



## INFANT TODDLER DEVELOPMENTAL SPECIALIST (ITDS) CERTIFICATE REQUEST CHECKLIST

Follow the checklist below to ensure all required documentation for issuance of an Infant Toddler Developmental Specialist certificate is sent with the ITDS enrollment packet.

**COVER LETTER**, which includes the following:

- a. Applicant's full name, middle initial, date of birth and social security number
- b. Identification of whether the applicant is an ITDS coursework graduate, a hardship waiver applicant or designated as highly qualified
- c. Clearly identified degree, major and number of years of professional experience

**COPY OF DEGREE OR TRANSCRIPTS.** ITDS applicants must have **one** of the following:

- a. Bachelor's degree or higher from an accredited college or university in early childhood education or early childhood/special education, child and family development, family life specialist, communication sciences, psychology, or social work.
  - Prior to sending, the LES should verify that university accreditation is met by checking the following website: <http://ope.ed.gov/accreditation/Search.aspx>.
  - If the college or university is not listed on the website, verification of accreditation by another organization must be included in the application packet.
- b. An equivalent degree based on transcript review by the Early Steps State Office. An equivalent degree would generally consist of at least 18 credit hours in one of the fields listed in **a.** above.
- c. An out-of-field degree **and** a minimum of five years documented post-degree professional experience in early intervention. A mentorship may not substitute for any part of the required experience.

**DOCUMENTATION OF PROFESSIONAL/POST DEGREE EXPERIENCE**

- a. An ITDS applicant with an in-field or equivalent degree must provide documentation of one year of post-degree professional experience in early intervention using the Early Steps Certification of Experience form.
- b. An ITDS applicant with an in-field or equivalent degree who cannot document one year of post-degree professional experience must provide a statement of their intent to complete the Early Steps mentorship requirements.
- c. An ITDS applicant with an out-of-field degree must provide documentation of at least five years of post-degree professional experience in early intervention using the Early Steps Certification of Experience form.

**VERIFICATION OF ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:**

- The applicant has successfully completed the university ITDS coursework at an approved university as documented by a university letter or transcripts

OR

- Request for a hardship waiver as described below

OR

- Request for a highly qualified designation as described below

**HARDSHIP WAIVER:** If requesting a **hardship waiver**, additional information is required in the cover letter from the LES.



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- Statement of need that includes a description of current workforce and the number of enrolled ITDSs for that service area.
- Need for additional ITDS providers
- Description of ITDS recruitment efforts by the LES
- Justification for submitting a specific individual for a waiver such as special languages spoken, willingness to serve in a rural area where there is a shortage of ITDSs, etc.

**HIGHLY QUALIFIED:** If requesting to be classified as **highly qualified**, the applicant must have and include documentation of the following:

- One year of documented professional experience. A mentorship cannot be completed in lieu of the experience.
  - Master's degree or higher from an accredited university in early childhood education or early childhood/special education, child and family development, family life specialist, communication sciences, psychology, social work, or equivalent degree.
- OR
- Bachelor's degree in any of the above required fields **AND**
  - One of the following:
    - Department of Education Pre-K Disabilities Endorsement
    - Certification in SKI HI, VIISA, or INSITE or completion of university certificate in hearing specialist or vision specialist in early intervention
    - Early Intervention credential or equivalent certificate from another state

Within 14 calendar days of receipt of a complete packet, the LES Director/Coordinator or their designee will be notified via email of the review committee's decision. If the application documentation is not complete, the LES will receive a request to submit specified information within thirty (30) days. Failure to complete the application within the 30 day time frame will result in the application being denied and returned. The applicant must reapply to be considered for ITDS enrollment in the future.

After the request is approved, the applicant must complete the six [ITDS online modules](#) within 30 calendar days of receiving approval. Approval to take the online modules does not constitute approval as a CMS provider. After completion of the ITDS online modules, the LES **must** notify the ESSO of completion in order for the ITDS certificate to be e-mailed back to the LES.

ITDS Certificate Requests may be emailed to [ITDSWaivers@doh.state.fl.us](mailto:ITDSWaivers@doh.state.fl.us), mailed to the address below, or faxed to (850) 921-8138/ATTN: Training Unit:

Children's Medical Services  
Early Steps Training Unit  
4052 Bald Cypress Way, Bin A06  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1707

For additional information regarding the ITDS application process, refer to the *Early Steps Section* of the [CMS Provider Handbook – Non-Licensed Healthcare](#) and Component 10 of the Early Steps Policy Handbook and Operations Guide.

If you have questions regarding the status of your application, please feel free to contact Children's Medical Services, Early Steps State Office via telephone: (850) 245-4200 X 3291 or email [ITDSWaivers@doh.state.fl.us](mailto:ITDSWaivers@doh.state.fl.us) .