

6M-4.720 Screening of Children in the School Readiness Program.

(1) Definitions. As used in this rule:

(a) "Concerns" means a child's scoring below established thresholds or age appropriate levels suggested by the authors of a screening instrument.

(b) "Eligibility determination" means the initial process conducted by the early learning coalition to determine if a child meets minimum requirements to participate in the School Readiness program.

(c) "Enrollment" is the final step in the process of entering (or enrolling) a child in the School Readiness program. It means officially entering the child's name in the statewide information system as a School Readiness student.

(d) "Exceptions" are circumstances in which School Readiness children aged six weeks to age of kindergarten eligibility are not required to be screened under this rule.

(e) "Individualized supports" means the action taken subsequent to a child demonstrating concerns based on screening results.

(f) "Redetermination" means the process conducted by the early learning coalition at least annually to determine if a child's family continues to meet minimum requirements to participate in the School Readiness program pursuant to Rule 6M-4.209, F.A.C.

(g) "Referral" means the process of providing information and recommendations to parents regarding further evaluation for a child who shows concerns based on screening results.

(h) "Screening" means activities to identify children who may have concerns and who may need individualized supports.

(2) Screening Process.

(a) By July 1, 2013, each early learning coalition shall implement processes consistent with the text of this rule.

(b) Initial screening. Each early learning coalition shall coordinate with parents or providers to complete initial screening for each child, aged six weeks to age of kindergarten eligibility. Children shall be screened no later than 45 calendar days after:

1. His or her first enrollment in the School Readiness program or

2. Subsequent enrollment after being terminated or withdrawn from the School Readiness program.

If a child, aged six weeks to age of kindergarten eligibility, is again enrolled in the School Readiness program after prior termination or withdrawal, the coalition must determine if the child has been screened in accordance with the subsequent screening intervals identified in paragraph (2)(f), no later than 45 calendar days after subsequent enrollment.

(c) Screening alternatives.

1. Coordination with parents. If a coalition elects to coordinate with parents to implement screenings for children, the coalition shall request the parent screen the child on-site. Early learning coalitions shall make staff persons available to assist parents during the screening.

2. Coordination with child care providers.

a. If a coalition elects to coordinate with child care providers to implement screenings for children, the coalition shall notify the child care provider serving each child, in writing, of the date by which the child must be screened. The coalition shall give this notification to the child care provider a minimum of 30 calendar days prior to the date by which the child must be screened.

b. No later than 30 calendar days after completion of a child's screening, the child care provider shall submit the child's screening results to the coalition in writing.

(d) The parent of a child enrolled in the School Readiness program may decline to have his or her child screened by completing and submitting to the coalition or child care provider Form OEL-SR 24, dated August 2012, which is hereby incorporated by reference and which may be obtained from Florida's Office of Early Learning at the following address: 250 Marriott Drive, Tallahassee, Florida 32399, (866)357-3239, TTY/Florida Relay 711, and at the Internet website: <http://www.floridaearlylearning.com>. If a parent submits the form to the child care provider, the child care provider shall submit a copy of the form to the early learning coalition no later than 30 calendar days after receipt. A parent's screening decision remains in effect if a child changes School Readiness providers within an early learning coalition's service delivery area.

(e) Each early learning coalition shall provide, in writing, or shall require a child care provider to provide in writing, the screening results for each child to the child's parent. Early learning coalitions shall make staff persons available to explain screening results if requested by a parent.

(f) Subsequent screenings. Each early learning coalition shall coordinate with parents or providers for subsequent screenings:

1. If a coalition coordinates with parents to implement subsequent screenings, each early learning coalition shall request a parent to screen, at a minimum, annually at redetermination, the parent's child(ren), aged six weeks to age of kindergarten eligibility, enrolled in the School Readiness program.

2. If a coalition coordinates with child care providers to implement subsequent screenings, each child care provider shall screen, at a minimum, annually in the month of the child's birthday, every child aged six weeks to age of kindergarten eligibility, who is enrolled in the provider's School Readiness program. This rule is not intended to limit the number of screenings offered to a child; a school readiness provider may conduct additional screenings at its discretion.

(3) Screening Instruments. Each early learning coalition shall select a screening instrument or instruments for use under this rule which meet all of the following criteria:

(a) Covers an age range of at least six weeks to age of kindergarten eligibility;

(b) Addresses, at a minimum, each of the developmental domains established in the performance standards (*Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards: Birth to Five*, Form OEL-SR 30, dated August 2012) adopted by Florida's Office of Early Learning in Rule 6M-4.700, F.A.C.;

(c) Takes 30 minutes or less on average to complete per child;

(d) Is supported by research-proven validity tests;

(e) Is supported by research-proven reliability tests;

(f) Is available, at a minimum, in English and Spanish versions;

(g) Is appropriate to be administered by a parent or guardian, child care provider or other professional; and

(h) Yields results, which can be entered into data fields into an electronic data system.

(4) Exceptions. All children enrolled in the School Readiness program aged six weeks to age of kindergarten eligibility must be screened in accordance with the screening process identified in subsection (2) except children in the following situations:

(a) Children who have been screened in a program other than the School Readiness program within the preceding 12 month period and whose scores were shared with the early learning coalition by the due date established for initial screening in paragraph (2)(b) or subsequent screenings in paragraph (2)(f) and when the screening instrument used meets the criteria in subsection (3) above; or

(b) Children who are receiving services in accordance with an individualized family support plan (IFSP) or individual education plan (IEP), in which the plans have been:

1. Developed or reviewed in the last 12 months by a school district, early intervention program, or other state agency that provides special education and related services, and

2. Shared with the early learning coalition by the due date established for initial screening in paragraph (2)(b) or subsequent screenings in paragraph (2)(f).

(5) Individualized supports.

(a) Each early learning coalition shall initiate individualized supports, no later than 60 calendar days after screening, for children who show concerns based on their screening results.

(b) Individualized supports must include, at a minimum, one of the following:

1. Additional screening or assessment,

2. Individualized learning plans,

3. Suggested developmental activities for parents or providers,

4. Observations and accommodations in the early learning program,

5. Parent education,

6. Referrals to early intervention services or specialized care.

a. Each early learning coalition shall notify in writing, or require a child care provider to notify in writing, the parent of a child who receives a referral under subparagraph (5)(b)6. The notification must include, at a minimum, areas identified through the screening which are of concern and local contact information for the appropriate referral agency.

b. When providing a referral under subparagraph (5)(b)6.a., each early learning coalition must offer to contact the appropriate referral agency. Either the coalition or the child care provider must document the parent's choice of "yes" or "no" indicating the choice regarding receipt of additional help, the name of the parent, the date, and the child's name.

(6) Data.

(a) The early learning coalition shall enter, or require the child care provider to enter, the child screening data into an electronic system no later than 60 calendar days after screening, and the early learning coalition shall enter the individualized supports data into an electronic system no later than 30 calendar days after initiating individualized supports.

(b) The early learning coalition shall make the electronic version of the screening and individualized supports data available to

Florida's Office of Early Learning upon request. The child screening and individualized supports data included in the electronic system must include, at a minimum, the following elements:

1. Child name;
2. Child date of birth;
3. Child age;
4. Child ID number, if available;
5. Parent name;
6. Parent contact information, to include: mailing address, email address, and phone number, if available;
7. Date of enrollment in the School Readiness program;
8. Date(s) of screening(s), if screened;
9. Reason for not being screened, if applicable, which may include:
 - i. Parental objection to the screening; or
 - ii. Exceptions to being screened in the School Readiness program as described in subsection (4);
10. Screening results, which include a summary of areas in which the child shows concerns based on the screening;
11. Date individualized supports were initiated;
12. Type of individualized supports initiated;
13. Date of referral, if applicable under sub-subparagraph (5)(b)6.; and
14. Whether the parent elected to receive additional help from the coalition under sub-subparagraph (5)(b)6.b.

Rulemaking Authority 411.01(4)(e) FS. Law Implemented 411.01(4)(d)3. FS. History--New 11-15-12.