

## Questions and Answers about Proposed First Steps Rates

### 1. When will rates change?

DESE has not set a date for rate changes. There are significant systemic problems that need to be corrected through redesign before rate changes can be implemented. This is due to the fact that there are multiple issues in the system including, but not limited to:

- ?? Inappropriate use of third party resources to pay for Part C services
- ?? Inadequate use of third party resources to pay for Part C services
- ?? Duplication in assessment and evaluation services
- ?? Unnecessary administration of formal testing
- ?? Service practices that are not based upon individual child and family needs

We are confident that these systemic problems will be corrected through the redesign changes. The Central Finance Office, together with the application of learning gained in the First Steps Core Curriculum, will make dramatic corrections. DESE will monitor progress towards the correction of these issues through the data and finance system. The goal is to bring the First Steps system to appropriate practice and service planning/delivery. When this goal is achieved, the new rates can be implemented.

### 2. How were the proposed rates determined?

A time and effort survey, along with a cost survey of actual expenditures, formed the basis of the rate methodology. Various types of Missouri early intervention providers completed these surveys. A workgroup, representing providers and state agencies, synthesized this information and developed the proposed rates. The rate methodology is as follows:

$$\text{Maximum rate} = \frac{\text{Cost}}{\text{Billable activity}}$$

Cost factors included in the Rate Calculation	Billable Activity	Non-Billable Activity included in Rate Calculation
Salary & Benefits	Face-to-face contact, 15 minute unit	Travel to/with Client
Consultants/Clinicians	Service coordination, monthly	Report writing
Facilities and Capital Improvements	Team meeting; 15 minute unit for eligibility determination, IFSP, & transition meetings	Documentation
Vehicles	Clinical evaluation; per event per clinician	Contact with other professionals
Equipment		Staff meetings
Transportation		Administrative activity
Travel Cost		No show/cancellations
Materials & Supplies		Sick/Vacation time
Utilities		Resource Development activities
Insurance		
Food		
Limited In-Kind		
Administrative Costs		
Miscellaneous		

**3. Do the proposed rates include travel costs?**

Yes—both distance and time were considered in the rate calculations. Providers will not be reimbursed for mileage in addition to the hourly rates; not can they bill for travel to and from the child’s service location.

**4. Why the uniformity in rates?**

The Rates workgroup identified common rates of reimbursement as one of the outcomes for the system. Discussions indicated that common rates provide equity among early intervention providers and does not create incentives for one type of service over another. The workgroup did recognize differences based upon cost—for example, the data indicated that when services are provided in a special purpose, center-based setting, the provider can bill for approximately 65% of their activities. When early intervention is provided in the natural environment, only 45% of the provider’s activities are billable. This discrepancy in billable opportunities is reflected in the proposed rates.

**Proposed First Steps Rates**

<b>Provider Type</b>	<b>Intervention in Special Purpose Settings</b>	<b>Intervention in Home and Community Settings</b>	<b>Teaming: Eligibility IFSP Transition</b>	<b>Clinical Evaluation: Special Purpose Settings</b>	<b>Clinical Evaluation in Home and Community Settings</b>
<b>Specialist</b>	\$11.48 / unit \$45.92/ hour	\$21.27 /unit \$85.08/ hour	\$15.00/ unit \$60.00/hour	\$121.23 per event	\$230.04 per event
<b>Associate</b>	\$5.15/ unit \$20.60/hour	\$11.47/unit \$45.88/hour	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

**Service Coordination:**

**Specialist Level**--\$66.00/child/month with at least one billable activity plus the ability to bill for all teaming activity

**Associate Level**--\$41.00/child/month with at least one billable activity

<b>Other Early Intervention Services</b> Interpreter Services Assistive Technology Device Transportation	TBA
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**Comparison of Current and Proposed First Steps Rates for Early Intervention Services**

**Specialist Level**

**Key: CB-Center or Clinic Based  
H/C- Home and Community Settings**

<b>Type of Service</b>	<b>Current Rate of Reimbursement</b>	<b>Proposed Rate of Reimbursement</b>	<b>Difference</b>
OT, PT, Speech-Language, Audiology, Nutrition	\$10.50 per unit for CB (\$42.00/hour)  + \$2.50 per unit for H/C (\$52.00/hour)	\$11.48 per unit (CB) (\$45.92/hour)  \$21.27 per unit (H/C) (\$85.08/hour)	+\$0.98/unit (CB)  +\$8.27/unit (H/C)
Nursing Services	\$10.50 per unit RN (\$42.00/hour)  \$8.00 per unit LPN  +\$2.50 per unit for H/C (\$52.00/hour RN \$42.00/hour LPN)	\$11.48 per unit (CB) (\$45.92/hour)    \$21.27 per unit (H/C) (\$85.08/hour)	+\$0.98/unit (CB)  +3.48/unit (CB)  +\$8.27/unit RN +\$10.77/unit/LPN (H/C)
Health Services	Payment in full for licensed physician  \$10.50 per unit RN (CB) (\$42.00/hour)  + \$2.50 per unit for H/C (\$52.00/hour)	SAME  \$11.48 per unit (CB) (\$45.92/hour)  \$21.27 per unit (H/C) (\$85.08/hour)	NONE  +\$0.98/unit (CB)  +\$8.27/unit (H/C)
Medical Services for Evaluation only	Payment in full for licensed physician	SAME	
Psychological Services	\$15.00 per unit – licensed psychologist (CB) (\$60/hour)  \$8.00 per unit—certified psychological examiner (CB) (\$32/hour)  + \$2.50 per unit for H/C	\$11.48 per unit (CB) (\$45.92/hour)  Same as above  \$21.27 per unit (H/C) (\$85.08/ hour)	- 3.52/ unit (CB)  +3.48/unit (CB)  +\$3.77/unit for licensed psychologist (H/C)  + 10.77/unit (H/C) for

			psychological examiner
Social Work	\$12.00 per unit (CB) (\$48.00/hour)  + \$2.50 per unit for H/C (\$58.00/hour)	\$11.48 per unit (CB) (\$45.92/hour)  \$21.27 per unit (H/C) (\$85.08/hour)	-.52/unit (CB)  +\$6.77/unit (H/C)
Special Instruction	\$8.00 per unit (CB) (\$32.00/hour)  + \$2.50 per unit for H/C (\$42.00/hour)	\$11.48 per unit (CB) (\$45.92/hour)  \$21.27 per unit (H/C) (\$85.08/hour)	+3.48/unit (CB)  +\$10.77/unit (H/C)
Vision Services	Payment in full— ophthalmologist, optometrist	SAME	

#### Associate Level

Type of Service	Current Rate of Reimbursement	Proposed Rate of Reimbursement	Difference
OT PT Speech/Language Nutrition	\$8.00 for COTA (CB) \$8.00 for PTA (CB) \$8.00 for SPL (CB) \$8.00 Nutrition Associate (CB) + \$2.50 per unit for H/C	\$5.15 per unit (CB)  \$11.47 per unit (H/C)	-\$2.85 per unit (CB)  +\$0.97 per unit (H/C)
Health Service	\$8.00 for LPN (CB) + \$2.50 per unit for H/C	\$5.15 per unit (CB) \$11.47 per unit (H/C)	-\$2.85 per unit (CB) +\$0.97 per unit (H/C)
Special Instruction	\$ 2.70 per unit (CB) + \$2.50 per unit for H/C	\$5.15 per unit (CB) \$11.47 per unit (H/C)	+2.45 per unit (CB) +6.27 per unit (H/C)
Vision Services	\$8.00 for O& M (CB) + \$2.50 per unit for H/C	\$5.15 per unit (CB) \$11.47 per unit (H/C)	-\$2.85 per unit (CB) +\$0.97 per unit (H/C)