DDS will issue to each regional center an accounting record of newly initiated services receiving an incentive payment, as evidenced by an eBilling claim. Regional centers can make this record available to service providers upon request.

Q16. If a child begins receiving services from one provider and that provider can no longer provide the authorized service, the regional center may refer the child to a second provider for that same service period. In this case, would the second provider for that same newly authorized service be eligible for an incentive payment?

A16. Yes, in this scenario the second provider is eligible, if all other eligibility requirements are met.

Q17. If a child begins receiving services from a provider vendored by one regional center, but the child's case is then transferred to another provider at a different regional center, would the second provider for that same newly authorized service be eligible for an incentive payment?

A17. Yes, in this scenario the second provider is eligible, if all other eligibility requirements are met.

DATA VALIDATION AND INCENTIVE PAYMENT PROCESSING

Q18. How can I verify or update the information for my organization?

A18. To verify or to update your organization's information that you are recognized as a qualified Early Intervention service provider, please contact your regional center.

Q19. When will the incentive be disbursed?

A19. Qualifying incentive payments based on the tiered amounts will be issued quarterly by regional centers to each eligible early intervention service provider.

Q20. How will the incentive be disbursed?

A20. Three months after the end of each calendar quarter (i.e., June for the quarter ending March 31), the Department will review available data described above and instruct regional centers to issue incentive payments based on the tiered amounts, to each eligible service provider. The incentive will be paid using a contract authorization, with the applicable service code associated with the service provider vendor number, and using only the payment subcodes identified in the updated and in [Enclosure A](#) (updated June 26, 2024).

TRAINING AND PURCHASE OF AUTHORIZATION (POS) OVERVIEW

Q21. Will there be additional training webinars on Early Intervention quality measure, eligibility criteria and incentive payments?

A21. An FAQ, Directive, enclosures, and a recording of the training webinar held on May 1, 2024, are available for providers and the general public [here](#), on the Early Intervention tab.

Q22. What is the official POS authorization date and who sets the POS authorization date?

A22. The POS authorization date is the date entered by the regional center into the fiscal system for each service that will be purchased for an individual served. It is the first date that a vendor is authorized to begin providing the service and to bill for that service.

This should be sent to a provider on a paper document. For more specific questions about the method by which the regional center notifies the provider of this date, please contact your regional center.

Q23. How will DDS determine the length of time between the POS authorization date and the first date that service is delivered?

A23. The Department will use data from the Client Master File, POS data, and eBilling information to determine eligible newly initiated early intervention services to a child who at the time of the POS authorization is less than three years of age and in the Early Start program.

The Department will use these data to determine the length of time from the POS authorization by a regional center for that newly initiated service, to the date that the corresponding service first was provided.

Q24. The POS may appear in the system, but the hard copy of the POS may not be received for another week. Does the incentive payment calculation use the portal date for the POS or when the hard copy of the POS is received?

A24. The incentive payment calculation uses the POS authorization date that is entered into the system. For updates and more information on the POS authorization, please contact the regional center processing the POS.

- Q25. What if the new (POS) authorization is approved and the service provider contacts the family, and the family is not available or can't set a start date within 20 days of the POS authorization. What should the service provider do to qualify for the incentive payment?**
- A25.** The [tiered incentive amounts](#) for this measure are based on the length of time between the POS authorization by a regional center to the date of delivery for that corresponding service code and its subcodes. Unless a service is delivered within the time frames listed in [Enclosure A](#), it is not eligible for an incentive payment.
- Q26. Is the incentive a one-time payment per client or per service authorization?**
- A26.** The measure offers a one-time incentive payment for each newly authorized service that is delivered within 20 days from the date of POS authorization. For more information about the incentive and payments, please see the [Department's correspondence](#) to regional centers and its enclosures.
- Q27. How does a POS authorization with multiple services get service codes / subcodes assigned?**
- A27.** Each regional center determines how it assigns service codes and subcodes. For more detailed information regarding the assignment of service codes and subcodes, please contact the regional center processing the POS.
- Q28. If a child receives service from two different service providers under one authorization number for the same service code & subcode, which service provider is awarded the incentive payment?**
- A28.** This quality measure is aimed at incentivizing rapid access to early intervention services. The service provider that delivers service for a specific code/subcode first will receive the incentive payment. For questions regarding how service / subcodes are assigned, please contact the regional center processing the POS for your client.
- Q29. Will a distinction be made between service codes 116 (Early Start Specialized Therapeutic Services) or 805 (Infant Development Program) for incentive payments?**
- A29.** No. Service providers who begin providing a newly authorized early intervention service to a child less than three years of age in the Early Start program are eligible for this incentive. All intervention services listed in [Enclosure C](#) are eligible to receive the incentive amounts listed in [Enclosure A](#).
- Q30. Are Infant Development Assessments (IDA) or other evaluations / assessments available for an incentive payment?**
- A30.** The intention of the incentive measure is to promote rapid delivery of intervention services to children and families. Evaluations and assessments are not considered an intervention service and are therefore not eligible for incentive payments.
- Q31. Is this incentive only for direct funded children?**
- A31.** This incentive applies to all service providers operating within one or more of the service codes listed in [Enclosure C](#) who meet the eligibility requirements specified in [the regional center correspondence](#) and begin providing a newly authorized early intervention service to a child less than three years of age in the Early Start program for the entirety of calendar year (CY) 2024.

Q32. Do regional centers or service providers need to submit anything to qualify, support or expedite a service provider's incentive payment?

A32. Service providers are not required to submit data to the Department or to regional centers to participate in this incentive. The Department will use data from the CMF, POS and eBilling databases to determine eligible newly initiated early intervention services provided to a child who at the time of the POS authorization is less than three years of age and in the Early Start program.

Q33. How will DDS know whether a provider has met the requirements for eligibility?

A33. DDS will determine the provider's eligibility status by reviewing: the service provider's record at the time the newly initiated service was provided, and at the time payment of the incentive is made, and for any corrective action plans (CAPs) or sanctions by a regional center as identified in the [Department's December 1, 2023 directive and ensure service provider is](#) compliant with, or implementing a corrective action plan for, the Home and Community-based Services Final Rule.

Q34. How much detail is provided for the incentive accounting record?

A34. The Department will use data from the CMF, POS and eBilling databases to create the accounting record. For specific details about the accounting record, please contact the regional center processing the POS.

Q35. When can a service provider request a copy of the accounting record?

A35. Three months after the end of each calendar quarter (i.e., July for the quarter ending March 31), the Department will issue to each regional center an accounting record of newly initiated services receiving an incentive payment, as evidenced by an eBilling claim. Regional centers can then make this record available to service providers upon request.

Please note there is a lag in eBilling such that it may be several months for a POS claim to appear in the eBilling record. If the Department does not have information about a particular first date of service that is eligible for an incentive payment, the Department will authorize regional centers to make any additional incentive payments for a prior quarter when the data becomes available after a subsequent quarter.

Q36. If early intervention services are first provided to a newly approved POS authorized in the first quarter of calendar year 2024 (Jan – Mar), when can an incentive payment be expected?

A36. Three months after the end of each calendar quarter (i.e., July for the quarter ending March 31), the Department will review available data described above and instruct regional centers to issue incentive payments based on the tiered amounts, to each eligible service provider.

Q37. Is the Early Incentive only for Calendar Year (CY) 2024 or will it continue after?

A37. Currently, this incentive is planned to be active only for CY 2024. DDS may extend this quality measure incentive in the future.

Q38. How much detail is provided for the incentive accounting record?

A38. The Department will use data from the Client Master File, POS and eBilling databases to create the accounting record. For specific details about the accounting record, please contact the regional center processing the POS.