NH Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) 129 Pleasant St.
Division of Long Term Supports and Services Concord, NH 03301
Bureau for Family Centered Services
Family Centered Early Supports and Services

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
FCESS GENERAL MEMORANDUM (GM)

DATE: 1/25/21

TO: Area Agency Executive Directors, Area Agency Family Centered Early Supports & Services Management, and Program Directors

FROM: Deirdre Dunn Tierney, Chief, Bureau for Family Centered Services

SIGNATURE: Deirdre Dunn Tierney

SUBJECT: FCESS COVID-19 Emergency Guidance #7

GM NUMBER: BFCS-COVID-19-007-FCESS

EFFECTIVE DATE: 1/25/21

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MEMORANDUM SUMMARY

The purpose of this memorandum is to:

- Replace previous guidance memo GM NUMBER: BFCS-COVID-19-006-FCESS.
- Provide statewide guidance to state designated area agencies and provider agencies relative to COVID-19 Emergency to ensure continuity of service delivery.

Emergency guidance #6 was issued by BFCS on 11/5/2020 and indicated that based on guidance from the Office of Special Education Program (OSEP), if Family Centered Early Supports and Services (FCESS) were to be provided via alternative means to in person, such as telecommunications, that an amendment to the IFSP to reflect this alternative must be completed.

Subsequent to Emergency Guidance #6, NH’s OSEP liaison provided further clarification to BFCS that the provision of teleintervention services are considered to be occurring in the child’s natural environment if the child is located in the natural environment at the time of the intervention. Therefore, during the COVID-19 pandemic, services provided through alternative means (e.g. video conference & Skype) while the child is in a location that complies with the natural environment requirements of He-M 510.04(b) , are deemed to satisfy the rule and no amendment to the IFSP shall be necessary.

Do not hesitate to contact the Part C Office Kathy Gray via phone 271-3783 or email Kathleen.gray@dhhs.nh.gov or Deirdre Dunn Tierney at Deirdre.dunn@dhhs.nh.gov with any questions.