

State/Program-Specific COS Process Policies and Procedures Checklist

The *Child Outcomes Summary (COS) Online Learning Module*¹ provides practitioners with general information on why and how to implement the COS process. However, states and local programs have established specific policies and procedures for implementing the child outcomes measurement process. These policies and procedures cover such topics as when to collect entry and exit data, which assessment instruments can be used, and how to handle children who move in state. It is important that these policies and procedures be documented and available in writing and communicated to practitioners through professional development activities.

TA providers should use this checklist to ensure that practitioners understand the policies and procedures that their state/program has set. These policies and procedures will help inform program monitoring, accountability, and improvement.

(e.g., the family provides input about the child's functioning, the family was present during the decision of the child outcomes rating)

The contents of these documents were developed under a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, #H373Z120002, and a cooperative agreement, #H326P170001, from the Office of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the U.S. Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.

DaSy Center Project Officers, Meredith Miceli and Richelle Davis
ECTA Center Project Officer, Julia Martin Eile.



Office of Special Education Programs
U.S. Department of Education

¹ Register to use the COS Process module at: <http://ectacenter.org/eco/pages/cos.asp#COSProcessModule>

State/Program COS Policies and Procedures Checklist

Completed By: The NC ITP Technical Assistance Coordinators

Date: March 2022

1. Informing Families About the COS Process

1a. How are families informed about the process?

The NC ITP acknowledges that including families in the COS scoring process is best practice. At this time, the NC ITP will continue with COS scoring processes as currently implemented at each agency and develop a plan for statewide implementation of best practices in the, relatively, near future.

1b. What materials does your state/program provide to families about the COS?

The NC ITP acknowledges that including families in the COS scoring process is best practice. At this time, the NC ITP will continue with COS scoring processes as currently implemented at each agency and develop a plan for statewide implementation of best practices in the, relatively, near future.

1c. Does your state have a family brochure?

- Yes
- No
- In progress

1d. When in the process are materials shared with families

The NC ITP acknowledges that including families in the COS scoring process is best practice. At this time, the NC ITP will continue with COS scoring processes as currently implemented at each agency and develop a plan for statewide implementation of best practices in the, relatively, near future.

1e. How does your state/program expect families to be included in the COS process?

The NC ITP's current practices include a structured interview, using an evidenced-based Family Directed Assessment Tool, to gather the family's input about their child's strengths and challenges within everyday family routines. Some families provide statements and examples of direct comparison of their child's development to those of their peers and/or siblings and/or other typically developing children.

Notes:

2. Tools Used During the COS Process

2a. Does your state/program use designated assessment tools to inform the COS?

Yes

No

Name(s) of assessment tool(s):

The NC ITP's current practices allow agencies to choose the assessment tool(s) to be used within their practice. The most frequently used assessment tools include Roadmap for Assessing Meaningful Participation (RAMP), Family-guided Approaches to Collaborative Early-intervention Training and Services (FACETS), Routines-Based Interview (RBI), The Scale for Assessment of Family Enjoyment within Routines (SAFER), Robin McWilliam's Eco-Map, and/or a combination of any of these tools.

2b. Does your state/program use a specific age-anchoring tool(s), specifically for the COS?

Yes

No

2c. Does your state/program use the COS decision tree?

Yes

No

The NC ITP requires local agencies to use the COS decision tree when assigning COS scores.

Notes:

3. Timing of the COS Process

3a. At what point in the IFSP process is the entry COS completed?

- Initial IFSP
- After the evaluation date
- After first delivered services
- Other (please explain):

The NC ITP's current practices allow agencies to choose at what point in the IFSP process the COS is completed. Generally, the COS is completed after the Eligibility Determination Evaluation, and after the Initial Child and Family Directed Assessment if the child is eligible based on having an established condition.

3b. How frequently is the COS process conducted?

(Note: required at entry and at exit, at minimum)

- Entry and exit
- Entry, annual, and exit
- Entry and exit, optional at annual
- Entry, then annual or exit
- Semi-annually (at 6-month IFSP review)
- Quarterly

The NC ITP requires the COS to only be completed at entry and at exit from the program.

3c. How is "entry" defined? (e.g. date of entry COS rating, evaluation date, date of first delivered services)

The NC ITP defines "entry" as the date on which the family provides written consent to the initial IFSP, regardless of the date on which the COS information was gathered and ratings assigned.

3d. How many days before or after the entry date can the rating be completed?

The NC ITP strongly encourages the COS ratings be completed as near to the child's entry into the program. Agencies are provided flexibility to develop local procedures that include specific timeframes for completion.

Notes:

3e. How is “exit” defined? (e.g., date of exit COS rating, date of last delivered services, IFSP end date)

The NC ITP defines “exit” as the date on which the family requests for all ITP services to end, or a date following the 10-day Prior Written Notice for closure being provided to the family, or the day prior to the child’s 3rd birthday for children who age-out of ITP services. Completion of an exit COS is required when the child has been enrolled in ITP for a minimum of 6 months.

3f. How many days before or after the exit date can the rating be completed?

The NC ITP strongly encourages the COS ratings be completed as near to the child’s exit from the program. Agencies are provided flexibility to develop local procedures that include specific timeframes for completion.

3g. Part C only: What is the minimum age for COS entry rating?

- No minimum age
- Minimum age 2 months
- Minimum age 4 months
- Minimum age 6 months

3h. Does your state/program conduct periodic reviews of COS documents?

- Yes
- No
- Other (please explain):

The NC ITP strongly encourages local agencies to complete periodic reviews of the COS documents to ensure consistency and for general quality assurance purposes. At the state level, data comparisons are completed annually as part of State Systemic Improvement Planning (SSIP) and State Performance reporting.

4. Teaming During the COS Process

4a. Who are the mandatory COS team members?

ITP Current Practices

Entry COS mandatory team members include evaluation team members, the EISC, and the family (through structured interview about their child's development).

Exit COS mandatory team members include the EISC, providers working with the child/family, and the family (through structured interview about their child's progress and development).

4b. Who are the optional COS team members?

For both the entry and exit COS, the NC ITP strongly encourages CDSA's to informally gather and incorporate information about the child's current development, from persons or community agencies (childcare, CPS, CMARK, etc.) already working with the child and family when assigning the ratings.

4c. COS team members meet:

- In person
- Virtually
- Both

Notes:

5. Determining and Recording the Rating

5a. To record COS ratings, what does your state/program use?

- Numbers (7-point scale)
- Descriptor statements

5b. The format of the COS documentation is:

- Bulleted
- In paragraph form
- Combination of the above.

5c. The COS documentation is entered and scored:

- Electronically
- On paper
- Both

5d. Does your state/program require/recommend data to support rating for:

- Entry
- Exit

Notes:

6. Special Circumstances for Exit Ratings

6a. If a child exits unexpectedly, what are your program's policies regarding the exit COS?

- No policies or procedures
- The team meets and determines the rating/score after the child exits based on ongoing assessment information. (Applicable only when the child has been enrolled in ITP for a minimum of 6 months).
- We use the last periodic child outcomes rating/score that was completed before the child exited, as long as it meets our state-established timeline for being current.

6b. How do you handle a transfer to another program within your state?

The entry COS is completed by the CDSA enrolling the child into ITP. The CDSA receiving the transfer completes the exit COS when the child exits the program, as appropriate. (An exit COS is completed only when the child has been enrolled in ITP for a minimum of 6 months).

6c. What does the COS process look like for a child transferring from Part C to Part B 619 services?

Part C completes an exit COS (applicable only when the child has been enrolled in ITP for a minimum of 6 months) prior to the planned exit upon the child's third birthday. Part B (Preschool Program) completes an entry COS, using information gathered as part of the transition process from ITP, as well as evaluations, assessments and interviews completed by Part B.

Notes:

7. Sharing Local Program Data and State Data

7a. What data are shared with locals? (e.g., local progress categories, summary statements)

The NC ITP currently shares annual statewide and CDSA level performance data, and how results compare to the state targets for each COS indicator.

7b. How are these data shared with locals? (e.g., annual meetings, online data system reports, newsletters)

The Annual ITP Performance report is provided to Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) and is published annually to the ITP Website. Annual data is also shared with the State Interagency Community Council (ICC) and appropriate stakeholders. CDSA level data is shared with local directors and is also published on the ITP website annually.

Notes: