Eligibility criteria for Early On fall under two categories: 1) developmental delay, and 2) established conditions. Children are evaluated by a multidisciplinary team using a comprehensive evaluation. Children are found eligible under developmental delay if they have a delay of 20 percent or 1 standard deviation below the mean in one or more developmental domains. A child is found eligible under established conditions when there is documentation of the diagnosis provided by a health or mental health care provider who is qualified to make the diagnosis.

Early On must have clear written evidence that matches one of the eligibility category definitions. Evidence may include test scores, levels on developmental checklists, genetic reports, ophthalmology, or audiology reports. Early On uses informed clinical opinion, in addition to the documented evidence, when deciding if the identified conditions for the child and/or family are associated with developmental concern and there is a need for developmental, therapeutic, or educational intervention.

If a child has an established condition, he/she is eligible for Early On as long as that diagnosis is current.