

Revision #1

12/15/96

CHILDREN'S ADMINISTRATION

PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES

GUIDE

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**1100 CONTEXT AND PURPOSE**

- Policy drives what Children's Administration (CA) and its staff must do and is grounded in the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) and federal laws, regulations, and policy interpretations; for example, federal Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Administration for Children, Youth, and Families (ACYF) policy interpretations. Where state law is in conflict with federal law or regulation, the federal rule prevails.
- Procedure defines how the agency and its staff implement policy.
- Practice guidelines identify agency and staff actions as they implement policy and procedure.

The Children's Administration *Case Services Policy Manual* sets forth the policies with regard to client families and individuals as they progress through six essential functions from Intake to Resolution. It also identifies the policies with regard to providers and ancillary services that may be necessary to assist clients as they progress.

This Children's Administration *Practices and Procedures Guide* sets forth good practice on how the agency and staff will implement policy contained in the *Case Services Policy Manual* and in the Children's Administration *Operations Manual*. It also defines responsibilities for CA staff as they implement policy and procedure.

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**1200 MANUAL MAINTENANCE AND POLICY ISSUANCE**

- A. See the flow chart below, section 1230, for a depiction of the process for development, approval, and issuance of manual revisions and interim numbered policy memoranda.
- B. DCFS Regional Administrators and DLR Regional Managers report regional practice waivers to the Director, Division of Program and Policy, quarterly to enable the Director to determine if manual revisions are necessary.

**1210 MANUAL REVISIONS**

- A. Assigned staff in the Division of Program and Policy will maintain the *CA Case Services Policy Manual* and the accompanying *Practices and Procedures Guide and Operations Manual*.
- B. The CA Manual Committee serves as a standing committee to provide a consistent process for development and issuance of interim procedures and manual revisions.
  - 1. The Director, Division of Program and Policy, chairs the Manual Committee and appoints a co-chair from among the committee membership.
  - 2. Membership includes a diverse group of staff representing all Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) regions, the Division of Licensed Resources (DLR) and its Offices, the Management Services Division, and the Division of Program and Policy. Representation reflects the various social work, support, and management position classifications in the field and headquarters.

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3. The committee meets on a regular basis to maintain currency of the manuals and to review and incorporate interim policies and manual revisions into the manual format and issue timely revisions.
- C. Procedures and manual revisions may be proposed by any CA staff by submitting a draft procedure, manual revision, or clearly articulated written concept paper to the Director, Division of Program and Policy.
- D. The Director, Division of Program and Policy, reviews any proposals submitted to determine if they are consistent with state statutes and federal law and regulation and if they meet a need of the Administration.
1. If the Director determines that it is not appropriate to develop a procedure or manual provision based upon the staff recommendation, the Director will provide written feedback to the submitting staff advising him or her of the decision and the reasons therefore.
  2. If the Director determines that the proposal should be refined into a numbered interim policy memorandum and/or a manual revision, the Director assigns staff of the Division of Program and Policy to develop the proposal into appropriate format, utilizing the knowledge and advice of CA staff and stakeholder work groups, as appropriate.
  3. Once the assigned staff person has completed the development of a draft document, the Director, Division of Program and Policy, will distribute to Directors, Office Chiefs, Regional Administrators, Regional Managers, other CA staff, and other interested parties for review and written comment.

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4. The Director assigns staff to incorporate submitted comments, as appropriate, into a final procedure/manual revision.
- E. For interim policy or procedure memoranda, the Director submits the final draft of the document to the Assistant Secretary for approval and signature.
1. Following approval by the Assistant Secretary, the Director arranges for distribution to all manual holders.
  2. The Director assigns staff to prepare the interim policy or procedure in manual format for review by the Manual Committee at its next scheduled meeting.
- F. For proposed manual revisions, the Director, Division of Program and Policy, assigns staff to incorporate comments in manual format for consideration by the Manual Committee at its next scheduled meeting.
- G. Assigned state office staff shall issue revisions to the manuals only after discussion with and concurrence of the Manual Committee. Hard copy issuances will be sequentially numbered with a cover memo outlining the changes.
- H. Manual issuances will be in effect only upon signature of the Assistant Secretary or designee.
- I. Once the system is developed, assigned state office staff will maintain the manuals in an electronic medium through which DCFS staff may access them.



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1220 POLICY PROMULGATION AND REVIEW

- A. DCFS shall utilize a system of memoranda numbered sequentially to issue interim policies and procedures prior to their inclusion in the appropriate manual. The interim policies and procedures shall be placed at the front of the applicable manual.
- B. Interim policies and procedures shall only be effective if issued through the system of numbered memoranda and if signed by the Assistant Secretary, or designee.
- C. Within 180 days of issuance, the Director, Program and Policy, will prepare the interim policy/procedure for review by the Manual Committee. If the policy/procedure needs to be made permanent, assigned staff, at the direction of the Director will develop and issue, under the Assistant Secretary's signature, a revision to the appropriate manual. If any issuance does not follow this process, with appropriate authorizing signature, it will not be binding upon local and regional staff. However, the Director, Division of Program and Policy, or the Assistant Secretary may provide written authorization for short-term extension of such interim policies and procedures to provide sufficient time to complete review and action on individual interim policies and procedures.
- D. Manual Committee review of interim policies and procedures and ongoing review of the manuals shall constitute Sunset Review as required in the DSHS *Paperwork Management Manual*.

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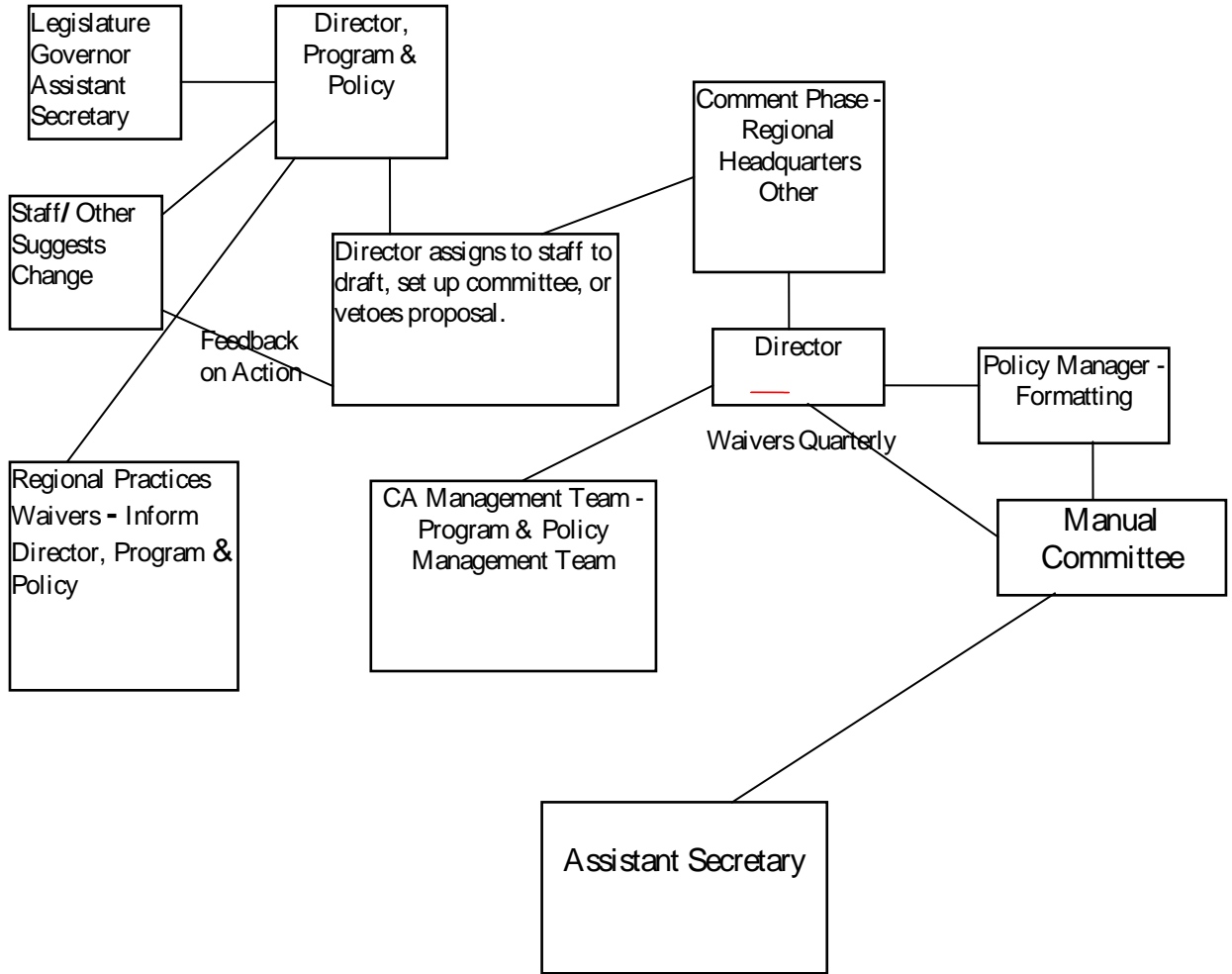
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## 1230 MANUAL REVISION AND INTERIM POLICY ISSUANCE FLOW CHART



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CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES

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2100 **INTRODUCTION**

2110 PROGRAM AUTHORITY

The Division of Children and Family Services' (DCFS) Child Protective Services (CPS) program is authorized under federal and state laws and regulations. The federal authorities are Public Law 93-247 and 45 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 1340 and 1357.20. The authorizing state laws and regulations are Chapter 74.13 RCW, Chapter 26.44 RCW, WAC 388-15-010(1)(c), WAC 388-15-130 through 388-15-134, and WAC 388-70-095.

2120 GOAL

The goal of CPS is to protect children from child abuse and/or neglect while preserving the family's integrity and cultural and ethnic identity to the maximum extent possible, consistent with the safety and permanency needs of the children.

CPS is a program available in all geographic areas of the state of Washington on a 24-hour basis.

2130 SERVICE DESCRIPTION

The purposes of CPS are to:

- A. Receive and assess referrals from the community alleging child abuse and neglect (CA/N).
- B. Assess risk of future abuse or neglect to children.
- C. Investigate referrals alleging CA/N or the risk of CA/N.
  - 1. Determine the existence of CA/N.

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2. Assess risk of abuse and neglect to children by performing a comprehensive assessment, using the risk assessment model.
- D. Provide early intervention information and referral services to advise parents about services to strengthen families and prevent serious or continuing CA/N:
- E. Develop culturally responsive case plans which:
1. Prevent or remedy CA/N in the shortest reasonable time.
  2. Prevent or reduce the need for out-of-home placement.
  3. Provide a safe, permanent and culturally relevant home for a child.

2131 Compliance with Court Orders and Liability Protection

See Chapter 4000, Child Welfare Services, section 43073, for staff expectations for compliance with court orders and legal representation for employees.

2200 **INTAKE**

2210 ELIGIBILITY

The primary purpose of the CPS program is to assess risk of child maltreatment rather than to substantiate specific allegations of CA/N.

- A. CPS shall receive referrals from any source and in any form, including those received from an anonymous source. See WAC 388-15-132(1).

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- B. The intake worker shall forward all referrals alleging CA/N by DCFS employees, volunteers, members of the household of any employee, or persons identified as relatives of an employee to a supervisor for review and disposition per Case and Management Information System (CAMIS) policy and procedure, *Operations Manual*, Chapter 15000, section 15204.
- C. CPS shall only be provided to a child alleged to have been abused or neglected by:
1. The child's parent or a person acting *in loco parentis*. Such persons include, but are not limited to:
    - a. Parents (custodial and non-custodial).
    - b. Step-parents.
    - c. Guardians.
    - d. Legal custodians.

Such persons do not include school personnel who are performing their official duties in the schools.
  2. The child's sibling, when the child's parent has failed to protect the child.
  3. Any person residing with and/or having care-taking responsibilities for the child.
  4. A person licensed or certified under Chapter 74.15 RCW or persons employed by licensed or certified agencies. Such persons include, but are not limited to:
    - a. Child day care providers.

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- b. Foster/group care providers.
  - c. Employees of licensed/certified child care agencies.
  - d. Volunteers of licensed/certified child care agencies.
5. A person subject to licensure/certification under Chapter 74.15 RCW and RCW 74.08.044 and described in WAC 388-73-014 and 388-73-020. Allegations of CA/N in such licensed or certified facilities shall not be treated as third party abuse or neglect. See Chapter 5000, section 5140 of this manual for basic requirements for investigation of facility complaints. See also the *CA Operations Manual*, Chapter 5000, section 5300, for expectations regarding investigations in licensed facilities.
6. A person providing in-home child care services and paid by the department.
7. A person (third party) alleged to have committed CA/N in an institutional setting. Abuse of one resident by another resident may constitute neglect by the caretaker. Such institutions include, but are not limited to:
- a. Licensed foster family homes and child care providers.
  - b. Residential care and treatment facilities for children.
  - c. Juvenile detention facilities.
  - d. Hospitals.
8. A DCFS employee.

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- D. CPS shall accept for investigation referrals regarding sexually aggressive youth (SAY) when:
1. Referred by law enforcement regarding a child under the age of eight who has been determined by law enforcement to have committed a sexually aggressive act.
  2. Referred by a prosecutor's office regarding a child under the age of 12 who has been determined by the prosecutor to have committed a sexually aggressive act but will not be prosecuted.
- E. Referrals screened in under paragraph D, above, shall be assessed for the following factors:
1. Whether or not the youth has been abused or neglected.
  2. The youth's potential for re-offending.
  3. Risk to other children residing with the sexually aggressive youth.
  4. The parents' willingness to protect, seek and utilize services, and cooperate with case planning.
- F. As mandated in RCW 26.44.030(8), any case referred to DCFS by a physician licensed under chapter 18.57 or 18.71 RCW on the basis of expert medical opinion that child abuse, neglect, or sexual assault has occurred and that the child's safety will be seriously endangered if returned home, CPS shall file a dependency petition unless a second licensed physician of the parents' choice believes that such expert medical opinion is incorrect.
1. If the parents fail to designate a second physician, DCFS may make a selection.

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2. If a physician finds that a child has suffered abuse or neglect but that such abuse or neglect does not constitute imminent danger to the child's health or safety, and DCFS agrees with the physician's assessment, the child may be left in the parents' home while DCFS proceeds with reasonable efforts to remedy parenting deficiencies.
- G. DCFS does not generally accept for investigation referrals of:
1. Abuse of dependent adults or persons 18 years of age or older. Such services are provided by the Adult Protective Services (APS) section.
  2. Third-party abuse committed by persons other than those responsible for the child's welfare, except as defined in section 2210.C.7.
  3. CA/N that is reported after the victim has reached age 18, except that alleged to have occurred in a licensed facility.
  4. Child custody determinations in conflictual family proceedings or marital dissolution, where there are no allegations of CA/N.
  5. Cases in which no abuse or neglect as defined in Appendix A is alleged to have occurred.
  6. Allegations of violations of the school system's:
    - a. Statutory Code.
    - b. Administrative Code.
    - c. Statements regarding discipline policies.

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- H. CPS is provided without regard to income.
- I. DCFS Intake shall assess, to the extent possible, and document in the referral the family's Limited English Proficiency (LEP) needs, including auxiliary aids for the sensory impaired.
- J. Intake shall also assess and document ethnicity of the child/family, including tribal affiliation.

2220 GUIDELINES

- A. The DCFS intake social worker shall utilize the CAMIS intake program to record a comprehensive intake interview with any referent wishing to report CA/N. The worker shall attempt to obtain and then include the following when recording information about the incident:
  - 1. The intake social worker shall conduct a CAMIS person search for all persons, victims, perpetrators, parents, and family members listed in the referral information.
  - 2. Individuals making referrals may be told that, if requested, a referent's name shall not be revealed by DCFS during the investigation. WAC 388-15-134(5)
  - 3. The social worker shall inform the referent that DCFS may disclose the name of any referent for:
    - a. Court testimony.
    - b. Fair hearings proceedings.
    - c. Criminal investigations by law enforcement including malicious reporting.
    - d. When the court orders disclosure.

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4. The social worker may request, but shall not require, mandated reporters or relatives to tell parents of the report. The worker may encourage reporters to allow disclosure of their names in order to permit honest discussion with the family of alleged CA/N and to facilitate problem solving.
5. Referents reporting or testifying in good faith have immunity under RCW 26.44.060.
6. Specific allegations of CA/N.
7. Risk factors:
  - a. Child characteristics: the emotional, mental and physical characteristics of the child.
  - b. Severity of CA/N: the degree of injury or physical or emotional harm to a child.
  - c. Frequency of CA/N: any past history of CA/N or out-of-home placement of child.
  - d. Caretaker Characteristics:
    - (1) Factors related to the physical, mental or emotional functioning of caretakers.
    - (2) Information regarding parents/caretakers or family of origin.
    - (3) Information regarding substance abuse, domestic violence, and/or ability to protect the child.
    - (4) Previous convictions for crimes against children.



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- e. Parent/Child Relationship: information regarding the attachment between the child and caretakers; information regarding parental response to the child's misconduct; and information regarding the child's role in the family.
  - f. Environmental factors: information regarding the family's social relationships and/or economic status; information regarding stressors on the family.
  - g. Perpetrator access: information regarding the capacity of the person(s) alleged to have committed CA/N to contact, supervise, or communicate with the child directly.
- 8. Referent and other collateral statements.
  - 9. Basis for intake risk assessment.
- B. Sufficiency Screen

The intake social worker shall complete the sufficiency screen and determine if:

- 1. There is sufficient information to locate the child. The intake social worker shall utilize all available resources to locate the child. Local offices may develop guidelines for best practice in locating children; and
- 2. The alleged perpetrator is a parent/caretaker of the child or someone acting *in loco parentis*, except school personnel who are performing their official duties in the schools, or the parent is negligent in protecting the child from further CA/N by a third party or the perpetrator is a person specified in section 2210(C); and

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3. There is a specific allegation of CA/N meeting the legal and/or WAC definition (In some cases, a collection of behaviors imply an allegation of CA/N and may be considered an allegation for purposes of the sufficiency screen); or
  4. Risk factors exist which place the child in danger of imminent harm. Imminent harm is defined as the significant possibility or likelihood that a child will suffer serious physical or emotional harm in the near future. In assessing risk of imminent harm, the overriding concern is a child's immediate safety.
- C. Social workers shall accept for CPS investigation any report meeting the sufficiency criteria specified on the CAMIS intake screen.
- Referrals on open cases which contain a new allegation shall be counted as a new referral. These referrals shall be counted the same as referrals on families not currently open to DCFS.
- The same allegation about the same victim from a new reporter shall not be counted as a new referral. Collateral contacts to support the information in a referral are not considered separate referrals.
- D. The intake social worker may accept CPS referrals which contain information regarding indicators of CA/N, but lack specific information regarding incidents, events, or conditions defined in DCFS policy as CA/N. Referrals are screened in when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is being abused or neglected or the risk factors place the child at risk of imminent harm.
- E. Child behaviors may be caused by factors other than CA/N. Intake staff must exercise judgment based on their knowledge of child abuse and neglect to decide if behavioral indicators of CA/N are comprehensive and cogent enough to pass the sufficiency screen.

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1. CA/N is not inherent in risk factors, and cases shall not be opened solely on the basis of a single behavioral indicator. The more complete the list of indicators of physical abuse, physical neglect, and/or sexual abuse, the more likely it is that a child is being abused or neglected. One or two behavioral indicators of abuse and neglect will rarely be sufficient to warrant CPS investigation.
2. The intake social worker shall complete the allegation section of the intake. The question in the sufficiency screen, "Is there a specific allegation of child abuse and neglect which meets the legal and/or WAC definition of child abuse and neglect?" shall be answered "YES" if reasonable cause exists to believe the child was abused or neglected or the child is at imminent risk of harm.
3. Prior to making the screening decision, the intake supervisor shall review CPS referrals containing information regarding behavioral indicators of child abuse and neglect but lack description of allegations of CA/N.

F. Screened in Referrals

1. The intake social worker shall assign a risk tag to referrals that are accepted for investigation. The six point scale for risk assessment is: 0 - No risk; 1 - low risk; 2 - moderately low risk; 3 - moderate risk; 4 - moderately high risk; and 5 - high risk. The intake social worker shall:
  - a. Classify the severity of the allegation(s) of CA/N from low risk to high risk utilizing section II, Severity, of the *Risk Factor Matrix Guide*. Establish a baseline risk level; e.g., an initial classification of the allegations of CA/N based on the most serious allegation.

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- b. Evaluate risk factor information noted on the referral form regarding:
  - (1) Child characteristics.
  - (2) History of prior agency contact.
  - (3) Parental functioning.
  - (4) Environmental factors.
  - (5) Perpetrator access.
- c. Adjust the baseline risk level based upon the extent and degree of factors exacerbating or ameliorating the risk of CA/N. Use these ratings to accommodate borderline situations at intake.
  - (1) The baseline may be adjusted upward when the referral contains information about factors which are likely to increase the risk of CA/N.
  - (2) The baseline may be reduced when the referral contains information about factors which reduce the risk of CA/N.
- d. Complete the "Basis for Intake Risk Assessment" section, which provides the rationale for the risk tag decision.
- e. Complete the intake process within three working days from the date of referral unless an emergent response is required.
- f. Contact collateral information sources and record such contacts in the Service Episode Record (SER) when:

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- (1) Sufficient information is not available from the referent to determine if the referral should be accepted for investigation.
    - (2) It is necessary to verify or clarify an allegation of CA/N.
    - (3) Collateral sources have information which would be useful in arriving at the Intake risk tag.
  - g. For the low standard of investigation, contact collateral sources when appropriate.
  - h. Make collateral contacts as soon as possible prior to making intake decisions unless:
    - (1) An immediate response is required.
    - (2) Sufficient information has been collected from the original referent.
  - i. Assess frequency of CA/N at intake. Referrals rated moderate risk or greater for frequency of CA/N shall receive a baseline risk tag that is equal to, or greater than, the frequency level.
2. The intake supervisor reviews all referrals and may change risk tag and screening decisions when:
- a. Additional information supports the change.
  - b. The supervisor determines that the screening decision and/or risk tag is incorrect based on program guidelines.

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3. The intake supervisor shall document the reasons for change in the SER on the CAMIS referral.

G. Intake Decision

The intake social worker reviews the referral information and records the intake decision in CAMIS:

1. Information only. Referral does not meet sufficiency criteria and referral is screened out.
2. Accepted for investigation. Referral meets sufficiency criteria and referral is screened in.
3. Third party report (when the perpetrator is not a person specified in section 2210[C]). Referral does not meet sufficiency criteria and referral is screened out. A referral is made to law enforcement and the date recorded on the intake form.

H. Screened Out Referrals

1. Referrals which do not meet the sufficiency screen criteria shall be screened out.
2. The intake supervisor shall retain in CAMIS, and make accessible to intake staff, referrals that are screened out.

RCW 26.44.030(11)

- I. Normally referrals will be entered directly into CAMIS. On those occasions where a referral has been recorded on another document, the referral information shall be recorded into CAMIS within two (2) working days.

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- J. The intake supervisor shall ensure that all referrals indicating physical injury, sexual abuse, death or other crimes against a child are referred to law enforcement.

2221 Jurisdiction

- A. Initial jurisdiction in a CPS investigation resides with the office receiving a referral.
- B. Primary jurisdiction is the office where the family of the child victim customarily resides. Screened-in referrals will be transferred to this office for case assignment and services, including court intervention, when necessary. Courtesy services may be requested from other offices.
- C. Emergency jurisdiction resides with the office where a child is found. Services to protect the child from imminent harm may be offered by the DCFS office in the area where the child is located. Case assignment and ongoing services will normally be the responsibility of the office with primary jurisdiction.
- D. Temporary jurisdiction belongs to the office where a child is located. The child may be residing on a temporary basis with a friend or relative or without the benefit of a caretaker. Courtesy service such as interviewing the child or continued temporary placement may be offered through this office.
- E. Protection of the child is a key concept. The DCFS office having primary jurisdiction shall not refuse its role. However, for referrals from out of state, there may be other factors about child safety and laws concerning the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) to be considered. When considering these other factors, safety of the child is the most significant issue.

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- F. DCFS shall determine the office having jurisdiction in a case by the following formula:
1. Where does the family reside (parent or other person having legal custody)?
  2. Where is the child physically located at this time?
  3. Will the child be protected?

**2300 ASSESSMENT**

**2310 RESPONSE TIME**

- A. The supervisor and assigned social worker shall consider as "maximum limits" the time-frames defined in this section for CPS response. Cases may require a quicker CPS response than the time- lines defined in this section.
- B. Response time begins at the time and date of receipt of the referral. The intake process shall be completed within three working days.
- C. Referral receipt date and time begins when a referral is initiated by the referent through contact with the intake worker by any means.
- D. Emergent response begins no later than 24 hours from the referral date and time and requires a high standard of investigation. Emergent response is required for children who are at risk of imminent harm (significant possibility or likelihood that child may be seriously physically or emotionally injured in the near future).
- E. Non-emergent response begins within 10 calendar days from the referral date and time. The standard of investigation may be high or low.



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2320 RISK LEVELS

There are six levels of risk - defined in the *Risk Factor Matrix Guide*. The levels of risk are used to define the seriousness of the allegations, known as the risk tag.

2330 STANDARDS OF INVESTIGATION

2331 High Standard

- A. The CPS social worker uses the high standard of investigation for all referrals given moderate to high risk tags at intake.
- B. The CPS social worker uses the high standard when child abuse and/or neglect is alleged in a licensed facility or a facility subject to licensure.
- C. The social worker gathers information for risk assessment, family evaluation, and case planning rather than gather evidence for criminal prosecution. The social worker is not a law enforcement agent but is expected to work cooperatively with law enforcement.
- D. The assigned social worker shall:
  - 1. Contact the referent if the intake information is insufficient or unclear and may provide information about the outcome of the case to mandated referents.
  - 2. Interview child victims face-to-face within 10 working days from date of referral.

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- a. All child victims involved in the report and capable of being interviewed shall be interviewed through face-to-face contact at the earliest possible time by an investigator or professional skilled in evaluating the child or condition of the child. Local protocol or the special needs of the child may dictate that someone other than the DCFS social worker interview the child.
  - b. The social worker may interview the child(ren) outside the presence of the parents. The interview may be conducted on school premises, at child day care facilities, at the child's home, or at other suitable locations.

RCW 26.44.030(10)
  - c. The social worker determines if the child wishes a third party to be present during the interview. The social worker makes a reasonable effort to have the interview observed by a third party so long as the child does not object and the presence of the third party will not jeopardize the investigation.

RCW 26.44.030(10)
  - d. The initial interview with the child may be critical to later dependency and/or criminal hearings. The social worker needs to make every effort to avoid saying or doing anything that could be construed as leading or influencing the child.
3. Assess referrals accepted as SAY for the following factors:
    - a. Whether or not the youth has been abused or neglected.
    - b. The youth's potential for re-offending.

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- c. The parents' willingness to protect, seek and utilize services, and cooperate with case planning.
4. If needed, photograph any child on whom a CPS referral has been made for the purpose of providing documentary evidence of the physical condition of the child. RCW 26.44.050
5. Evaluate the child's safety needs and the safety of the home environment using the *Risk Factor Matrix Guide*.
6. Unless credible collateral contacts clearly indicate that neglect is not occurring, make a home visit in cases of child neglect and in other cases when a home visit is necessary to complete a risk assessment of the family.
7. Notify the parents, guardian, or legal custodian of a child alleged to be the victim of CA/N at the earliest possible point in the investigation that will not jeopardize the safety or protection of the child or the course of the investigation. RCW 26.44.030(10)
8. Notify the alleged perpetrator of the allegations of CA/N at the earliest point in the investigation that will not jeopardize the safety or protection of the child or the course of the investigation.
9. Conduct individual and face-to-face interviews with the child's caretaker(s) and all alleged perpetrators if reasonably available. Interviews may be coordinated with local law enforcement agencies in accordance with written interagency agreements that may authorize interview of the perpetrators by a person other than the social worker.
10. Document in the record when the alleged perpetrator is unavailable or unwilling to be interviewed.

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11. Notify law enforcement in accordance with local protocol. The social worker shall ensure that notification has been made to law enforcement following instructions in section 2220 of this chapter. When in the course of an investigation there is reasonable cause to believe a crime has been committed, the social worker or supervisor shall notify the law enforcement agency with jurisdiction.

RCW 26.44.030(3) and 74.13.031(3).
12. Request the assistance of law enforcement to:
  - a. Assure the safety of the child(ren) or staff.
  - b. Observe and/or preserve evidence.
  - c. Take a child(ren) into protective custody.
  - d. Enforce a court order.
  - e. Assist with the investigation.
13. See chapter 4000, section 43022, for notification to parents of their rights when a child is taken into temporary custody.
14. Secure medical evaluation and/or treatment. The social worker considers utilizing a medical evaluation in cases when the reported, observable condition or the nature and severity of injury cannot be reasonably attributed to the claimed cause and a diagnostic finding would clarify assessment of risk. Social workers may also utilize a medical evaluation to determine the need for medical treatment.

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15. Make every effort to help the parent or legal guardian understand the need for, and obtain, necessary medical treatment for the child. The social worker shall arrange for legal authority to secure necessary available treatment when the parent or legal guardian is unable or unwilling.

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The social worker shall ask the parent to arrange for prompt medical evaluation of a child who does not require medical treatment, if indicators of serious child abuse or neglect exist. The social worker may seek legal authority for the medical examination if the parent does not comply with the request.

16. Contact the statewide Medical Consultation Network at 1-800-326-5300 whenever identification or management of CA/N would be facilitated by expert medical consultation.
17. Seek professional and expert consultation and evaluation of significant issues. Examples include having the housing inspector or other local authority assess building safety or having the county sanitarian assess sewage and septic treatment issues.
18. Interview, in-person or by telephone, professionals and other persons (physician, nurse, school personnel, child day care, relatives, etc.) who are reported to have or, the social worker believes, may have first-hand knowledge of the incident, the injury, or the family's circumstances.
19. When requested, contact the referents regarding the status of the case. More specific case information may be shared with mandated reporters; e.g., the disposition of the referral information and the department activity to protect the child. Take care to maintain confidentiality and the integrity of the family.

2332 Low Standard

The low standard of investigation may be used when intake staff and/or the supervisor assess a referral as low or moderate low risk of CA/N. Parameters for low standard of investigation include:

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- A. Response within 10 calendar days from the date of referral;
- B. Referral to an Alternative Response System (ARS) or other community agencies which are willing to accept the referrals for services and/or monitoring.
- C. The social worker may send a letter to the family, make a phone call to the caretaker(s), or make a brief home visit to provide the following information:
  - 1. Notification that CPS has accepted a referral for investigation.
  - 2. Information included in the referral regarding allegations of CA/N.
  - 3. The local DCFS telephone number/contact.
  - 4. Community resources which may be available to address the condition; i.e., information and referral.
  - 5. Notice that no further investigation will take place in response to this referral.
- D. Referrals that are tagged at intake as low risk and receive the low standard of investigation shall have a case folder created when a referral is made to an ARS and the case is open in DCFS. All other referrals that are tagged at intake as low risk and receive the low standard of investigation shall be opened and closed on CAMIS. Collateral information in the form of additional documentation or correspondence shall be filed and maintained by each office.
- E. If additional referrals are made on a family, and the risk is moderately low or higher, the low risk referral(s) shall be printed and included in the case file.



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2340 ONGOING RISK ASSESSMENT AND CPS

- A. Risk Assessment continues throughout the life of a case from the initial CPS referral until the case is closed. CPS is defined by the type and goal of provided services and not limited by the organizational structure of local DCFS offices.
- B. CPS is a continuum of protection consisting of different but complementary functions. Intervention designed to protect children from CA/N must include permanency planning goals from the onset of the case and must be updated at 90-day intervals.

2400 **CASE PLANNING**

2410 DESCRIPTION

- A. Case planning builds on the principles of risk assessment by linking the identified risk factors to their case plan.
- B. The CPS worker shall follow the requirements of WAC 388-15-131 and WAC 388-70-095 on determining if the reported child(ren) is Indian/Native American. The social worker shall document in the SER the steps taken and follow the requirements contained in the *Indian Child Welfare (ICW) Manual*.
- C. The CPS social worker shall develop and implement culturally responsive case plans, consistent with the risk assessment model, designed to reduce the risk of CA/N to children.

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2420 PROCESS

- A. The social worker develops service plans with available parents using empowerment strategies that identify and build on parental strengths. The worker provides available parents with regular feedback about progress.
- B. The social worker develops a case plan with each available family when services are provided. The social worker completes a service plan on the summary assessment form and negotiates service agreements with the family and outlines the steps that are to be taken to achieve the case plans. See chapter 4000, section 45023, for procedures to access Intensive Family Preservation Services (IFPS). The social worker makes reasonable efforts to ensure that service agreements are translated into the primary language of the child and the child's caretaker.

2430 SERVICE AGREEMENTS

2431 Purpose and Content

A service agreement is a written agreement between the social worker and the parents that emerges from the case plan. The social worker, with the family, makes efforts to have the service agreement with the family:

- A. Provide the family and social worker with an organized, realistic method of seeing the logical connection between a problem and how to resolve or lessen that problem.
- B. Result in services that are prioritized, is targeted to address major parenting problems and family concerns, and builds on the strengths and resources of the family.
- C. Address the key patterns associated with CA/N.

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- D. Clearly define expectations for both the social worker and the family.
- E. Dated and signed by the social worker and the parent(s) of the child.

2432 Development

- A. The first priority in the development of a service agreement is the protection of the child(ren).
- B. Services are chosen based on the assessment of the problem, identification of the strengths and resources of the family and the community, and the likelihood that the service will reduce or eliminate risk of harm to the child(ren).
- C. The agreement will make use of concrete services when appropriate to supplement treatment/counseling.
- D. The outcomes of the agreement will be evaluated by whether there is a reduction of risk.

2433 Elements

- A. The CPS social worker includes the following elements in service agreements:
  - 1. Issues needing to be addressed.
  - 2. Means of addressing the issues.
  - 3. Behavioral objectives to be achieved.
  - 4. Significant activities to be completed, and by whom.
  - 5. Known or anticipated cost of services.

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6. Who will be responsible for costs.
  7. Significant dates and time frames for completion.
  8. Goal/outcome expectations for successful completion.
  9. Methods for verifying compliance and measuring outcomes.
- B. Service agreements are not legally binding.
- C. The social worker discusses factors relevant to the agreement with the parent to determine the level of compliance that can reasonably be expected. The social worker monitors progress toward achievement of activities in these agreements and may use telephone contacts and reports from providers.
- D. The social worker incorporates service agreements into the service plan. For specific criteria to be addressed in service agreements, see the *Risk Assessment Guide*.
- E. The social worker may authorize interim services prior to completing or updating the Individual Service Plan (ISP) or Summary Assessment. The social worker may use the service agreement process to authorize interim services.

2500 **SERVICE DELIVERY**

2510 DESCRIPTION

The social worker's primary goal is to attempt to ensure the safety of the child within the context of the child's need for permanence in a family setting. The social worker's emphasis is to strengthen the family in order to prevent removal and/or reduce the length of stay in temporary out-of-home care.

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2511 Service Model

DCFS employs the least intrusive service delivery model which engages the family in problem solving efforts provided the child is adequately protected. Service delivery is based upon and designed to build upon assessed family strengths. The level of agency involvement with continuing service cases will be commensurate with the level of assessed risk.

2512 Accessing Available Services

DCFS supervisors are responsible for orienting all social work staff with information regarding agencies and services available to clients. Social workers refer clients to appropriate available services necessary to alleviate the risk of CA/N.

2513 Case Management Functions

Service delivery/case management functions include:

- A. Ongoing review of case plan as needed.
- B. Regular assessments of risk of CA/N.
- C. Coordination of service delivery, including assisting families and children in accessing DSHS and community resources.
- D. Consulting with service providers regarding:
  - 1. Reason for referral.
  - 2. Family's attendance and progress in service efforts.
  - 3. Provider/family identification of service needs.
  - 4. Other case coordination.

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- E. Monitoring a child's safety.
- F. Assessing and monitoring the ability of a non-offending parent or caretaker to protect the child from further CA/N.
- G. Decision-making regarding the timing and goals of permanency planning.

2514 Service Continuity

The supervisor shall work to assure continuity of service delivery when CPS cases are transferred from one social worker to another. Continuity of service delivery includes communication and case staffing among DCFS staff who have recently worked on the case.

2520 INVESTIGATION

The social worker shall complete all investigations of child abuse and neglect within 90 days of the date of referral. The worker shall complete investigations of health and safety issues, in accordance with Health and Safety Standards contained in the *Operations Manual*, chapter 5000, section 5400, within 90 days of receipt of the referral.

2530 SERVICE OUTCOMES

The social worker shall achieve one of three outcomes for investigations:

- A. A written voluntary service agreement with the family signed by the participants.
- B. A dependency action filed in juvenile court.
- C. Closure of the case.

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2540 SUMMARY ASSESSMENT

Summary Assessment is completed as part of the high standard of investigation only.

A. The social worker shall complete a CAMIS Summary Assessment form which includes:

1. A listing of risk factors included on the risk factor matrix.
2. A narrative account of important risk factors and family strengths and how these factors contribute to or reduce the risk of CA/N.
3. Disposition; e.g., a description of DCFS case status.
4. A record of case findings regarding alleged abuse or neglect.
  - a. Founded means: Based on the CPS investigation, there is reasonable cause for the social worker to believe that either the allegations on the referral are true or that sufficient evidence exists to reasonably support the conclusion that the child has been, or is at risk of being, abused or neglected by a parent or caretaker.
  - b. Unfounded means: Based on the CPS investigation, there is reasonable cause for the social worker to believe that the allegations on the CPS referral are untrue or that sufficient evidence exists to reasonably conclude that the child has not been abused or neglected nor is at risk of abuse or neglect.

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- c. Inconclusive means: There is not significant evidence for the social worker to reasonably conclude that a child has or has not been abused or neglected or is at risk of abuse or neglect.
- B. The social worker shall complete the CAMIS Summary Assessment form as follows:
- 1. Cases Closed Within 90 Days Without Services  
Complete the following sections by the 90th day from assignment:
    - Section I Risk Matrix
    - Section II Summary Assessment Narrative
    - Disposition  
In cases closed immediately after investigation, the summary assessment form will serve as a closure document and may substitute for other narrative documentation.
    - Findings
    - Overall Risk
  - 2. Cases Closed Within 90 Days With Services
    - a. Complete the following sections by the 90th day from assignment:
      - Section I Risk Matrix



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- Section II Summary Assessment Narrative
  - Disposition
  - Findings
  - Overall Risk
- b. Complete the following section prior to starting services:
- Service Plan Parents are not required to sign the service plan if the case is closed by the 90th day.
3. Cases Open With Voluntary Service Agreement
- Complete the following sections prior to having the parent sign the service agreement. Complete again at case closure or transfer:
- Section I Risk Matrix
  - Section II Summary Assessment Narrative
  - Disposition
  - Findings
  - Overall Risk

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- **Service Plan**      This section shall be completed even if the social worker chooses to use another format for the written agreement between the parents and the social worker.

4.    Cases Open Due to Placement or Dependency Action

- a.    Complete Section I, Risk Matrix, of the Summary Assessment at each of the following points:
  - 1.    By the 90<sup>th</sup> day from assignment.
  - 2.    Before returning a child home.
  - 3.    At case transfer/closure.
- b.    Complete Section IV, Findings, of the Summary Assessment:
  - 1.    Before returning a child home.
  - 2.    At case transfer/closure.
- c.    The social worker shall, on placement/dependency cases, include SER documentation of important observations, events and collateral contacts, as well as dates of contact with parents, children, foster parents, and service providers. The social worker shall also include the visitation record in the case file.

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2550 SPECIAL PROCEDURES

2551 Prenatal/Newborn, Drug/Alcohol Exposure

A. The CPS social worker shall take the following steps:

1. Accept as "information only" referrals which document the use, by a pregnant woman, of alcohol or controlled substances that are not medically prescribed and are teratogenic or known to potentially cause fetal toxicity or damage.
2. Refer all prenatal referrals to the local Economic and Medical Field Services (EMFS) or contracted First Steps social worker for determination of eligibility for the First Steps program. EMFS and First Steps shall be responsible for case management and treatment services funded under the Maternity Care Access Bill and the Drug Omnibus Act.
3. Accept and open for investigation referrals made by the Community Services Office (CSO) or contracted First Steps case manager, or other mandated reporter, on women believed to be within four (4) weeks of delivery and who are using substances as defined above. Earlier CPS intervention may occur based on the decision of a joint CPS/EMFS case staffing. The social worker shall accept the referral if the pregnant mother meets one or more of the following conditions:
  - a. Refuses to get prenatal care and/or has made no provisions for the baby.
  - b. Refuses to enter substance abuse treatment.
  - c. Is mentally ill or seriously emotionally disturbed.
  - d. Is without a social and financial support system.

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- e. Has a history of prior CPS involvement where other children are in out-of-home care or where parental rights have been terminated.
  - f. Is under the age of 18 and lacks a place to live.
- B. The purpose of prenatal CPS involvement is to:
- 1. Allow adequate time prior to birth to assess the parent(s)' ability to provide safe and adequate care for the child at birth.
  - 2. Explore relatives or other placement possibilities if it appears unlikely that the parent(s) will be able to provide care.
  - 3. Encourage the parent(s) to participate in treatment.
  - 4. Advise of possible CPS action at birth.
- C. The social worker does not file prenatal dependency petitions except when the social worker believes it is necessary to assume immediate custody of the infant at birth. The social worker files prenatal petitions only in consultation with assigned legal counsel.

2552 Referrals on Drug/Alcohol-Exposed Newborns

The CPS intake social worker shall accept referrals from mandatory reporters on drug/alcohol-exposed newborns. These referrals include, but are not limited to, infants with a positive drug screen at the time of birth.

- A. The DCFS supervisor shall assign these referrals for investigation.

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- B. The social worker conducts an investigation, following the risk assessment model, focusing on the ability of the parent(s) to protect and care for the infant and including consultation with the referring source. The CPS social worker or supervisor shall refer cases to law enforcement or to the prosecutor's office per local agreement.
  
- C. Factors such as signs of infant or maternal drug withdrawal or evidence of current maternal substance abuse may result in referral to CPS, and the CPS supervisor may consider them for assignment.
  
- D. The social worker, when completing an assessment, shall specifically address the following factors:
  - 1. History and pattern of parental substance abuse.
  - 2. Parental mental health and physical condition.
  - 3. Home environment, including presence of other substance abusers or transience of parent(s).
  - 4. Physical condition and medical needs of the child.
  - 5. Support available to the parent(s).
  - 6. History of previous allegations of CA/N by parents.
  - 7. Chemical dependency testing (e.g., urinalysis) and monitoring of parent(s), when available within existing resources.

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- E. The social worker's first priority in case planning will be protection and safety of the child. For cases where the infant remains in parental care, the written case plan shall document specific safeguards to protect the child. Participation by parents in substance abuse evaluation and treatment, though a necessary component of a service plan, does not in and of itself indicate protection for the child.
- F. The social worker monitors, through regular personal and collateral contacts, the service plan for compliance when the infant remains in the home. The social worker immediately re-assesses the need for court involvement or out-of-home placement if the parent fails to comply with the service plan.
- G. The social worker may, if appropriate, refer the child/family to the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) facilitator for assistance in applying for SSI on behalf of the child.

2553 Institutional Abuse

- A. Institutional abuse is any child maltreatment as defined in DSHS Administrative Policy 8.02, *Client Abuse*, occurring in any DSHS certified, licensed, or staffed child care facility, including adoptive home placements prior to finalization. For investigation, DCFS staff shall follow the policy and procedures outlined in the *Operations Manual*, Chapter 5000, section 5300.
- B. The social worker shall report through the supervisor all incidents of alleged CA/N in DSHS staffed, licensed, or certified facilities using the steps outlined in the *CA Operations Manual*, Chapter 5000, section 5100.

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- C. Certified and licensed facilities include foster homes, including those licensed by child placing agencies, child day care facilities, group homes, hospitals, Crisis Residential Centers (CRC), and some juvenile detention facilities. CPS shall notify the licensing authority of alleged CA/N and shall investigate in accordance with the *Operations Manual*, section 5300. Any plan for remedial action with the facility shall be the responsibility of the licensing authority. The CPS social worker and the licenser shall consult during the investigation.

WAC 388-73-036, 388-73-048, and 388-73-050

2554 Alleged Abuse of Child Clients by DSHS Personnel

- A. The social worker takes referrals using CAMIS intake and shall attach any supporting documents. See the *CA Operations Manual*, Chapter 15000, section 15204, for procedures regarding administrative files.
- B. The intake social worker places all relevant material into a confidential file folder and bring it immediately to the attention of the supervisor.
- C. The supervisor briefs the area manager and agrees on a plan for independent investigation by DCFS staff which includes the following elements:
1. Consultation with the Office of Special Investigations (OSI) under DSHS Administrative Policy 6.01.
  2. Referral to the Employee Services Director for possible investigation per DSHS Administrative Policy 6.01.
  3. Designation of specific DCFS social work staff to conduct the investigation.

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4. Making an initial incident report to the Regional Administrator;
  5. Notification to law enforcement as required by RCW 26.44.030(3) and 74.13.03.
  6. Notification to the head, or designee, of the facility where the staff is employed that:
    - a. A CPS referral has been made.
    - b. A CPS investigation will follow.
    - c. No action shall be taken by the facility which might interfere with the CPS investigation.
  7. Assessment of the alleged perpetrator's access to the child victim or other potential child victims.
  8. The immediate treatment and protection needs of the child and willingness or ability of the agency to meet those needs.
  9. Notification of the parents and/or person(s) who had legal custody prior to the grant of legal custody to the state of the alleged victim and the facility head of the allegations and the results of the CPS investigation.
  10. Provision of the written results of the investigation to the Assistant Secretary through the Regional Administrator on an incident report format, in accordance with the incident reporting provisions of the *Operations Manual*, section 5100.
- D. The CPS social worker shall coordinate the investigation with other authorized investigative activities.



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- E. The assigned social worker and the supervisor are responsible for the assessment of continued risk to the alleged victim.

2555 Alleged Medical Neglect in Health Care Facilities

- A. DCFS investigates alleged incidents of medical neglect, including the withholding of medically indicated treatment from a disabled infant with a life-threatening condition, in a health care facility. As used in this section, withholding medically indicated treatment means: The failure to respond to a child's life-threatening conditions by providing treatment which, in the treating or consulting physician's reasonable medical judgment, will be most likely to be effective in ameliorating or correcting such conditions.
- B. There are three exceptions to the requirements that treatment be provided. Determination of exceptions is a medical responsibility. Exceptions are valid for cases in which:
  - 1. The child is chronically and irreversibly comatose.
  - 2. The provision of treatment would merely prolong dying or would not be effective in ameliorating or correcting the child's life-threatening conditions, or otherwise would be futile in terms of survival of the child.
  - 3. The provision of such treatment would be virtually futile in terms of the survival of the child and the treatment itself under such circumstances would be inhumane.

Appropriate nutrition, hydration, and medication must be provided without exception. The medical professional reviewing the medical decision shall not base consideration on the quality of life in later childhood and adulthood in determining whether an exception may be made.

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- C. The CPS social worker shall:
1. Promptly notify the individual designated by and within the health care facility of cases of alleged medical neglect.
  2. Coordinate and consult with individuals designated by and within the health care facility throughout the ongoing investigation.
  3. Meet with the individual designated by the facility to review the medical record.
  4. Observe the child.
  5. Consider the referral unfounded when:
    - a. The child is not at risk.
    - b. The medical records indicate that the attending physician's plan to withhold medical treatment has been reviewed and concurred with by two consulting physicians or an infant care review committee (or similar institutional/medical review) which includes the concurrence of two consulting physicians.
      - (1) Provided that at any time the department may review any decision with the Medical Consultation Network, telephone 1-800-326-5300, or other consulting physician as may be designated by the department, in determining the need for CPS intervention.
      - (2) The department has final responsibility for determining whether further intervention or court referral is necessary.

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6. Request that a meeting be scheduled as soon as possible with appropriate hospital/medical staff to review the decision to withhold treatment when it is not clear or documented that the conditions in number 5 above exist. Such a meeting shall include:
  - a. The hospital or facility designee.
  - b. The attending physician.
  - c. The CPS social worker.
  - d. The DCFS medical consultant (as necessary).
  - e. Others as appropriate.

The social worker shall document the reason for the non-attendance of a representative of a through d.

7. Pursue remedies, including initiating a dependency action in juvenile court, as may be necessary to prevent the withholding of medically indicated treatment from children with life threatening conditions.
  8. Encourage inclusion in treatment of appropriate nutrition, hydration, and medication regardless of the child's condition or prognosis.
- D. Hospitals/health care facilities involved in the care of children are an important reporting and monitoring resource for DCFS. Local DCFS offices shall maintain and update annually agreements with each facility that shall include the following elements:

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1. Procedure specifying that the CPS social worker shall promptly contact the facility to obtain the name, title, and telephone number of the individual(s) designated by such facility for the purpose of coordination, consultation, and notification of CPS concerns involving the facility.
2. CPS referral procedures consistent with the intent of RCW 26.44 that facilitate direct referral by the person observing the risk situation.
3. Arrangements for preliminary interviews of children by the CPS social worker before notification of parents when such notification of parents would interfere with the appropriate collection of information.
4. Arrangements for allowing access to medical records by the social worker involved in a CPS investigation.
5. Procedure for the placing of a child in temporary protective custody by a hospital administrator or physician as specified by RCW 26.44.056.
6. Procedure for the investigation of alleged incidents for medical neglect by the facility, including the alleged withholding of medically indicated treatment from a disabled infant. Such a procedure may include:
  - a. Continuation of medically necessary treatment upon notification that DCFS has received a referral. When necessary to maintain medical treatment, the facility administrator shall take action to allow the initial CPS review to be completed.

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- b. Notification to parents regarding the review of the decision to withhold treatment shall be deferred to the facility when the facility is willing to accept that responsibility.
- c. Agreement and procedures for the meeting of the social worker and facility representatives, including, as necessary, the contracted medical consultant designated by DCFS.
- d. The social worker may refer unresolved issues to the Attorney General's Office or its designee for consideration of grounds for dependency to assure the continuation of medically necessary treatment.

2556 Referrals to CPS from Residential Facilities When Alleged Abuse Occurred Prior to Placement

- A. DCFS response when a child in a residential treatment facility, institution, or group home discloses past sexual or physical abuse which did not occur in the facility includes:
  - 1. Where to Report
    - a. CPS intake in the office currently authorizing or supervising the placement of the child (placing office) has primary responsibility to receive a report regarding previous CA/N.
    - b. Intake serving the area in which the facility is located shall take the referral when:
      - (1) The child is not a DCFS-related placement.
      - (2) The facility is unable to contact the placing office.

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2. CPS Response to Reports
  - a. When CPS in the local office serving the area where the facility is located receives a call, the intake worker:
    - (1) Obtains the following information as necessary to identify the case and the placing office:
      - i. A brief description of the information.
      - ii. The name, birth date, and case number (if any) of the child.
      - iii. The name and address of the child's parent(s) or other caretaker.
      - iv. The name of the family's caseworker, if any.
      - v. The name and phone number of the reporter.
    - (2) Calls CPS intake in the placing office. If this can be done with the facility on hold, then the worker need only connect the facility when the placing office is on line. If the facility is not on hold, the above information will be given to CPS intake at the placing office.
    - (3) Will be available to provide coordination and facilitation of the referral; e.g., interview the child victim or other facility staff when requested by the placing office.

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- (4) Provides consultation and assistance to facilities in their area regarding what constitutes CA/N and what are the reporting requirements.
- b. The placing office coordinates the:
  - (1) Investigation, including the interview of the child.
  - (2) Reports to law enforcement.
  - (3) Other activities as necessary.
- c. The placing office:
  - (1) Has CPS in the location of the facility conduct the investigation.
  - (2) Completes the CAMIS referral with the notation "This is a residential facility" and screen the referral for sufficiency.
  - (3) Informs the referent of the initial decision and reason.
    - i. If accepted, non-emergent response is most likely unless the child is returning to the home of the alleged offender (visit, discharge, etc.).
    - ii. If screened out when the case is already open to DCFS, the referral will be sent to the assigned worker for information, possible non-CPS follow-up, or other action as may be necessary.

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- (4) Assigns cases accepted for investigation and notify the facility of the worker identity within three working days. The supervisor and the social worker shall make every effort to expedite responses when the facility requests earlier assignment for the security or emotional health of the child. The supervisor may assign an emergent response time.
- (5) The intake supervisor notifies staff/supervisors with the open cases on the child/victim and forward a copy of the referral to the currently assigned social worker.
- (6) The investigating worker keeps the facility advised of the investigation time-frames, progress, and findings.

2557 CPS Alerts

A. Alert Procedures

1. Any DCFS supervisor may initiate statewide or interstate CPS alerts when it is important that a child at risk be located. Before initiating the alert, the social worker needs to check for the subject individuals in Interactive Terminal Information System (ITIS) or its replacement, Automated Client Eligibility System (ACES). The alert system generates a computer printout containing essential information for each local office within the state and, when necessary, provides for referral to liaison persons in other states. The system is only available for open and assigned CPS cases.
2. A DCFS supervisor may initiate an alert within the state by contacting the CAMIS Help Desk or using E-mail requesting acknowledgment and providing information in the following format:



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- a. Identification:
    - (1) Name and birth date of child at risk.
    - (2) Names and birth dates of persons presently caring for the child.
    - (3) Current legal status of the child.
  - b. Problem: Describe why the child is at risk, the degree of risk, and, if known, the probable destination. Historical, legal, or other identifying information may be added, but it should be brief and relevant.
  - c. Contact: Name of assigned social worker and complete mail and phone contact instructions.
- 3. The DCFS supervisor follows the above format for interstate alerts and must submit them in typed memo form to DSHS, DCFS, Mail Stop 45710, Attention: CPS Program Manager.
  - 4. The supervisor may provide printed copies of the alert to CSO intake units.
  - 5. The intake supervisor maintains a printed copy of all alerts in either a chronological or alphabetical file at the office for 180 days after receipt. The local office may destroy the printed alerts after that time. The originating office may renew alerts after 180 days.

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2558 Sexually Aggressive Youth

- A. Social workers shall arrange for the provision of appropriate and comprehensive evaluation, treatment and supplemental services for sexually aggressive youth (SAY) as approved by Regional SAY Teams. RCW 74.13.075
- B. Sexually aggressive youth means those juveniles who:
1. Have been abused and have committed a sexually aggressive act or other violent act that is sexual in nature; and
  2. Are in the care and custody of the state; or
  3. Are in the care and custody of a federally recognized Indian tribe located within the state; or
  4. Are the subject of a proceeding under chapter RCW 13.34 or a child welfare proceeding held before a tribal court. This allows service to children in their own home who are in shelter care status or dependent; or
  5. Have been determined by law enforcement (for children under eight years of age) or a prosecutor's office (for children eight through 11 years of age) to be a sexually aggressive youth who will not be prosecuted. RCW 26.44.160 and 9A.040.050
- C. CPS shall investigate any referrals from law enforcement or a prosecutor's office that allege that a child is a sexually aggressive youth. The purpose of the investigation shall be to determine whether the child is abused or neglected, whether any siblings are at risk, and whether the child or the child's parents are in need of services or treatment. RCW 26.44.075

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- D. DCFS may offer appropriate available services and treatment as provided in RCW 74.13.075 and may refer the child and his or her parents to appropriate services available within the community. If the parents refuse to accept or fail to obtain appropriate treatment or services under circumstances that indicate that the refusal or failure is child abuse or neglect, the department may pursue a dependency action as provided in chapter RCW 13.34.

2559 Hospital Holds

CPS shall receive a child taken into custody by a law enforcement agency pursuant to a determination by a hospital administrator or physician that the child would be in imminent danger if released to the child's caretaker. CPS shall detain the child until the court assumes custody or upon documented and substantiated evidence that, in the opinion of the CPS worker and supervisor, in consultation with appropriate entities such as the Child Protection Team (CPT), the child's safety will not be unduly endangered if the child is returned. If the child is returned home, the assigned social worker shall monitor the continued safety of the child for a six-month period.

2560 COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

2561 Community Involvement

DCFS managers, supervisors, and line staff are expected to allocate time to the development and maintenance of written operating agreements and collaborative working relationships with:

- A. Law enforcement agencies.
- B. Juvenile courts.
- C. Schools.

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- D. Ethnic/minority communities.
- E. The medical community.
- F. Appropriate social service agencies.

2562 Child Protection Teams

- A. Purpose and Scope
  - 1. Regional Administrators shall establish and maintain one or more CPTs in each region. RCW  
74.14B.030 and Executive Order (EO) 95-04
  - 2. The Regional Administrator shall utilize the team(s) for consultation to:
    - a. Assist in assessment of the future risk of abuse and neglect to children; and
    - b. Assist in assessment of the need to place children in out-of-home care in Children's Administration (CA) cases where a risk of serious harm to the child exists, including situations outlined below.
      - i. Any case in which there is serious professional disagreement, including disagreement by the foster parent(s), regarding risk of death, serious injury, out-of-home placement of a child, or the child's return home as a result of a decision to leave a child in the home or to return the child to the home;

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The CPT can be told the facts and may opt not to review the situation, on a case-by-case basis;

- ii. Cases in which the risk assessment, following initial investigation, results in a moderately high or high risk classification, and the child victim is age six or younger;
- iii. In all cases prior to return home or dismissal of dependency, when the child is age six or younger and any risk assessment has resulted in a risk level of moderately high or high risk;
- iv. Cases that are opened solely on the basis of risk of imminent harm following initial investigation where there are no allegations of abuse or neglect; and/or
- iv. Complex cases where such consultation will help improve outcomes for children.

B. Requirements

- 1. Multidisciplinary CPTs provide confidential case staffing and consultation to CA. Recommendations by CPTs are advisory to DCFS staff, except when deciding to place a child or return a child home.
  - a. Each Regional Administrator shall establish and maintain one or more culturally diverse and responsive multi-disciplinary CPTs.

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- b. Each CPT shall consist of at least four persons, selected by the Regional Administrator, from professions which provide services to abused and neglected children and/or the parents of such children. Participants may include, but are not limited to, law enforcement officers, physicians, mental health and substance abuse counselors, or other mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect.
    - c. While the recommendations and conclusions of the CPTs are advisory in all cases except decisions about placement out of or return to the home, the social worker shall give full consideration to them in the development of case plans and provide feedback on their implementation to the CPT, in accordance with local agreements.
  2. Before participating in the business of the CPT, each member must register with CA as a volunteer.
  3. Multi-disciplinary CPTs provide confidential case staffings and recommendations to CA. Release of information is subject to laws regarding public disclosure and confidentiality contained in RCW 74.04.060.
  4. Each Regional Administrator shall develop and implement written procedures for establishing, convening, and managing the region's CPTs. The Regional Administrator shall designate a staff person to serve as CPT coordinator for the region or local area as well as a facilitator for CPT staffings.

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- a. With the approval of the Regional Administrator, other types of community review teams or team members from other review and consultation teams may be used for CPT under this policy when they meet the criteria of this procedure and are willing to staff cases for the express purposes of this procedure.
  - b. A person with a personal or fiduciary interest in the outcome of the case under review may participate as a CPT member in the review of that case after declaring that personal or fiduciary interest.
- C. Procedures
- 1. DCFS field staff refer cases for staffing to the CPT through their supervisor.
  - 2. A community professional may schedule a CPT staffing, pursuant to this policy, with the CPT coordinator when the professional has reviewed and discussed the issues with the social worker and the supervisor and wishes to pursue a staffing.
  - 3. Among the responsibilities of the CPT coordinator are:
    - a. Coordination and management of membership recruitment, training, scheduling, record-keeping including CPT recommendations, reporting, and communication for the CPT.
    - b. Provision of written staffing recommendations to the assigned social worker and supervisor following the staffing.

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- c. Maintenance of a tracking system to document activity for staffings and recommendations.
4. If the social worker decides not to place a child or to return a child home when the CPT has recommended otherwise, the social worker, the supervisor, and the Area Manager will consult the Regional Administrator immediately upon making the decision. DCFS staff will follow the recommendation of the CPT regarding placement unless the Regional Administrator specifically authorizes the action contrary to the recommendation. The supervisor and the Area Manager will report the Regional Administrator's decision, in writing, to the CPT, through the coordinator, within seven working days.
5. The CPT may request the Regional Administrator to review the social worker's case plan decision and present additional information to support a concern for the health, safety, and welfare of the child or the effectiveness of the DCFS plan. The Regional Administrator or designee shall review the issue and determine if another course of action is appropriate. The Regional Administrator may also consider minority opinions when the CPT has been unable to achieve a consensus of opinion.
6. If the CPT disagrees with the decision of the Regional Administrator, the team may appeal to the Assistant Secretary.



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2563 Military Personnel

CPS service guidelines for on-post military families shall be developed administratively with the base commander or commander's designee and the Regional Administrator or designee. Mutually developed written guidelines and procedures may include, but are not necessary for, off-post families.

2570 LAW ENFORCEMENT

2571 Mandated Reports to Law Enforcement

A. The social worker or supervisor shall report, as required by RCW 26.44.030(4) and 74.13.031(3), to law enforcement within 24 hours of receipt of a report by the department in cases where the response time is labeled "emergent" and the child's welfare is believed to be in immediate danger. With the exception of a child fatality, which the social worker or supervisor shall report immediately, the social worker or supervisor shall notify law enforcement within 72 hours of receipt of any reported incident of:

1. Sexual abuse.
2. Non-accidental physical injury of a child.
3. Incidents where the investigation reveals reasonable cause to believe that a crime against a child may have been committed.

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- B. Unless otherwise agreed in a local written working agreement with law enforcement, developed in consultation with the Attorney General's Office, DCFS staff making an oral report to law enforcement shall, within five days of receipt of the referral, also report in writing. The person making the report shall file a copy in the department case record or in an administrative file when no case record exists. A CAMIS Law Enforcement Report or a legibly completed *Report of CA/N*, DSHS 14-260(X), may be used to comply with the requirement for a written referral.
1. The social worker or the supervisor may release referent identification information to law enforcement in all cases when the referent has not requested confidentiality.
  2. The department may delete the name of the referent from reports sent to law enforcement pursuant to this policy when the referent requests confidentiality and no written agreement with law enforcement to honor that status exists.
  3. The department may include the name of the confidential referent when the local written protocol with law enforcement and prosecutors contains the agreement to hold the name confidential.
  4. The department shall, when contacted, accept information about third party CA/N. This information shall be recorded and forwarded to law enforcement when it meets the statutory definition of what is to be reported.
  5. The department may share information with law enforcement about CA/N referrals which are not required to be reported when law enforcement is investigating CA/N involving the child victim.

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- 6. A report mailed by common carrier shall be considered to be made.
- C. Social workers and supervisors are not required by statute to report to law enforcement instances of CA/N where no criminal misconduct is reported or discovered. Parenting, child rearing practices, or other life circumstances which may be reported to the department for social assessment are not required to be reported to law enforcement when they do not indicate criminal misconduct against children.

2572 Criminal History Checks

Each DCFS office has access to criminal arrest and conviction information maintained by the Washington State Patrol Identification Section. Local social workers and supervisors make requests following instructions in the *CA Operations Manual*, Chapter 5000, section 5500. The social worker must include documentation in the service record that each of the following conditions exists before making the inquiry:

- A. The inquiry is about an alleged perpetrator in an open CPS case.
- B. The alleged CA/N incident has been reported to law enforcement as required by RCW 26.44.030.
- C. The information being requested can reasonably be expected to help in assessing or reducing risk to the alleged victim as mandated in RCW 26.44.050 and RCW 74.13.031.

Information gained will be subject to public disclosure policy as outlined in chapters 43.43 and 10.97 RCW and the *CA Operations Manual*, Chapter 13000, section 13500.

A local office may access other criminal background information systems when enabled to do so by agreements with local law enforcement agencies.

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2573 Law Enforcement Assistance

- A. A social worker may request the assistance/accompaniment of a law enforcement officer in situations that may be dangerous to the worker or when the worker believes a child may need to be taken into protective custody.
- B. A social worker may receive children taken into custody under RCW 26.44.050 from law enforcement with a *Child Custody Transfer*, DSHS 10-157(X), or an equivalent emergency placement authorization signed by the authorizing law enforcement officer.

2574 Law Enforcement Agreement

Each DCFS office shall develop a written working agreement with each law enforcement agency in its catchment area. Such agreements will detail local mechanisms for handling matters contained in sections 2571 - 2773.

2575 Confidentiality of Records

DCFS records are confidential and shall not be disclosed to law enforcement other than as described above. Law enforcement or the prosecutor may subpoena other information from the DCFS record. See *CA Case Services Policy Manual*, Chapter 4000, section 4120.

2600 **CASE REVIEW**

2610 SUPERVISORY REVIEW

The supervisor shall review all cases open to CPS for 90 days to determine if:

- A. The case record and CAMIS file are complete.

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- B. The service is appropriate and effective.
- C. The 90-day rule requirement has been met.
- D. The service may continue.
  - 1. The supervisor may consider transfer of cases to continuing CPS or ongoing CWS when the criteria above have been completed.
  - 2. The supervisor may refer the case back for further investigation.
- E. The supervisor shall document the reasons for the 90-day review decision in the SER and sign the record.

**2700 RESOLUTION**

**2710 CLOSURE OF CONTINUING SERVICE CASES**

- A. The social worker may close continuing service cases when the problems resulting in risk of CA/N identified in the summary assessment form have been alleviated, and no new factors have been discovered which would increase the risk of further CA/N.
- B. The social worker may close other cases in which there is a continuing risk of CA/N but which are not likely to be resolved through treatment efforts when:
  - 1. Further voluntary services are not available or accepted.
  - 2. There is no plan to file a dependency petition.

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- C. The social worker shall not close cases for service while a dependency order or voluntary placement agreement is in effect or within six months of the time a child is returned to parental care as a result of a dependency order.
- D. The social worker shall properly complete all forms and narrative recording within 90 days of a decision to terminate services and close a case. The supervisor shall review both CAMIS and the folder for accuracy and completeness and sign the SER before closure or transfer to another service.

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CHAPTER 3000  
FAMILY RECONCILIATION  
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**3100 INTRODUCTION**

- A. Family Reconciliation Services (FRS) are intended to preserve, strengthen, and reconcile families, maintain the family as a unit, and prevent out-of-home placement of adolescents. Services are voluntary, family-focused, and depend upon family participation in determining the focus of intervention. They are available 24 hours per day, seven days per week, without regard to family income.
- B. Services are available at no cost to the family and consist of intake/assessment and crisis counseling. When appropriate, short-term placement of the child may be provided, with recovery of the cost of care a possibility. When less intensive services fail to resolve the conflict, alternatives such as a Child in Need of Services (CHINS) petition, At-Risk Youth Petition, or voluntary placement may be used.
- C. Those eligible for services include a child, age 12 or older, and his/her parents who are in severe conflict or a family with a child who has run away from home.

**3110 COMPLIANCE WITH COURT ORDERS AND LIABILITY REPRESENTATION**

See Chapter 4000, Child Welfare Services, section 43073, for staff expectations for compliance with court orders and legal representation for employees.

**3200 INTAKE**

- A. An FRS intake is the initial request for service and input of the information obtained into the Case and Management Information System (CAMIS). The intake worker takes an active role in discussing the family situation and obtaining comprehensive family history from the family and from existing DCFS data, including CAMIS.

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- B. The social worker shall determine ethnic status of family members and determine whether any family members are of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) or are persons of sensory impairment. Interpreter services will be provided as needed by the family. All services subsequent to intake will also utilize interpreter services as needed.
- C. The social worker shall adhere to all requirements of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) and the DCFS *Indian Child Welfare (ICW) Manual* throughout all phases of FRS service provision.
- D. The intake worker shall provide written information about the FRS program to parents and children upon request. Information may also be provided by telephone.
- E. The intake worker shall refer non-eligible applicants to other agencies, when appropriate.

3210 ELIGIBILITY

- A. Families and youth age 12 through 17 may request service when they are experiencing serious conflict, non-compliance with family rules, family relationship problems, or running away.
- B. DCFS provides services, on a voluntary basis, including assessment and counseling, without regard to the family's income.
- C. Law enforcement may also make referrals to FRS of runaway children who are in their custody under a runaway statute.
- D. Youth and families not eligible for services include those involved in custody disputes, those actively receiving crisis counseling services from other DCFS social workers, or those receiving family services in the community.

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- E. The DCFS office in the county of residence of the custodial parent provides FRS. However, the social worker may authorize services to the youth and non-custodial relative when the child has been living with the non-custodial relative, with the concurrence of the custodial parent.

**3220 RESPONSE TIME**

A social worker shall contact the family to obtain basic intake information within four (4) hours of the initial inquiry. A telephone contact is permissible.

**3230 DISPOSITION**

Based on preliminary data gathered at intake, the social worker determines whether to proceed to assessment.

**3300 ASSESSMENT**

- A. Assessment is short-term interaction directed toward defusing the immediate potential for violence, identifying problems, and exploring options leading to problem resolution. Assessment is a continuation and expansion of the activities of Intake. Assessment is an ongoing process through the life of the FRS intervention, and additional services shall be flexible to respond to changing dynamics.
- B. FRS social workers shall initiate an assessment with the family within forty-eight (48) hours of intake, excluding weekends and holidays. After-hours social workers provide emergency assessment services as needed during those periods when offices are closed.

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3310 COMPONENTS OF ASSESSMENT

The FRS social worker utilizes the following when performing assessment activities:

- A. Exploration of the seriousness of the crisis situation and history of efforts to resolve similar situations.
- B. Assessment of roles, interactions, dynamics, and communication among family members.
- C. Identification of family demographics (names, ages, sexes, schools, occupations, ethnicity, socio-cultural environment, household composition, etc.)
- D. Engagement of the family in defining problems and identifying options.
- E. Assessment of child safety issues in the home and the need for referral to Child Protective Services (CPS) or to community services; e.g., mental health, drug and alcohol treatment. The social worker continues to be aware of protection considerations for the family.

3320 SERVICE EPISODE RECORDING

Social workers shall record results of the assessment and subsequent interventions in the case record in accordance with CAMIS policy and the *Operations Manual*.

3400 **CASE PLANNING**

3410 GOAL SETTING AND TASK DEFINITION

Based upon the assessment, the social worker guides the family to identify and prioritize immediate and longer-term goals.



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3420 EXPLANATION AND DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES

- A. The social worker explains and describes appropriate services to the family. Services offered by the DCFS include but are not limited to assessment, contracted crisis counseling, intensive family preservation services, home based services, crisis residential or receiving foster care placement, assessment bed placement, treatment foster care, regular foster care, and group care.
- B. The worker continues to assess whether services could be more appropriately provided outside the agency. Such services might include mental health, private therapy, anger management, substance abuse treatment, or family counseling. The worker shall play an active role in helping to access culturally appropriate service.

3430 SPECIALIZED STAFFING

The social worker identifies the need for and refers to specialized staffing such as a CPT, Multi-Ethnic Councils, Multi-Disciplinary Teams, Local Indian Child Welfare Advisory Committee (LICWAC), Resource Committees, etc.

3500 **SERVICE DELIVERY**

Service delivery begins with the least intensive, least intrusive intervention. Services are time-limited, family-focused, goal-oriented, culturally appropriate, and voluntary.

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3510 AVAILABLE SERVICES

- A. The social worker shall initiate short-term crisis counseling services within 48 hours of intake. This provision is a specific waiver of WAC 388-15-570(5)(a), which limits the service to four hours within a 24-hour period. All FRS services are to be completed within 90 days. The social worker shall design services to develop skills and supports within families to resolve family conflicts and to achieve a reconciliation between parent and child to avoid out-of-home placement.
  
- B. The social worker shall apply for Title IV-A/Consolidated Emergency Assistance Program (CEAP) federal funding on behalf of families receiving FRS and in need of other assistance. The worker shall send the completed application to the federal funding specialist.
  
- C. Thirty-day crisis counseling services are usually provided by contractors but may be provided directly by DCFS staff at the Regional Administrator's discretion.
  - 1. Families eligible for 30-day crisis counseling are those who, in the opinion of the family and the social worker, require more intensive services than those described above.
  
  - 2. Families must make a commitment to participate in the 30-day crisis counseling service and must not be currently receiving family counseling services through other agencies or practitioners. At a minimum, there must be a parent and a child willing to participate.
  
  - 3. Thirty-day crisis counseling services are sessions, limited to 15 hours within 30 days, directed toward developing skills and supports within the family to resolve conflicts or to refer to appropriate resources including medical, legal, ongoing counseling, and CPS for problem resolution.

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- a. Thirty-day crisis counseling may be extended for an additional 30 days for up to 15 additional hours of service, with supervisory approval, subject to availability of funds.
- b. Thirty-day crisis counseling may be made available a maximum of twice in the lifetime of any one child within a family.
- c. The FRS social worker must review and be familiar with the department's statements of work in FRS contracts with vendors.
- d. The Regional Administrator arranges for provision of basic contract information to social workers to give them a working knowledge of FRS 30-day crisis counseling services contract provisions. The social worker reports to the supervisor problems with contract compliance which cannot be resolved by the social worker. The supervisor refers the issue to the regional contracts coordinator if unable to resolve the problem with the contractor.

3511 Crisis Residential Center (CRC) Placement

- A. CRC is a short-term, temporary shelter available on a 24-hour-a-day, 7-day-a-week basis to runaways and youth in serious conflict with parents or guardians. A child admitted to a secure facility within a CRC must remain in the facility not more than five consecutive days, but for at least 24 hours after admission. CRCs serve youth 12 and older for up to five calendar days.
- B. Regional and group CRCs provide on-site family counseling aimed at early reunification of the youth with his/her family. As family CRC beds are located in family foster homes, counseling services are provided by DCFS or, when available, contractor staff.

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- C. The Regional Administrator shall designate an FRS supervisor to serve as Gatekeeper for CRC placements to work for compliance with CRC law and statements of work. The placing DCFS worker arranges for provision of FRS to youth placed in CRCs unless exceptions are authorized by the Gatekeeper.
  
- D. Social workers shall be familiar with CRC statements of work in order to work for compliance with the CRC contract and to avoid duplication of services. The statement of work outlines CRC responsibilities regarding individual, group, and family counseling; transportation; medical treatment; termination summaries; and record keeping.
  
- E. The social worker performs the following duties with respect to CRCs:
  - 1. Assess the need for all CRC placements and obtain Gatekeeper approval for the placement.
  - 2. Obtain legal authority for placement.
  - 3. Document the placement in the SER and authorize relevant SSPS codes.
  - 4. Be attentive to medical, educational, and cultural needs of the child.
  - 5. Coordinate reunification plans with the CRC, child, and parent or guardian.
  - 6. Coordinate placement planning when re-unification efforts are unsuccessful.
  - 7. Assist the family in obtaining services designed to strengthen the family following discharge of the youth from the CRC.

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3512 Intensive Family Preservation Services (IFPS)

IFPS is a family-focused, behavior-oriented, primarily in-home counseling and support program available in some counties. The service may be utilized when youth are at imminent risk of placement. The service is usually 80-100 hours in 30-40 days. In some areas, assessment and aftercare may also be available. The Regional Administrator will arrange for provision of information to the social worker about regional or local protocol and the contract statement of work for access and detailed program information. See chapter 4000, section 45023, for procedures to access IFPS.

3513 Home Based Services (HBS)

HBS is flexible funding for short-term services for families with children at risk of out-of-home placement. HBS is focused on behavioral and environmental change. Services include, but are not limited to, basic needs (food, clothing, shelter, furniture, health, home repair, utilities, transportation) and professional services such as anger management classes, family counseling, drug testing, and child care. The social worker reviews regional instructions for specific information related to services available and authorization procedures.

3514 Other Service Options

If FRS services fail to resolve the conflict and placement appears unavoidable, the social worker consults with the family and with the supervisor. The following may be considered as options for placement, depending upon regional and local policy:

- A. Relative placement.
- B. Assessment Center placement.
- C. Foster care placement.

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- D. Treatment foster care placement.
- E. Group care placement.

See Chapter 4000, Child Welfare Services, for descriptions and instructions regarding these services.

3520 OUT-OF-AREA RUNAWAYS

3521 Washington Jurisdictions

Runaway youth from other Washington jurisdictions may be held with proper legal authority in CRC or other out-of-home care facilities until one of the following occurs:

- A. The social worker, juvenile court officer, or law enforcement contacts the legal custodian and arrangements are made for transport home.
- B. If the child is receiving services from another DCFS social worker, the social worker responsible for returning the youth coordinates transportation arrangements with that social worker.
- C. If the child is placed, the social worker shall notify the DCFS office in the area of the youth's legal residence.

3522 Out of State Jurisdictions

Out-of-state runaway youth may be held with proper legal authority in a CRC or other out-of-home care facility until one of the following occurs:

- A. The legal custodian is contacted and arrangements made for transportation home.

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- B. If the youth is a dependent of another state, the DCFS social worker coordinates transportation arrangements with the proper authorities in that state.

3530 DOCUMENTING INFORMATION ON PERSONS CARING FOR RUNAWAYS

3531 Purpose and Scope

This section identifies minimum information to be collected by Children's Administration field staff and made available through the Case and Management Information System (CAMIS) for preparation of required reports by headquarters staff.

3532 Policy

- A. E2SHB 2217 requires persons caring for runaways to report those youth to parents, police, or the department within eight hours of learning that the youth is away from home without parental permission. When the department receives these reports, it must notify the parent that a report was received and must offer services to help resolve the conflict and reunite the family.
- B. Under "'Becca One," regions chose how to deal with these reports. "Becca Too" requires documentation, parent notification, and the offer of services.

3533 Procedures

- A. Each field office will designate staff to receive reports from persons or shelters caring for runaways. Staff will take reports by telephone or in person and document them in CAMIS. Staff receiving the reports will normally be the FRS or intake units or the assigned workers if the case is already open.

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- B. These reports are to be taken only from persons directly caring for (i.e., receiving) runaways. Parents wanting to report a youth who has run from home must report the youth to the police in the area where the youth ran away. The department at this time is not logging third party reports.
- C. Staff receiving the reports about runaway youth must attempt to notify parents of the report and offer unification services to the family. Usually, those services will be FRS services, such as FRS assessment, CRC placement, or thirty-day crisis counseling services.
- D. Whether to release the child's exact location to the parent will be a case-by-case decision by the worker receiving the report. Usually the local DCFS office will be a neutral place where parents can pick up their youth and meet with DCFS staff about possible services. Shelters and other "harborers" vary in their willingness to allow parents or police to come to their site, with many preferring to bring the youth to the DCFS office.
- E. Unless the parents or youth request services, or the case is already open for service, the department's responsibility ends with the parent notification and offer of services.
- F. Staff designated at the field office shall log these reports from people caring for runaways under "Run" on the intake screens in CAMIS. This "Run" field is not to be used for any other purpose. The following information is to be included on the intake screens:
  - 1. Date and time information received on runaway youth
  - 2. Name of youth
  - 3. Name of shelter or person reporting, if given
  - 4. Location of youth
  - 5. A "Help" screen (F1) explains which codes to use for documentation of parent notification.

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G. Codes

Blank space after "Run" indicates a regular case. The "Run" line is used only when someone is reporting they have a runaway youth in their care.

1. A person reported a youth staying with them without parental permission. The parent's telephone number was not available or the parent did not answer when staff attempted to call the parent.
2. A person reported a runaway in their care. The child's parents were reached and received the information and offer of services.
3. A person reported a runaway in their care. Parents were notified and refused services.
4. A person reported a runaway in their care. If parents were unavailable, police were notified.

3540 PLACEMENT OR DECLINE OF PLACEMENT OF RUNAWAYS AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

3541 Purpose and Scope

- A. This section outlines steps to be taken by law enforcement and department staff when a runaway youth is in need of placement. It includes guidelines for Children's Administration staff to follow when deciding if placement is appropriate. It also describes elements that the department is required to report to the legislature.

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- B. **This section pertains only to youth taken into police custody as runaways under Chapter 13.32A RCW and does not apply to youth served under dependency or child protection statutes.**

3542 Requirements and Procedures

- A. Police may take a youth in custody to the department for placement, if the parent or a CRC bed is not readily available. The department must accept the youth for placement if an "appropriate placement is currently available." The department may decline the youth if a suitable placement is unavailable. If the department declines the youth, the police must attempt to take the youth to the home of an adult relative, a responsible adult, or a licensed youth shelter (in that order). If those efforts fail, police may release the youth and make a report to DCFS.
- B. When picking up runaways identified as Indian youth, police should first attempt to return the youth to the parent or other legal guardian. If the parent or guardian is not available, the officer should then contact the youth's tribe. If neither the parent nor a tribal contact is immediately available, the police should take the youth to the department for emergency placement under Indian Child Welfare (ICW) procedures.
- C. Reporting Requirements
1. The department is required to report to the legislature:
    - a. The number of children it declines to accept from police; and
    - b. The number of times the police released youth because the department declined custody.

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2. The law specifically requires dates, places, and reasons why the department declined custody and dates and places youth are released by police.
- D. DCFS field staff will make reasonable attempts to find a suitable placement for youth brought by law enforcement to the department for placement.
- E. DCFS field staff will use the following guidelines when determining whether the department will accept custody from law enforcement:
1. Whether a bed is available within a reasonable distance.
  2. Whether a foster parent can reasonably be expected to manage the youth's behavior.
  3. Age of the Youth  

No youth under 12 years of age should be turned away unless police are pursuing a placement for the child with a relative or other responsible adult.
  4. Special Needs of the Youth  

If the youth has serious medical problems or is developmentally disabled and would be endangered if released by police, staff will make every effort to locate a placement.
  5. The youth states strongly that a relative or responsible adult will let him or her stay the night. A telephone call will be made to confirm this alternative while the youth and officer are in the office.

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6. If a bed is available, but social work staff believe the youth is not appropriate for it, the staff will confirm that fact with a supervisor. For example, a youth with a history of physical assault on adults would usually not be appropriate for an emergency placement into a family foster home. However, a youth who has run away several times previously should not be denied placement on that basis alone.

F. Reporting

1. CAMIS contains a reporting screen to be used when DCFS field staff decline placement of a youth. To access this screen from the CAMIS main menu, press "2" for "Referral, Intake Procedures/Reports." Then, from the Intake menu, press "1" for "Intake Procedures." Hit "enter" twice or enter "23" to select "Decline Plcmnt of Youth in Police Custody." This screen does not link to other CAMIS case data, but is simply a listing of youth declined from police custody. To retrieve information from it, simply type "A" on line "Youth Last Name: \_\_\_\_." A listing of all declined youth will appear.
2. The lower section of the screen described above is used when law enforcement officers report that a youth who has been declined by DCFS for placement was later released because no placement was available with a relative, other responsible adult, or licensed youth shelter. This section is to be completed by DCFS staff who are taking the information from law enforcement officers by telephone, in person, or from a police report. To access the "decline" information about a particular youth, follow procedures in paragraph (1), above.

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**3600 REVIEW**

- A. Reviews will usually pertain to children in placement or those for whom longer term placement is a likely outcome. Social workers are expected to comply with regional and local procedures. Examples of reviews may include LICWAC reviews for Native American children, children in care over 30 days, multi-disciplinary team staffing, and court-mandated legal reviews. Chapter 4000, Child Welfare Services, contains additional guidelines for such reviews.
- B. See chapter 2000, section 2562, for requirements relating to Child Protection Team (CPT) staffings.

**3700 RESOLUTION**

The ideal outcome of an FRS service episode is the reduction in level of conflict, the stabilization of the family, and the reduced risk of out-of-home placement or the return home of a runaway youth.

**3710 OUTCOMES**

Specific outcomes may include:

- A. Youth and family received FRS counseling, and the youth remains at home. Case is closed.
- B. Youth and family received FRS counseling, and the youth was placed temporarily in out-of-home care. The family's ability to cope was strengthened, and the youth was then returned home. Case is closed.

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- C. Youth and family received FRS counseling, but serious conflict remained unresolved. The youth was placed in longer term out-of-home care. The social worker shall transfer placement cases to CWS social workers when family reunification is not the immediate goal.
- D. Youth and family chose not to participate in further FRS service. Case is closed.
- E. During FRS intervention, youth disclosed sexual abuse or serious physical abuse and, following supervisory staffing, the FRS worker carried the case jointly with or transferred to CPS.
- F. Family was referred to community services, and the case was closed.

3711 Out-of-Home Placement

- A. After reasonable efforts (which may include but are not limited to crisis counseling, CRC placement, IFPS, etc.) at resolving conflict have failed to achieve reconciliation, the parents, the youth, or DCFS may file a CHINS petition. See the *DCFS Case Services Policy Manual*, sections 5500-5530 and section 7200, for references to the statute and relevant policy and practice considerations for the social worker.
- B. An order resulting from a CHINS petition allows the youth to remain in out-of-home placement while continuing efforts to reconcile with their parent or guardian. The social worker shall not utilize CHINS for protection issues or to resolve custody disputes.

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3712 At-Risk Youth (ARY)

- A. Where parents are willing to participate in FRS services, but the youth remains uncooperative, the family fits criteria for At-Risk Youth Petition (ARY). This petition has provisions which allow the court to order the youth home or into placement of the parent's choosing and at the parent's expense. See the *DCFS Case Services Policy Manual*, Appendix A and Section 5540, for policy and practice considerations.
  
- B. This service is not funded and is not available in most counties. Social workers shall attempt to engage persons inquiring about ARY in FRS or other appropriate service.

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CHAPTER 4000

CHILD WELFARE SERVICES

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4100 **INTAKE**

4110 PURPOSE

The purpose of Child Welfare Services (CWS) intake is to determine whether the family's need for service is most appropriately addressed by a Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) assessment or by referral to another agency or other family members.

4120 ELIGIBILITY

4121 New Referrals

Requests from parents or children for child placement services are received by CWS Intake when the placement request is not a direct result of a need for child protection due to abuse or neglect or the family's needs are beyond the scope of Family Reconciliation Services (FRS).

4122 Transfer of Open CPS or FRS Cases

Cases transfer from Child Protective Services (CPS) or FRS to CWS at transfer points determined by the Regional Administrator. Usually these are cases where there will be a need for on-going in-home or out-of-home service that will extend beyond the scope of the CPS investigation or, with FRS, beyond 90 days from case opening.

4130 SCOPE

4131 New Referrals

A. The intake function for new CWS referrals includes obtaining brief initial information from the referent regarding the family composition, nature, duration and urgency of the problems leading to the request for placement services and an initial determination of the family and child's desire to obtain services.



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- B. Intake social workers determine if a family assessment by CWS is needed or if another state or community based resource can more appropriately provide an assessment or services. Intake staff provide information and referral to other services when appropriate.
- C. Intake services may, with the permission of the family, involve gathering collateral information from schools, doctors, other agencies, or family members if such information is necessary to make a decision regarding acceptance of the intake referral.

4132 Cases Transferring from CPS and FRS

Cases transferring from CPS and FRS will be transferred directly to a CWS supervisor following established regional transfer procedures.

4140 SCREENING NEW REFERRALS FOR ACCEPTANCE

- A. When the family requests an assessment or services but is not requesting placement, the family will normally be referred to the appropriate agency/school providing services without opening a case. Examples of this type of situation include:
  - 1. Requests for mental health assessments or counseling. Youth who need immediate psychiatric treatment because they are a danger to themselves or others or are gravely disabled as a result of a psychiatric condition.
  - 2. Requests for assessment for in-home services for developmentally disabled children unless the family has already applied for and exhausted services available through the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD).
  - 3. Requests for assessment of a child who is primarily delinquent and will be in a detention or institutional setting for more than six weeks.

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4. Requests for educational evaluations or other services made primarily because the child has a problem in school.
- B. When the family requests placement, the intake social worker screens in referrals only against the following criteria, which must be met:
1. The child can be located.
  2. If the youth is an adolescent, she/he is willing to accept services.
  3. The child's future safety and well-being will be seriously compromised.
  4. The family does not have adequate strengths or resources to resolve the problem without DCFS intervention.
  5. There are no more appropriate services immediately available for the family than DCFS CWS Assessment Services.

If the above criteria do not apply, but the parent is requesting voluntary termination of their rights, the referral shall be accepted for assessment.

4141 Accepted Referrals

Following screen-in, the intake worker shall document the intake information consistent with Case and Management Information System (CAMIS) policy and the *CA Operations Manual*. Regional offices may establish priorities for case assignment of accepted CWS intakes.

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4150 CASE OPENING ACTIVITIES

- A. Screened in referrals will become DCFS cases. The local office opens a family case, in CAMIS and a paper file, for the family. The office will open an individual child case only if a child is placed in out-of-home care.
- B. The intake supervisor sends cases to the appropriate CWS supervisor for assignment to a social worker for a full assessment.

4200 **ASSESSMENT**

4210 PURPOSE

The central responsibility of DCFS is to serve the needs of children who are at risk of abuse and neglect. Included in that responsibility are in-home and out-of-home placement services to protect children. To the extent possible, within available funding, DCFS collaborates with other agencies in the identification of services and resources, including placement, for developmentally disabled, mentally ill, and other children with behavioral problems.

4220 ASSESSMENT FOR NEW CWS CASES

4221 Family-Focused Assessments

The social worker shall complete a full family-focused case assessment to identify family strengths and problems. The assessment includes multi-family groupings; e.g., the family home from which the child was removed as well as the home of another parent.

RCW 74.14A.020

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4222 Community-Informed Decision-Making

The CWS assessment focuses first on identifying family resources or services within the community which can be utilized to safely maintain a child in his/her own home and community. The social worker identifies services which may be needed in the future through coordination with the family and other relevant community agencies.

4223 Culturally Appropriate Assessment

Culturally sensitive assessment means viewing the family from its own perspective, cultural context and values. The family, the extended family, and the community must be encouraged to identify their own solutions to mitigate the need for services.

4224 Initial Assessment

The CWS social worker's initial assessment includes:

- A. Identification of family needs and strengths.
- B. Determining who is legally responsible for the child.
- C. Clarifying the presenting problems and resolutions expected.
- D. Obtaining the family and child's own description of the situation and family's recommendations for how to solve the problem.
- E. Reviewing family history, including such factors as ethnic and cultural heritage, family and community resources, emotional/social support systems, medical histories, family dynamics, educational backgrounds of parents and children, work histories/employment stability, availability of financial resources (AFDC, public housing, Supplemental Security Income [SSI], Social Security, Veterans Administration benefits), and family mobility.

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- F. Reviewing available case records, previous service/placement history, and response to previous services.
- G. Making collateral contacts necessary to complete assessment.
- H. Consultation with supervisor as needed.

4230 ONGOING ASSESSMENT

Assessment is an ongoing process within service provision. New information or changes in family circumstances may require the worker to revise the original assessment and service plan.

4240 ASSESSMENT FOR TRANSFERRED CASES

The newly assigned CWS social worker reviews the assessments completed by CPS, FRS, or another CWS unit upon case assignment.

4250 ASSESSMENT FOR OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENT

4251 Least Restrictive Setting

- A. When assessing a child's need for services and placement, the social worker shall select the least restrictive setting available consistent with the safety and best interest of the child. This means serving a child in a setting where he/she has an opportunity to maintain parental attachments that is the least restrictive available to meet the child's needs. The setting means "least restrictive, most family-like, and most appropriate" placement option.

RCW 74.14A.020

- B. Least to most restrictive are defined as:

- 1. Child's own home.

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2. Relatives/Tribe.
3. Out-of-home care in a family setting. This includes a family setting that provides a child with a primary parental attachment figure. It may include receiving care, family foster care, and treatment/therapeutic foster care with live-in house parents.
4. Rehabilitative Group Placement, including non-institutional settings that are shift staffed.
5. Short and long-term psychiatric facilities.
6. Other institutions, accessed only through court commitment.

4252 Assessing for Reasonable Efforts

The social worker shall assess services available to serve the family within the home. The social worker shall not place any child unless the child is at risk of imminent harm, and/or there are no alternative services available to keep the child safely at home.

4253 Assessment for Decision to Place in Out-Of-Home Care

- A. Some children have dual status in that they may be dependent as well as meeting the service definitions for other programs or divisions. For example, a child may be found by the court to be both a dependent child and a juvenile offender who may also be committed to a Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration (JRA) placement for a period of time, or a child may be developmentally disabled and eligible for some DDD services. In such cases, DCFS services will be offered in accordance with state and local interagency agreements.

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- B. Within the constraints of available financial resources, placement services will be provided to children according to the following ordered priorities:
1. Children who urgently require protection from child abuse or neglect (CA/N).
  2. Children who are developmentally disabled as defined by DDD and are referred for placement shall be assessed against the process/criteria outlined in the DCFS/DDD agreement.
  3. Children who are mentally ill or who are among the priority populations identified by statute and Regional Support Networks (RSN) shall be assessed according to criteria defined in local DCFS/Mental Health agreements.
  4. Referrals of children with conduct disorders or juvenile offender histories shall be assessed utilizing DCFS guidelines. The juvenile justice system has primary responsibility for community protection. However, DCFS staff will assist in planning to the extent possible and as defined by DCFS agreements with the Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration (JRA) or other local agreements.
- C. DCFS social workers shall not place children in the types of situations outlined below, as they relate to CWS. For placement standards for CPS, see chapter 2000, and, for FRS, see chapter 3000.
1. Children who, after assessment, the DCFS worker believes will not be helped in out-of-home care.
  2. Youths 12 - 17 years of age in conflict with parents and who have not been through FRS, except adoption support families that have already received extensive counseling services.

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3. Youths 12 - 17 years of age whose parents are unwilling to have them at home due to misbehavior and who have not been through FRS.
  4. Youths for whom the primary placement issue is community protection, including sexual predators not covered by the Sexually Aggressive Youth (SAY) statute.
  5. Youths who are unwilling to live in the home of parents who are willing to have them at home, when this is the only presenting problem.
  6. Youths who are mentally ill and a danger to themselves or others as defined by a mental health professional.
- D. Reserved.
- E. The social worker shall conduct, and document, a social study whenever a child is placed in out-of-home care under the supervision of the department. The study shall be conducted prior to placement, or, if it is not feasible to conduct the study prior to placement due to circumstances of the case, the study shall be conducted as soon as possible following placement. The social study includes, but is not necessarily limited to, an assessment of the following factors:
1. The physical and emotional strengths and needs of the child.
  2. The proximity of the child's placement to the child's family to aid reunification.
  3. The possibility of placement with the child's relatives or extended family.

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4. The racial, ethnic, cultural, and religious background of the child.
5. The least-restrictive, most family-like placement reasonably available and capable of meeting the child's needs.

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6. Compliance with RCW 13.34.260 regarding parental preferences for placement of their children.

RCW 74.13

4260 CONSIDERATIONS FOR PLACEMENT CHOICE

4261 Type

The social worker works with the family to choose the least restrictive placement setting, based upon availability, that is in the child's best interest and can meet the child's special needs. The worker, absent good cause, follows the wishes of the birth/adoptive parent regarding the placement of the child.

4262 Specific Placements

The actual placement chosen shall be the least restrictive available that meets the child's special needs and that is in closest proximity to the child's home and the child's current school if he/she is of school age. Preferably it is one that will allow the child to continue at the same school and with the same medical providers.

4263 Special Needs

The social worker considers special needs, including cultural, educational, medical, religious, psychological and safety factors. The social worker considers whether the placement provider chosen can cooperate with the overall permanency plan in a positive way that contributes to a timely and safe resolution of problems for the family. In addition, the worker always considers the child's need for stability in relationships when choosing a placement.

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4264 Native American Children

DCFS social workers shall follow the provisions of the *Indian Child Welfare (ICW) Manual* when placing Native American children.

4265 Minimizing Placements

The social worker develops and chooses placements designed to provide stability and permanency for the child. Utilizing short term receiving care does not violate this principle. Although multiple placements may occur, they are generally not considered to be in the best interest of children or their families.

4300 **CASE PLANNING**

4301 INTRODUCTION

This section contains procedures for case planning and case review. Legal mandates for case plans are included in the *CA Case Services Policy Manual*, Chapter 4000. Details on requirements to comply with federal funding mandates are contained in the *Operations Manual*.

4302 PARTICIPANTS IN CASE PLANNING

43021 Social Worker Role

- A. Social workers have primary responsibility to coordinate the case planning efforts of all persons working on behalf of the child. This includes helping to develop goals and the means to their achievement with the parents in order to strengthen the family.

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B. Information Sharing

Either prior to or soon after placement, the social worker shall have a candid discussion with the relative care providers to inform them of the following:

1. The reasons for the placement.
2. Full disclosure of the child's needs and characteristics.
3. The agency plan for the child's parents, relatives, and the care providers.
4. The legal process.

C. The social worker shall give the foster care provider/agency information and resources, within available funding, to assist with the stability of the placement and to meet the needs of the child.

D. The social worker works with the placement family/agency and with the other professionals involved in the case to support the permanent plan for the child.

43022 Parent Involvement

A. Whenever possible, the social worker involves the child's parents in the decision to place their child prior to removing the child from his/her home.

1. Except when the child's health, safety, or welfare might be compromised, the social worker shall attempt to involve the child's parent(s) in the placement choice and shall document this effort in the service episode record (SER).

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2. Whenever a child is placed in out-of-home care on a non-voluntary basis by a Child Protective Services (CPS) worker as a result of a court order or a law enforcement transfer of custody, the social worker must provide to the parents the *Parent's Guide to Child Protective Services* and have the parent(s) sign a *Temporary Custody Notification*, DSHS 09-731.
- B. The social worker solicits the parents' active participation in the development of an Individual Service Plan (ISP) to obtain expedient remediation of risk factors to facilitate the child's timely return home. Social workers are encouraged to develop the ISP in a family in-person conference. All parents whose location are known must be provided with a copy of the ISP.
- C. Following placement, the social worker informs the parent(s), whose location is known, of all illnesses and injuries requiring medical treatment while the child is in out-of-home care, with notice of any serious injury or illness requiring hospitalization within 24 hours following its occurrence.
- D. The social worker does not have authority to approve a child in placement's participation in driver's education or to obtain a driver's license. The parent(s) or court must give formal approval.

43023 Out-of-Home Care Provider

- A. Out-of-home care providers are responsible for the protection, daily care, and nurturance of the child in placement. A primary function of the providers is to assure the health and safety of child.

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- B. Out-of-home care providers are members of the child's treatment team and may participate in the development of the service plan for the child and his/her family, assist in family visitation and monitoring, and model effective parenting behavior for the family. See the *CA Case Services Policy Manual*, Chapter 5000, section 5760, regarding placement provider participation in court hearings. Therapeutic foster care and group/rehabilitative care providers are responsible for additional therapeutic service as defined in their contracts with the department.

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- C. Care providers, because of their day-to-day contact and care of the child, have valuable input about the child's behavior, school and medical status, response to parental visits, and growth and development. Care providers have a responsibility to record and share that information with the social worker or other agency/community staff working on behalf of the child; i.e., schools, therapists, and SSI facilitators.

43024 Extended Family/Supportive Network

Whether or not a child is placed with relatives, the social worker encourages the parents to build upon the strengths found in their extended family and include those individuals in case planning.

43025 Indian Tribes/Bands

Indian tribes/bands have a substantial legal and social interest in those children who are members/eligible for membership in the tribe/band. In cases involving Native American children, the child's tribe/band is a primary resource for identifying appropriate placement options and for service plan development/implementation. See the DCFS ICW Manual for specific instructions.

43026 Other Professionals

Professional members of the medical, educational, tribal, social services, and legal community work in accordance with the ISP to provide services which support the child and his/her family moving toward permanency. These professionals may share their recommendations with the social worker through written reports or network staffing.

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43027 Child

Many children who enter the child welfare system are willing and able to participate in the ISP by sharing their needs, feelings, and goals. Although the child is not always in a decision-making position, the social worker listens, acknowledges, and responds to the child. The social worker shall make special efforts to involve adolescent children in planning. The social worker shall provide a copy of the ISP to the child, if age 12 or older, upon completion and at each point of update.

4303 CASE PLANS

- A. The social worker prepares a written case plan for each case open for services after assessment. All case plans require:
  - 1. A statement of specific behaviors or risk factors the case plan is to address.
  - 2. Specific services to address those behaviors and/or risk factors.
  - 3. Expected outcomes, including a projected date of completion of the permanent plan.
  - 4. Estimated duration of the service plan, not to exceed six months.
- B. Cases involving out-of-home placement beyond 60 days require completion of the ISP, form DSHS 15-209(X). For all children 16 and over, the social worker shall include a plan for developing the child's independent living skills.

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4304 SCOPE OF REASONABLE EFFORTS

Unless the child is at risk of imminent harm, the social worker is expected to make the following reasonable efforts to prevent placement:

- A. A determination of what services would be appropriate for the family to address issues identified in the assessment.
- B. Primary focus on those problems preventing the child's safe return home.
- C. Consideration and involvement of parental opinion in determining what services to pursue.
- D. Consideration of cultural issues, including availability of planning and services offered in the native language and culture of the family.
- E. Consideration of the distance of the family from services and transportation available to the family.
- F. Consideration of financial ability to pay for services, on the part of both DCFS and the family.
- G. Development of specific time-lines for demonstration of parental improvement.
- H. Consideration of specific behavioral indicators that progress has been made toward alleviating parental deficiencies.
- I. Development of parent-agency service agreements and/or a written case plan with parents.
- J. Decisions on use of court action to mandate services to the child or family members who may be resisting cooperation with the case plan.

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- K. Regular review of parent-agency service agreements and case plans by social workers, supervisors, and, if court-ordered, the juvenile court.

If, due to the risk of imminent harm to the child, it is not feasible for the social worker to make the above reasonable efforts prior to placement, the social worker is expected to offer reunification/preventive services to the family, as provided in section 4308, in an attempt to eliminate the need for placement.

4305 PERMANENCY PLANNING

- A. The social worker begins permanency planning when commencing work with the child's family.
- B. The primary permanency plan is designed so that no child is placed in foster care who can effectively be protected in the child's own home and that, when removal is necessary, reunification is attempted before any other permanent plan is sought. If reunification is not possible in the foreseeable future, the social worker shall implement an alternate permanency plan at the earliest possible date.
- C. The social worker may identify a contingent, or alternate, plan to which the agency will work concurrently to work toward the child's stability. Consistent with court order, the social worker's attempts to achieve the primary or alternate plan shall not prevent reunification efforts when the parents are involved.

43051 Acceptable Permanency Plans

The only acceptable permanent plans are:

- A. Maintaining a child in or return of a child to the home of a parent.

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- B. Relative guardianship.
- C. Relative placement with written permanency agreement.
- D. Adoption.
- E. Foster parent guardianship.
- F. Family Foster Care with written permanency agreement.
- G. Independent Living, if appropriate and if the child is age 16 or older.
  - 1. Whenever a permanency plan identifies Independent Living as a goal, the plan shall also specifically identify the services that will be provided to assist the child to make a successful transition from foster care to independent living.
  - 2. Before a court approves Independent Living as a permanent plan of care, the court shall make a finding that the provision of services to assist the child in making the transition from DCFS out-of-home placement to Independent Living will allow the child to manage his or her financial affairs and to manage his or her personal, social, educational and non-financial affairs.
  - 3. The department shall not discharge a child to an Independent Living situation before the child is 18 years of age unless the child becomes emancipated pursuant to Chapter 13.64 RCW.

RCW 13.34.130

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43052 Permanency Planning Staffing

Case staffings should occur to develop and assess permanency plans. However, workload may impact ability to accomplish this goal in all cases. The following conditions apply when staffings occur.

- A. At minimum, the following people shall attend the staffing:
  - 1. The child's social worker.
  - 2. Supervisor assigned to the case.
  - 3. Supervisor or designee of the adoption unit.
  
- B. The social worker is strongly encouraged to include the following additional participants:
  - 1. The *Guardian Ad Litem* (GAL).
  - 2. The foster parents.
  - 3. The birth parents.
  - 4. The foster home licensor.
  - 5. Relative care providers.
  - 6. Representatives of collateral community service providers.
  
- C. The following topics shall be addressed during the staffing:

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1. Description of the Family Functioning -- The social worker will detail the major problems leading to the placement and the daily functioning of the family. Strengths as well as weaknesses shall be reviewed. The Risk Assessment Matrix shall be completed and discussed. The ISP shall be distributed to persons attending the staffing prior to the staffing.
2. Parents' Plan for the Children -- Prior to the staffing, the social worker shall have discussed with the parent(s) their plan for the child. This plan shall be reviewed in the staffing.
3. Disposition Plan for Return to the Parent(s) -- Whether or not the fact-finding hearing has occurred, the Disposition plan shall be reviewed to see that all areas of risk identified in the Risk Assessment Matrix have been addressed. The plan shall be realistic and involve parental input.
4. Assessment of Prognosis -- With a thorough evaluation of the family's strengths as well as weaknesses, a review of the prognosis for return home shall occur at the staffing.
5. Relative Placement Search -- The social worker shall have inquired of the parents the names and locations of relatives for the child. If the parent refuses to divulge this information, the worker shall have asked the parents' attorney and then the Court to direct the parent to reveal his/her relatives. When one relative is contacted, he or she shall have been asked the names and locations of other relatives who might be a suitable placement for the child. All extended family members shall be considered. The role of the worker as an advocate for placement with relatives shall be discussed at the staffing.

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6. Appropriate Placement Resource -- Given the information considered, a decision shall be made at this staffing as to the best placement resource for the child. If the child cannot be placed with relatives, then this staffing shall determine if sufficient efforts are being made to find a home of the same ethnic, cultural, and religious background of the child.
7. Extensions for Receiving Care/Temporary Placements -- It may be appropriate to maintain children in temporary placements, including extensions to receiving care, while a diligent relative search is made and information is gathered to address other staffing requirements.
8. Following the staffing, the social worker shall place a permanency planning staffing report in the narrative section of the case file.

4306 VOLUNTARY PLACEMENT AGREEMENT

- A. If a child and a parent cannot agree to the child's return home, but do agree to the child's placement out of the home, or when a parent is unable to care for a child, the parent(s)/guardian may request a voluntary placement.
  1. Children may be accepted for voluntary family foster care or group care placement only when the parent(s) have signed a DSHS 9-004(X), *Placement Authorization and Acknowledgment*, and the social worker has eliminated alternative placements, including in the family home with social service supports.



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2. The social worker shall file a dependency petition in spite of the parent(s) willingness to place the child voluntarily when it appears that a placement of more than 180 days is needed. To meet federal funding requirements, a court order for out-of-home placement of the child must be entered prior to the 180th day of placement.
  3. When a request for a voluntary placement involves an Native American child, involvement of the court with jurisdiction, either tribal or juvenile, is required. The social worker shall follow the requirements of the ICW Manual.
- B. In choosing between a voluntary placement agreement and a dependency order as legal authority to place, the social worker considers the following factors:
1. Safety of child.
  2. Parents' capability and willingness to complete the case plan within six months.
  3. Effects on permanency planning for the child.
  4. The need to preserve existing evidence.
- C. Foster care required beyond 180 days must be authorized by a court order or a newly signed voluntary placement agreement and an Exception to Policy (ETP), approved by the Regional Administrator or designee and utilizing an Alternative Administrative Review or Citizens Review as appropriate. Regional procedures may require approvals to continue consents to place at earlier time intervals. A court order authorizing placement must be obtained by the 180<sup>th</sup> day of placement or federal funding is lost.

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- D. The social worker must release a child from placement within 72 hours after the worker receives a written request from the legal custodian or guardian who consented to the placement by signing a *Voluntary Placement Agreement* (VPA), DSHS 09-004B, unless a court order authorizing out-of-home placement has previously been entered, or unless the child has been placed in protective custody by law enforcement.

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4307 LEGAL ACTIVITY

43071 Dependency Petition Process - RCW 13.34.030 through 13.34.130

- A. The social worker files a dependency petition if the child is at risk of imminent harm and if the parents refuse or are unwilling to immediately make changes adequate to protect the child, or after all other reasonable attempts to help correct the family problems have been exhausted.
- B. The Office of the Attorney General or its designee represents the department in dependency matters and presents the evidence supporting department petitions alleging dependency or seeking the termination of a parent and child relationship. In Class 1-9 counties the Attorney General may contract with the prosecuting attorney of the county to perform duties of the Attorney General.
- C. If a child is alleged to be dependent and if a child's health, safety, and welfare will be seriously endangered if he/she is not taken into custody, a service worker shall file a petition and request a court order that the child be taken into custody. If the court enters such an order, the court may direct a law enforcement officer, a probation counselor, or a CPS official to take the child into custody.

RCW 13.34.050
- D. The social worker is required to testify at the first shelter care hearing as to notice given to the parents.
- E. The social worker shall refer to the ICW Manual when working with American Indian/Alaskan Native children.

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43072 Juvenile Court Hearings and Reports

The service worker may be required to submit written reports, attend, and present testimony at court hearings. See the *CA Case Services Policy Manual* for detailed legal requirements.

43073 Compliance with Court Orders and Liability Protection

- A. CA staff shall make good faith efforts to comply with all court orders.
- B. In cases where it is not possible to comply, with a court order, despite staff's best efforts, the social worker shall promptly consult with his/her supervisor and legal counsel to explore alternatives. If compliance is not possible, the worker shall take steps to obtain a modification of the order. If the parties will not approve an agreed order of modification, the worker and legal counsel shall schedule the matter for a hearing as soon as possible so that the situation can be brought to the court's attention and DCFS can request that the order be modified.
- C. Employees are eligible for liability protection and may seek legal representation through the Office of the Attorney General, consistent with the provisions of DSHS Personnel Policy 523.

4308 REASONABLE EFFORTS TO RETURN A CHILD HOME

Following placement of the child in out-of-home care, the social worker must offer reunification/preventive services to the family in an attempt to eliminate the need for placement. The social worker's reasonable efforts to reunify a family shall take the following factors into account:

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- A. A schedule of visitation between parent and child taking into account the need to maintain the child's developmental level and to maintain or form an attachment, as long as visitation is not harmful to the child or prohibited by the court.
- B. Services offered geographically accessible to the family.

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- C. Services offered responsive to the family's cultural background and native language.
- D. Placement of the child as close to the family home as possible while still meeting the needs of the child.
- E. Consideration of parental opinion in the development of all case plans.
- F. Placement of clear time-frames on the completion of services.
- G. Where possible, delineation of behavioral indicators of progress in the case plan.
- H. Monitoring and review of case plans shall at least every six months by courts, citizen review boards, and administrative review boards as required by state and federal law.
- I. Description in updated case plans of efforts to offer/provide services and of outcomes.
- J. Reassessment of families at least every six months to evaluate the continuing risk to the child if the child were returned home.
- K. Referral of the child's case to the SSI facilitator for review for possible application and benefits.

4309 INDIVIDUAL SERVICE PLAN AND HEALTH AND EDUCATION RECORD

43091 Individual Service Plan

- A. When a child is in out-of-home care, the social worker shall complete or update the ISP in the following time-frames.



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1. The first ISP is due no later than 10 working days before the dependency Disposition hearing or by the 60th day of the placement episode of a child (whichever date occurs first), the second by the sixth month, and periodically thereafter at six month intervals.
  2. If the ISP is completed earlier than required, the next ISP is due no later than six months from the date of the last one completed.
- B. The social worker shall submit the ISP in the following situations:
1. For all court disposition, permanency planning, and review hearings.
  2. To obtain approval to place a child in group care.
  3. For administrative reviews.
  4. For citizen reviews.
  5. For Local Indian Child Welfare Advisory Committee (LICWAC) staffing, as defined in the ICW Manual.
- C. The social worker shall develop the ISP after consulting, in person if possible, with the parents of the child. Following completion of the service plan, the social worker's supervisor shall approve and sign each ISP and up-date. The social worker shall provide a copy of the initial ISP and updates to the parent(s) if their whereabouts are known.

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43092 Health and Education Record

- A. The social worker shall update the Health and Education form, which is to be attached to the ISP and kept in the legal section of the case record, at the time of any ISP update. In addition, the social worker shall update it at the point of any placement change. The social worker shall always provide a copy of the form to the care-giver at the time of placement and at the time of update. In the case of an emergency placement, the worker shall provide the form to the care-giver within two working days following placement.
- B. The SSI facilitator shall provide the social worker with new medical/ psychological or social information gathered in the process of doing an SSI screen or application. The social worker shall integrate this information with the Health and Education record.

4310 CHILDREN AGES 16 AND OVER

43101 Independent Living Program

- A. For all children ages 16-21 who have been in DCFS paid placement since their 16th birthday, the development of an Independent Living Program (ILP) assessment and case plan that assists them to attain independence and self-sufficiency in the community is required as a part of the ISP.
- B. The social worker shall identify the strengths and needs of each child in the assessment. The worker then develops a plan to meet the identified needs. The worker is strongly encouraged to include the child in the assessment process and in the case plan development in conjunction with the child's placement provider. The worker shall also involve the ILP contractor, when the child has been referred for ILP services through a contracted provider. In assessing the child's ability to live independently, the social worker addresses, at a minimum, the following areas:

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1. Attainment of educational goals (GED, high school completion, etc.).
  2. Income maintenance (budgeting, checking/savings accounts, etc.). A child receiving SSI/SSA benefits must be given information about becoming his/her own payee or, where competence is an issue, have help in selecting an appropriate representative payee. A child receiving Title II SSA survivors benefits may need conversion to Disabled Adult benefits. The SSI facilitator shall review the child's record at age 17 and a half to do an application or complete a school report, if the child will remain in high school beyond age 18.
  3. Vocational goal attainment (obtaining marketable skills, job search, work place expectations, etc.).
  4. "Know-how" to secure adequate housing (rentals, shared housing, transitional living housing resources, etc.).
  5. Daily living skills (cooking, chores, transportation, community resource access, etc.).
  6. Interpersonal skills (communication, anger management, dating, parenting, etc.).
- C. At the social worker's discretion, the worker may refer foster teens to the ILP contractor in their region for development of these skills. When ILP contractors develop ILP assessments and plans, the worker shall reference the skills in the ISP.

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4320 TERMINATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS

43201 Voluntary Termination

The juvenile courts are authorized to terminate parental rights voluntarily under RCW 26.33. Social workers shall use the forms provided by the Office of Attorney General or county prosecutor, as applicable, relating to relinquishment of parental rights. In order to achieve legal sufficiency it is important to use the most recently revised forms whenever handling a voluntary relinquishment. If out-of-date forms are used rather than the most recent form, the relinquishment may not be legally binding. Special procedures apply when handling the voluntary termination of a Native American child. The social worker shall refer to the ICW Manual.

- A. Except in cases involving children who are subject to the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), petitions for voluntary termination of parental rights may be initiated for either an unborn or born child. The hearing on the petitions for relinquishment or termination cannot occur until at least 48 hours after the birth of the child or the parent's signing the consent to adoption, whichever is later (10 days for children protected by the ICWA).
- B. In considering a petition for termination of parental rights based on a voluntary consent to adoption by a parent, the judge will review whether the consent was genuinely voluntary and whether the termination of parental rights is in the best interest of the child.
  - 1. The social worker shall take care to inform the parent that any relinquishment is voluntary throughout this process.

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2. If the parent has an attorney, that attorney must be involved in the legal process for termination of parental rights. When the parent has an attorney, the social worker does not work with a parent to secure a relinquishment and consent to adoption without the involvement of the parent's attorney.

43202 Parents Under Age 18

- A. If any parent seeking to relinquish his or her parental rights is under age 18, or incapacity to voluntarily relinquish if over age 18, or when there is a question about the parent's capacity to voluntarily relinquish, the court must appoint a GAL for that person prior to the relinquishment being entered and before an order to the court. If a social worker learns that a parent is under 18 or of questionable capacity, the worker shall seek a hearing to have a GAL appointed for the parent before taking any other legal action to proceed with a voluntary termination.
- B. It is the responsibility of the GAL for a parent to do an investigation and report to the court concerning whether any written consent to adoption or petition for relinquishment signed by the parent was signed voluntarily and with an understanding of the consequences of the action. RCW 26.33.070

43203 Relinquishment of Parental Rights to a Native American Child

The social worker shall refer to the ICW Manual. Special procedures and rules apply to the relinquishment and termination of parental rights of a Native American child.

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43204 Opposing a Voluntary Petition

Prior to agreeing to entry of a voluntary relinquishment, the department, through the social worker, must agree that termination of parental rights and adoption is in the best interest of the child. Financial concerns alone are not grounds for a parent to relinquish a child. The social worker may also oppose a termination petition because no adoptive family is available to care for a child. Other concerns, such as the child's support of the adoption case plan and the family's use of services available to correct parental deficiencies, may also be considered.

43205 Filing a Petition to Terminate Parental Rights

The social worker shall achieve permanency for each child at the earliest possible date. If the permanency plan is not to return of the child to a parent's home, then an alternate plan must be identified and implemented by the social worker. Adoption provides a child the greatest legal security for connection to a family. If this is the plan identified for the child, then termination of parental rights is necessary. The department social worker shall initiate the drafting of a petition to terminate parental rights with the Office of the Attorney General or, if appropriate, the county prosecutor's office. The worker shall follow local procedures for drafting and filing petitions.

43206 Time-Lines for Decision-Making

- A. The social worker shall consider initiating a petition to terminate parental rights when any of the following conditions exist:
  - 1. The child has been in out-of-home placement for 90 days pursuant to an order of dependency and Disposition order, and the parents have failed to engage in services.

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2. The parents have failed to make any progress in a service plan following 90 days of service delivery or a qualified expert has stated the parents are unable to make the changes required to safely parent the child.
  3. Aggravated circumstances exist, and the court has, at the request of DCFS, ordered the filing of a termination petition in the Disposition order on the dependency.
  4. The child has been in out-of-home care for 12 months, and the parents have not made sufficient progress to allow the child to be safely returned home in the near future.
- B. A petition to terminate parental rights is a step toward the implementation of a permanent plan of adoption. If a termination petition is to be filed in any other circumstance, a staffing should be held including the child's social worker and supervisor and a representative, as designated by local procedures, of the adoption unit to approve the filing of a termination petition. If the parents, subsequent to the filing of the termination petition, begin to make progress toward a permanency plan of returning the child home, then the petition may be dismissed at the request of the department or the termination fact-finding hearing may be continued to allow the parents the opportunity to make the changes required.
- C. When a decision is made to file a petition to request termination of parental rights, the social worker shall discuss permanency planning issues with the parents. Permanency planning for the child is a joint responsibility, and the social worker shall encourage parents to help plan for the child.

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The Social Security Administration does not recognize "termination of parental rights" with regard to survivor's benefits. A child remains eligible for said benefits due to the death or disability of a birth parent. These benefits may be paid even after a child is adopted, if the adoptive family so chooses.

4330 OPEN ADOPTION AGREEMENTS

Open adoption agreements are allowed under RCW 26.33.295. The paramount consideration in setting an open adoption agreement is the child's best interest. An open adoption agreement shall not be entered solely as a means to negotiate a settlement in a proceeding for involuntary termination of parental rights.

- A. Drafting of the open adoption agreement is between the birth parent(s), adoptive parent(s) and their respective legal representatives.
- B. Adoptive parents and birth parents are entitled to and shall be advised and encouraged by the worker to seek their own independent legal representation, prior to entering into any such agreement.
- C. Such agreements shall be initiated early in the termination planning process and shall not delay permanency planning for the child.
- D. An agency staffing shall occur to review the proposed agreement. The staffing shall be attended by the child's worker and supervisor, the adoptive home social worker and supervisor, and other individuals deemed pertinent to the approval of the agreement. The initial adoption planning review is an appropriate time for such consideration.
- E. The social worker shall seek advice from the assigned Assistant Attorney General or county prosecutor, as applicable, regarding legal implications of the agreement.



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- F. The department's decision to approve or reject such an agreement shall be prepared in writing by the social worker and state:
1. The agreement is in the child's best interest now and in the future;
  2. The agreement does not encumber the department to any financial costs or services related to such an agreement now or in the future;
  3. All placement options were reviewed, and this prospective adoptive family is the family of choice for adopting this child;
  4. The prospective adoptive family has a completed and approved home study on file.
- G. If the staffing decision is that the agreement is not in the child's best interest, then the agreement shall either be rejected or renegotiated/modified.
- H. If the staffing decision is that the agreement is in the best interest of the child and appropriate, the Regional Administrator or designee shall sign the approval to the agreement confirming the above policy has been followed.
- I. All such agreements entered into shall have the written approval of the child's representative (GAL) as required by statute.
- J. Children 14 years of age and older, unless of limited capacity, shall approve of and consent to the agreement in writing.
- K. If the agreement cannot be modified so as to satisfy all necessary parties, then the social worker shall pursue the permanency plan without the agreement. The worker shall pursue termination of parental rights if appropriate.

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- L. Under RCW 26.33.295(2), the open adoption agreement can only be entered into by a birth parent who has not had parental rights terminated.

43301 Open Adoption and Adoption Support

- A. For a child to be eligible for adoption support, the child must be "legally free" and, under RCW 74.13.109, "hard to place" at the time the adoption support agreement is established. Entering into an open adoption agreement under the terms of RCW 26.33.295 may prevent establishing the child as being "hard to place."
- B. If there is an open adoption agreement in place, the following procedures must be followed when applying to the adoption support program:
  - 1. Any application submitted for the adoption support program with an open adoption agreement shall include a copy of the open adoption agreement.
  - 2. The costs and services related to open adoption agreements will not be covered by the adoption support program.

4340 GUARDIANSHIP

43401 Filing a Dependency Guardianship Petition

Dependency Guardianship, as an alternative to return of the child to the birth parents, provides a child with long-term connection with a family while continuing financial supports to the child. This may be the permanency plan of choice, despite greater legal security for connection to a family in adoption, for the following reasons:

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- A. Cultural norms may oppose termination of parental rights or adoption, which would cause a break between the child and his/her community if an adoption is completed.
- B. On-going and frequent contact between a child and his/her family or shared decision-making between the guardians and the parents may be best served by the legal framework of a guardianship.
- C. If the proposed guardians are relatives, there may be family conflict caused by termination proceedings which are contrary to the best interest of the child. Relatives may be strongly opposed to termination of parental rights but maintain a commitment to raise the child. Family philosophy and attitudes must be honored while formulating the permanency plan for the child.
- D. Older children may be unwilling to be adopted but may support a guardianship to establish the legal commitment and authority of the guardians.
- E. If dependency guardianship is the plan identified for the child, then a petition must be filed with the court in coordination with the Office of the Attorney General or, if appropriate, the county prosecutor's office. Local procedures dictate how petitions are drafted and filed.

43402 Time-Lines for Decision-Making -- Dependency Guardianship

- A. Time-lines which guide when to initiate a dependency guardianship petition are similar to those which govern when to file a petition to terminate parental rights. The guiding philosophy of establishing a stable and nurturing environment for the child at the earliest possible date also holds true with the permanency plan of dependency guardianship.

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- B. The social worker shall discuss permanency planning issues with the parents. Permanency planning for the child is a joint responsibility, and the worker shall encourage parents to help plan for the child. The worker informs dependency guardians of their responsibilities and the intent for this to be the child's permanent placement. The worker advises them that the court may not agree to set aside the guardianship order at their request.

43403 Departmental Responsibilities in Dependency Guardianships

- A. The homes of guardians to which the department makes foster care payments must be certified as meeting licensing requirements.
- B. The department's rules and procedures regarding the certification and supervision of the home for licensing purposes must be followed in spite of the fact that the court may have relieved the department of responsibility to supervise the child.
- C. Guardianship of a child, under RCW 13.34.231 and 13.34.232, does not preclude a guardian from continued eligibility to receive foster care payment.
- D. Where a court order relieves the department of responsibility for providing supervision for a child and the child remains in foster care, the source of funds must be state funds.
- E. When a foster care payment continues to the guardian, the service worker remains responsible to implement the payment and to assure the child's continued eligibility for foster care payment.

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- F. Establishment of a guardianship where DCFS is relieved of responsibility for supervision eliminates the automatic six-month review in Juvenile Court and periodic review and permanency plan hearing requirements, as the permanency plan is considered completed. However, if the service worker finds that the guardianship has failed or is terminated, the social worker shall bring the case before the Juvenile Court to review the status of the child.
- G. A child found to be dependent as defined in RCW 13.34.030(2) remains under the court's jurisdiction, (i.e., dependency continues) even after a legal guardianship is established.
- H. Appointment of guardianship for Native American children shall follow procedures as described in the ICW Manual.

43404 Decision to Vacate a Guardianship

A dependency guardianship may be modified or terminated upon motion of any party or DCFS if the court finds by a preponderance of the evidence that there has been a substantial change of circumstances subsequent to establishment of the guardianship and that it is in the child's best interest to modify or terminate the guardianship. The court must hold a hearing on the motion before modifying or terminating a guardianship.

- A. The social worker examines the reasons for a party's request to set aside the guardianship and reports to the court the interests of the child and planning for the child in the event the dependency guardianship is vacated. Although a dependency guardian may be requesting that the guardianship be vacated, the social worker need not concur with that recommendation to the court.

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- B. The social worker may request that a guardianship be vacated if the child's health, safety, or welfare would be jeopardized by continuation of the guardianship or if the guardian fails to meet minimum licensing standards.

4350 STATUS OF RELATIVES OF SPECIFIED DEGREE WITH LEGALLY FREE CHILDREN

- A. Children's Administration acknowledges a continuing relationship between relatives of specified degree and children whose parental rights have been terminated in those cases where the relatives choose to continue a relationship with the child and the continuing relationship is in the best interest of the child. This acknowledgment applies to all legally free children in the custody of DCFS.  
RCW 13.34.180; 13.34.210; 26.33.295; and 74.15.020
- B. Relatives of specified degree, as defined in RCW 74.15.020 and this *Practices and Procedures Guide*, chapter 5000, section 5230, remain legal relatives when a child becomes legally free if those relatives wish to maintain a relationship with the child and the social worker assigned to the child determines, consistent with the Shared Decision Making model contained in the *CA Case Services Policy Manual*, Appendix C, the continuing relationship to be in the best interest of the child.
- C. These relatives of specified degree shall be treated as are all relatives of specified degree under the rules of the foster care and foster family home licensing programs.
- D. These affected relatives of specified degree shall be treated the same as all relatives of specified degree under the Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children (ICPC) program.

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- E. The rights of the affected relatives of specified degree do not extend beyond adoption of the child except through an open adoption agreement as described in RCW 26.33.295. See section 4330, above.
  
- F. In determining which adoptive placement is in the best interest of the child, family relationships will be only one of the factors considered by DCFS staff. Other factors include, but are not limited to:
  - 1. Attachment to and relationship with the child.
  - 2. History of parenting.
  - 3. Ability to meet the special needs of the child.
  - 4. Ability to meet the basic needs of the child.
  - 5. Family composition.
  - 6. Child's preferences.
  - 7. Cultural needs of the child.
  
- G. The rights of relatives of legally free Indian children, as defined in the DCFS *Indian Child Welfare Manual*, the Tribal-Washington State Indian Child Welfare Agreement of 1987, and the federal Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978 shall be preserved in accordance with those requirements.

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4400 **SERVICE DELIVERY**

4410 CHARACTERISTICS

4411 Mission and Values

For a description of CA's mission and values, see the *CA Case Services Policy Manual*, chapter 1000, section 1200.

4412 Supportive Services

Supportive services are those non-placement services available to either prevent the out-of-home placement of a child, reunify a family following placement, or maintain/improve functioning of a child in a placement setting. All services authorized are provided within the context of a time-limited, goal-oriented case plan.

4413 Placement Services

Placement services are those services available to a child to either temporarily care for the child (e.g. foster care, group care) while permanent placement is sought or to provide the child with a permanent placement setting; e.g., adoption, guardianship or foster/relative care with a permanency agreement. All placement services authorized are provided within the context of a time-limited, goal-oriented case plan.



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4420 GENERAL POLICY/PROCEDURES

4421 Health and Safety of Children

DCFS services are provided while keeping the health and safety of children as a primary principle. In an attempt to promote the health and safety of children, their social workers shall pursue the following guidelines for all cases open for service:

- A. The assigned social worker shall see children in out-of-home care in face-to-face visits at least once every 90 days.
- B. Social workers shall provide each child capable of reading, writing and using the telephone a card with the social worker's name, office address, and phone number.
- C. During face-to-face visits, social workers shall inquire of the child's caretaker about the health, safety, and emotional well-being of the child. For example, inquiries might include:
  - 1. The child's daily schedule.
  - 2. The child's progress in school.
  - 3. If the child is in out-of-home care, how the child is adjusting.
  - 4. Behavior or medical/dental problems of the child and what services are being provided to care for such problems.
  - 5. How the caretaker has responded to any discipline problems.
  - 6. Significant events in the caretaker's residence that might impact the care of this child; e.g., deaths, separation from cared about adults.

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7. Special needs of the caretaker to care for this child.
  8. How often the child is left alone, asleep, or in bed.
  9. How often the child is allowed privacy, is bathed, and is involved in self-stimulating behavior.
  10. Whether the child engages in self-destructive activities.
  11. Whether the child has had problems with the law or other institutions.
  12. Whether family members feel safe with this child.
  13. What makes the child happy or upset.
- D. During face-to-face visits, the social workers shall talk to the child, and discussion may include:
1. Whether they feel safe or have concerns about their home or setting.
  2. Whether they get enough to eat.
  3. How they are disciplined.
  4. Who they would call in an emergency.
  5. What makes them happy or sad.
- E. With non-verbal children or infants, social worker observation is important to determine if there are concerns. The worker shall particularly check:

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1. How the child appears to be developmentally, physically, medically.
  2. How the caretaker responds to the child.
  3. Whether the caretaker has appropriate in-home assistance, respite, and support.
  4. Whether the caretaker appears attached to the child.
  5. If there are others besides the primary caretakers with close contact with the child capable of appropriate behavior with the child.
- F. Besides face-to-face contact, the social worker may inquire of others involved in the child's life to determine if there are any concerns. For example, collateral contacts might include teachers, doctors, mental health professionals, or the GAL.
- G. If the social worker has concerns about a licensed placement provider, the worker shall report those concerns in writing to the licensing authority for the home or facility.
- H. The social worker also may, with concerns of a serious nature, consult with his/her supervisor about removing the child from the home or facility. Should a decision be reached to pursue removal from the home or facility, the social worker shall proceed with the move following procedures for out-of-home placements contained the *CA Case Services Policy Manual*, Chapters 3000, 4000, and 5000, and Chapters 2000, 3000, and 4000 of this manual.
- I. For guidelines relating to health and safety reviews in behalf of children in out-of-home care, see the *Operations Manual*, chapter 5400, section 5400, Health and Safety Standards.

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4422 Guidelines for Client Referrals to Contractors

- A. Social Workers shall provide contractors with written information regarding referred cases. The release of information to contracting agencies is permitted under RCW 13.50.100(3). The social worker provides the following information in the initial referral, when available and applicable:
1. Date and time of referral.
  2. Inclusive dates of service authorization.
  3. Purpose of the referral. Provide a clear statement to the contractor regarding type of case; e.g., crisis intervention, child abuse, reunification, etc., and the services to be performed.
  4. Clear, written expectations to the contractor; e.g., "This is a CPS case. Please provide unannounced visits, document your observations, and report them to the assigned social worker."
  5. Description of family strengths and extended family networks (if known).
  6. Family members' responses to current and past services.
  7. Known or suspected past or current mental health, developmental, or other health related disabilities and conditions.
  8. Known or suspected past or current involvement with drugs, alcohol, or illegal activities.
  9. Copy of current court report and/or Individual Service Plan (ISP).

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- B. The social worker complies with the following procedures for ongoing case management:
1. Keep the contractor informed of new developments/concerns regarding referred case.
  2. Keep a written record of required reports, noting date due, date received, acceptable, non-acceptable, etc.

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4500 **SPECIFIC SERVICES**

4501 **CASE MANAGEMENT**

45011 SERVICE DEFINITION

Case management includes providing an assessment for eligibility for services, assessing risk of abuse/neglect, family conflict or placement, developing permanency plans, advocating for families in brokering services, ensuring that families understand how to access services, monitoring the progress of services/permanency plans, and making recommendations to juvenile courts and other reviewing bodies about the case plan and completing administrative requirements.

45012 ELIGIBILITY

Each family opened for DCFS services shall have an assigned DCFS social worker.

45013 PROCEDURES FOR ACCESS

- A. Social workers refer families for case management by following established CPS, FRS, and CWS intake procedures.
- B. Social workers are assigned by a local office supervisor following intake.
  - 1. The entry point for case assignment for CPS is a referral alleging abuse and/or neglect. See Chapter 2000.
  - 2. For FRS the entry point is a family's request for services to resolve family conflict. See Chapter 3000.

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3. The entry point for CWS is a family's request for such intake/assessment services. See Chapter 4000, sections 4100 and 4200.

45014 Other Sources

Case management services may be available through mental health, DDD, private child placing agencies, and schools in some communities.

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**4502 INTENSIVE FAMILY PRESERVATION SERVICES (IFPS)**

**45021 SERVICE DEFINITION**

IFPS is a service available to prevent the removal of children from their family home when removal is imminent and to provide a safe alternative to out-of-home placement for children and youth. Services begin within 24 hours of referral, are available 24 hours a day, and are short-term, limited to a maximum of 40 days, unless extended by waiver of the Regional Administrator or designee. Services include both clinical assistance (counseling, case management, parent education) and concrete help (financial, housing, utilities, clothing, food). DCFS-funded IFPS services are provided by contracted vendors and may not be available statewide.

**45022 ELIGIBILITY**

- A. Families and children are eligible for IFPS when a child is in out-of-home placement and can be reunited within 30 days or the social worker has determined that, without intervention, the child is at imminent risk of out-of-home placement due to at least one of the following:
1. Child abuse or neglect.
  2. A serious threat of substantial harm to the child's health, safety, or welfare.
  3. Family conflict.
- B. The social worker need not refer otherwise eligible families and family preservation services need not be provided if at least one of the following conditions is met:



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1. The services are not available in the community in which the family resides.
  2. The services cannot be provided because the program is filled to capacity.
  3. The family refuses services. or
  4. The social worker or the service provider determines that the safety of a child, a family member, or persons providing the services would be unduly threatened.
- C. IFPS may not be used for families in need of an in-home crisis resolution or therapeutic service to avoid possible family disruption or foster care placement at some unspecified time in the future and is not to be used as an interim measure until a planned placement resource is secured.
- D. The family has a case open for service with CPS, FRS, or CWS. The child must be either residing in the family home or be able to go home immediately with IFPS.
- E. The child has been assessed by the assigned social worker as needing immediate placement or is already in placement but could return home immediately with IFPS. Immediate placement means that the social worker is planning to file a petition with the juvenile court to remove the child from the family home within 72 hours or is planning to obtain a voluntary placement authorization from the child's parents within 72 hours.

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- F. The Regional Administrator may limit the provision of IFPS to families where children would be receiving paid DCFS placement services.
- G. The social worker has determined that there are no less intensive services available that can meet the family need.
- H. An immediate opening with the contracted IFPS agency is available.

45023 PROCEDURES FOR ACCESS

- A. Referrals for IFPS must come through DCFS. Contractors shall not accept referrals directly from families or other sources.
- B. The Regional Administrator or designee:
  - 1. Appoints a Gatekeeper for each office served by an IFPS provider. The IFPS Gatekeeper:
    - a. Participates in a review or reviews all IFPS referrals to ensure conformance with eligibility requirements and the best use of the resource.
    - b. Makes final department determinations of family eligibility for IFPS prior to referral to and intake by the service provider, rejecting all families for whom placement is not imminent.
    - c. Facilitates the departmental review of all families entering placement for possible eligibility and referral to IFPS.
  - 2. Develops a written protocol with IFPS contractors governing the assessment of client eligibility, procedures for service referrals, approval of service extensions, and utilization of IFPS - Assessment and Aftercare Services.

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3. Distributes copies of the written protocol to IFPS Gatekeepers, Area Managers, supervisors, and all case carrying DCFS social workers.
  4. Work to ensure that IFPS eligibility determination and case referral practices in local offices are consistent with statutory and protocol requirements.
  5. Report to the Assistant Secretary quarterly on the provision of IFPS in the region.
  6. Monitor payments against allotment and contract dollar limits.
  7. Monitor performance of contractors against standards set by the statement of work.
  8. Notify contractors when there is a rate change and amend contracts as needed.
- C. The DCFS social worker:
1. Identifies families who may be eligible for the service in accordance with regional procedures, including consultation with an internal or external team, a supervisor, or a designated IFPS Gatekeeper.
  2. Following referral, orally or in writing, per contract and regional procedure, supplies the contractor with referral information, release of which is permitted under RCW 13.50.100(3), that is as complete as possible and includes:
    - Name and case numbers of family caretaker(s).

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- Names, birth dates, Social Security numbers, and case numbers (if different) for all children at imminent risk of placement;
3. File a written report with his/her supervisor stating the names of families referred and reasons for which the client was referred. The social worker's supervisor verifies in writing his/her belief that the family referred meets the eligibility criteria in section 45022(A), above. The supervisor reports monthly, through the Area Manager, to the Regional Administrator on the provision of these services. The Regional Administrator reports to the Assistant Secretary quarterly on the provision of these services for the entire region.

RCW 74.14C
  4. Immediately opens payment on the *Social Service Authorization*, DSHS 14-154(A), utilizing SSPS codes at the time of authorization and sends a copy of the service authorization to the provider. The service termination date will not be entered until receipt of the service termination summary from the contractor.
  5. During the delivery of contracted service, regularly consult with the IFPS contractor regarding the progress of the family.
  6. Immediately notify the contractor if CPS referrals are received on the family.
  7. Participate in exit interviews with the IFPS therapist within 24 hours of the service termination date.

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8. Enters the service termination date on the *Social Service Authorization* upon receipt of the contractor's termination report, using the last date of client contact as the termination date. The authorization is immediately processed to generate a payment for services provided by the IFPS contractor.

45024 OTHER SOURCES

Components of DCFS funded IFPS exist in other service delivery systems in some communities, including the Regional Support Network (RSN) and DDD.

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**4503 CPS/CWS CHILD CARE**

45031 SERVICE DEFINITION

Day care provided to CPS or CWS clients for respite to parents under stress, to allow parents to complete a service plan, or to allow foster parents or relative care-givers to work. This service is a short-term, time-limited service directed toward completion of the ISP.

45032 ELIGIBILITY

CPS or CWS clients are eligible as determined by the DCFS social worker within available budgets.

- A. For CPS child care, the family is not required to participate in the cost of care.
- B. For CWS day care, the parent(s) must participate in the cost of care, as required by RCW 74.12.340, according to the same standard as that for employment day care. See Office of Child Care Policy (OCCP) policies and procedures in the *Operations Manual*, chapter 9000, section 91300, for standards.
- C. For Employment Child Care for Foster Parent and Non-Needy Relative, the care-giver is not required to participate in the cost of care. Eligibility is limited to payment for children placed by DCFS in foster care or a non-needy relative placement and the care provider(s) is employed out of the home. Child care for children living with non-needy relatives and not placed by DCFS will be provided through Employment Child Care and is subject to the rules governing that program. The foster care or non-needy relative care provider is not eligible to receive both foster care and day care payments simultaneously for the same child. The Child Care service must be provided by and payment made to an eligible Child Care provider other than the Foster Care or non-needy relative placement service provider.

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See Chapter 5000 for types of providers and procedures for their eligibility to receive DCFS-paid child care.

45033 PROCEDURES FOR ACCESS

- A. For CPS and CWS, social workers determine whether short-term, time-limited day care would improve family functioning so that a service plan can be completed. For Employment Child Care for Foster Parent or Non-Needy Relative, social workers determine that the family home residential care provider requires Child Care payments for the child(ren) placed by DCFS to enable the provider to work out of the home.
- B. Social workers determine if other resources are available to meet this need before authorizing DCFS payment; for example, family members may be available either to provide or pay for privately arranged child care services.
- C. The social worker shall follow regional procedures for authorization of day care.

45034 OTHER SOURCES

- A. OCCP maintains an information and referral service for parents who are seeking child care providers. Information on other sources of payment for child care is available through OCCP. For example, the DSHS Division of Income Assistance (DIA) may subsidize payment for child care for some parents who are pursuing employment or training.
- B. Head Start is a federally funded parent-participation pre-school program for low-income children.
- C. Cooperative Pre-school and Crisis Nursery Services may be available in local communities to provide child care at low fee to parents.

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**4504 THERAPEUTIC CHILD DEVELOPMENT**

**45041 SERVICE DEFINITION**

- A. Therapeutic Child Development (TCD) is child development and family service provided in a licensed child care setting to families of children at risk for maltreatment wherein both children and parents receive treatment for the purpose of reducing the risk of child maltreatment and strengthening the family. Contractors provide a daily day care program during which they monitor the child's welfare, complete regular assessments, and provide remediation activities. Services include home visits by TCD social workers, transportation to and from day care, and parenting education.
- B. Model 1 TCD provides a shorter day, defined in the contract, with less intense service.
- C. Model 2 TCD provides four hours of service daily, excluding transportation time.

**45042 ELIGIBILITY**

- A. TCD is available to children who are at risk of CA/N and their families who have open cases with CPS or CWS. The program is used to support the ISP. Since this is a daily weekday program, the program is generally structured to serve children who have not yet entered school. The provider's contract with the department further defines the eligible population.
- B. The child's CPS/CWS social worker determines eligibility. The social worker consults regional procedures to determine current availability of slots and other limitations.

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45043 PROCEDURES FOR ACCESS

- A. To use TCD, social workers shall include TCD as part of the overall ISP for the child.
- B. When interviewing the family, the social worker inquires about the family's financial and family resources.
- C. The child's social worker sees that the child's full legal name, birth date, and Social Security number are entered into CAMIS so that the information is available to the DCFS federal funding specialist for Model 2 TCD programs.
- D. The federal funding specialist tries to ensure that the TCD providers obtain the following information:
  - 1. Client income. If the family is not receiving Medicaid benefits and their income is above \$60,000, the TCD provider collects a one-time co-payment of \$100.00 from the family and reports the collection to the social worker.
  - 2. Medical necessity. Providers complete a statement of medical necessity during the initial physical assessment (EPSDT screening) and for each on-going physical examination, signed by a licensed practitioner of the healing arts. Providers forward this information to the DCFS federal funding specialist.
- E. After receipt of the required information from the TCD provider, or after searching CAMIS to determine the child's enrollment in TCD, the federal funding specialist completes an Interactive Terminal Information System (ITIS) or Automated Client Eligibility System (ACES) search to determine Medicaid eligibility. The federal funding specialist makes a screen print of Medicaid eligibility. In addition, the federal funding specialist submits a copy of the child's ISP to Headquarters for determination of medical necessity.

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- F. The social worker complete SSPS authorization for payment at the time he/she approves the service for the child.
  
- G. If the child is on Medicaid, CAMIS will automatically generate the source of funds code "6," Categorically Needy-Title XIX eligible. If the child is not on Medicaid, the federal funding specialist shall determine if the client is eligible for AFDC-FC. If the child is ineligible, the federal funding specialist updates the SSPS authorization with a source of funds code "5" and informs the social worker so that appropriate Medicaid application can be made.

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**4505 EMPLOYMENT CHILD CARE**

**45051 SERVICE DEFINITION**

Employment Child Care provides child care payments to enable a family to maintain employment. Employment Child Care is managed within available funds through local office authorization limits. A local office may need to establish a waiting list if it has authorized up to its limit.

**45052 ELIGIBILITY**

Employment Child Care is available to low income working families that are not receiving an Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) grant. Families with gross income at or below 38 percent of State Median Income Adjusted for Family Size (SMIAFS) are eligible for the maximum subsidy and minimum \$1.00 monthly co-payment. Families with gross income above 38 percent SMIAFS and at or below 52 percent SMIAFS are eligible for subsidy with a calculated co-payment. See OCCP policies and procedures in the *Operations Manual*, chapter 9000, section 91300, for standards.

**45053 PROCEDURES FOR ACCESS**

DCFS authorizing workers determine eligibility in parts of Region 1 and in Regions 2, 3, 5, and 6. Community Services Office (CSO) workers determine eligibility in parts of Region 1 and all of Region 4.

Management of Employment Child Care is through local office authorization limits. In offices where the local office authorization limit is met, the local office shall establish waiting lists. Families whose income falls at or below 38 percent SMIAFS or whose child(ren) has special needs are placed on a priority list and are served first. All other eligible families are placed on the non-priority list. Eligible Transitional Child Care recipients may place their names on the waiting list six weeks prior to the end date of their Transitional Child Care benefits.

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45054 OTHER SOURCES

See the OCCP procedures in the *Operations Manual*, chapter 9000, section 91300, for definitions, program descriptions, types of child care, rates, payment policies, payment processes, and worker responsibilities.

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**4506 TEEN PARENT CHILD CARE**

**45061 SERVICE DESCRIPTION**

Teen Parent Child Care provides child care to enable the parent to complete high school or obtain a GED. It provides care and protection for the children of teenage parents.

**45062 ELIGIBILITY**

Teen parents, 21 years of age or younger, who are not receiving an AFDC grant and who are attending an approved secondary education or GED program are eligible. Only the income received by the teen parent is used to determine eligibility. The teen parent with gross income at or below 38 percent SMIAFS is eligible for the maximum subsidy and the minimum monthly \$1.00 co-payment. The teen parent with gross income above 38 percent and at or below 52 percent SMIAFS is eligible for subsidy with a calculated co-payment.

**45063 PROCEDURES FOR ACCESS**

DCFS authorizing workers determine eligibility in parts of Region 1 and Regions 2, 3, 5, and 6. CSO workers determine eligibility in Region 4 and parts of Region 1.

**45064 OTHER SOURCES**

See the procedures in the *Operations Manual*, chapter 9000, section 91300, for definitions, program descriptions, types of child care, rates, payment policies, payment processes, and worker responsibilities.



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**4507 SEASONAL FARMWORKER CHILD CARE**

45071 SERVICE DESCRIPTION

Seasonal Farmworker Child Care is available, within funding limits, to agriculturally employed families not currently receiving an AFDC grant. Seasonal child care helps parents maintain employment and provides protection and bilingual programs for children.

45072 ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible, families need to be agriculturally employed by two or more agricultural employers during the course of the year. Families with annual gross income at or below 38 percent SMIAFS are eligible for maximum subsidy at minimum monthly \$1.00 co-payment. Families with annual gross income above 38 percent SMIAFS and at or below 52 percent SMIAFS are eligible for subsidy with a calculated co-payment.

45073 PROCEDURES FOR ACCESS

Seasonal Farm Worker Child Care is authorized by contracted providers in most geographical areas with agriculturally-related employment. Eligibility is determined by a Seasonal Farmworker Child Care contractor. The contractor may make referrals to the DCFS office or the CSO when appropriate.

45074 OTHER SOURCES

See the procedures in the *Operations Manual*, chapter 9000, section 91300, for definitions, program descriptions, types of child care, rates, payment policies, payment processes, and worker responsibilities.

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**4508 HOMELESS CHILD CARE**

**45081 SERVICE DESCRIPTION**

Regular child care, respite child care, and specialized homeless child care for children ages 0 - 5 are provided to eligible families.

**45082 ELIGIBILITY**

Eligibility, based on homelessness, is established by contracted agencies.

**45083 PROCEDURES FOR ACCESS**

Local community agencies contract with DSHS through OCCP. Access to Homeless Child Care is through these local agencies. The social worker shall contact their local OCCP representative for the name of a local service provider.

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**4509 RESPITE FOR PARENTS OR RELATIVES AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO OUT-OF-HOME CARE**

45091 SERVICE DEFINITION

Respite care provides for time-limited relief for parents/relative care-givers with extremely difficult to manage children to ease family stress, prevent child abuse, and allow a parent time away from care-taking. DCFS-paid respite is provided only within the context of a time-limited, goal-oriented case plan in behalf of DCFS clients.

45092 ELIGIBILITY

The social worker determines eligibility and authorizes service for DCFS clients based upon social need and availability of funding. Such services are not an entitlement and may be discontinued at the discretion of the social worker.

45093 PROCEDURES FOR ACCESS

- A. The social worker asks the family about available family resources to assist in providing respite. Appropriate family resources are utilized whenever available. When family resources are utilized for dependent children, the social worker completes criminal/background checks prior to DCFS approval of the service.
- B. The social worker determines that funds are not available through other DSHS divisions prior to authorization of respite. For example, DDD may have respite funds available for its clients.
- C. Respite for parents as an alternative to out-of-home care can only be paid to licensed out-of-home care providers. The social worker authorizes respite by opening the appropriate SSPS code for each episode of respite care.

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45094 OTHER SOURCES

- A. Mental Health: Regional Support Networks (RSN) may provide emergency respite care for mental health clients to prevent hospitalization. Multi-disciplinary "wrap-around" service planning groups may also occasionally authorize respite care in the context of a plan that prevents a child from entering out-of-home care.
- B. Developmental Disabilities: DDD may provide respite care to prevent out-of-home placement of clients.

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**4510 FOSTER PARENT RESPITE**

45101 SERVICE DEFINITION

- A. Respite care provides for time-limited relief to the receiving and on-going foster parents with the respite provider fulfilling some or all of the functions of the foster parent. It can be arranged in advance or on an emergency basis to augment/support the care a foster parent is providing or to provide substitute care in the absence of foster parents. Respite care provided outside the foster parent's home must be provided by licensed providers.
  
- B. Typical activities include, but are not limited to, assistance with the maintenance of children in placement or to provide individual attention to children in placement, providing assistance to foster parents with household maintenance activities, providing foster parents with opportunities to take children to community appointments, attend training, or for personal business.

45102 ELIGIBILITY

Licensed foster or receiving care parents with children placed in their homes are eligible for the service. Such services are not an entitlement, and may be discontinued at the discretion of the social worker based on availability of funds and/or an assessment of the needs of the child, family, and foster family.

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45103 PROCEDURES FOR ACCESS

- A. The social worker advises foster parents of the availability of respite, the requirements for respite outlined in section B below, and local procedures for utilizing respite care. In some offices, Home Finders -- DCFS social work staff assigned to assist placement workers to identify suitable licensed placement resources -- may be a resource to the child's social worker regarding information about the foster parent respite service.
  
- B. The foster parents select a respite provider meeting the following qualifications:
  - 1. Previous experience successfully working with or raising children.
  - 2. Three satisfactory references directly addressing child care capabilities.
  - 3. Absence of criminal record or founded CPS referral.
  - 4. Eighteen years of age or older.
  - 5. Unrelated to children in placement in the home providing respite care.
  - 6. Live separately from the foster home.
  - 7. Complete mandatory orientation training provided by DCFS unless waived by DCFS. The training shall include:
    - a. Orientation to DSHS.
    - b. Overview of the role of the respite provider.

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- c. Knowledge of CPS, licensing, and CPS and FRS reporting requirements.
  - d. Knowledge of coordination responsibilities with DSHS.
  - e. Confidentiality.
- C. The social worker determines that the respite provider is qualified and completed training prior to the provision of respite care for DCFS licensed homes.

45104 RESPITE CARE RATES

A. Levels

The maximum rate for respite is based on an assessment of the functional care needs of a foster child. Regional offices may set lower rates for respite care if funding is not sufficient to support the established SSPS rates. SSPS rates are based on the following guidelines:

<u>CARE LEVEL</u>	<u>LIGHT</u>	<u>HEAVY</u>
Physical/ Medical	Care that does not substantially differ from, but may require attention or assistance greater than, that of similar individuals of similar age in the general population.	Care that requires constant, intensive attention, excessive or total assistance; and regular intervention in meeting the needs of the child.
Behavioral/ Psychological		

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A rating of light in both areas = light.

A rating of light in one area and heavy in the other = moderate.

A rating of heavy in both areas = heavy.

B. Procedures for Payment

1. Non-Contracted Respite

The social worker determines the number of hours to be utilized each month and opens payment to the foster parent utilizing Foster Care Respite SSPS codes. The foster parent actually pays the respite to the provider.

2. Contracted Respite

- a. The social worker follows contract agreements for contracted respite care.
- b. The social worker sees that payment is opened on SSPS for contracted respite.



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**4511 FOSTER PARENT CONSULTATION**

**45111 SERVICE DEFINITION**

Consultation is a contracted service to individual homes or to a group of homes directed toward skill building and networking. Typical activities include home visits to foster homes and telephone consultation, advice in a crisis or skill building information, individual and group consultation, assistance in obtaining resources, and participation in case staffing.

**45112 ELIGIBILITY**

DCFS licensed foster parents are eligible for the service upon authorization by the social worker. Such services are not an entitlement and may be discontinued at the discretion of the social worker.

**45113 PROCEDURES FOR ACCESS**

The social worker utilizes regional procedures for authorization of contracted consultation. Social workers may consult with Home Finders to determine the regional availability of this service. See Chapter 5000, Section 5182.

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**4512 FOSTER PARENT TRAINING**

45121 SERVICE DEFINITION

Training is a service to individual foster homes or groups of homes focusing on issues common to placement such as behavior management, limit setting, and structuring activities. Potential applicants for foster family home licenses must participate in pre-application orientation. The purpose of training activities is to build skill levels, broaden the range of intervention strategies, and offer problem specific solutions. Training may include, but is not limited to:

- A. Orientation for foster parents beyond routine orientation.
- B. Understanding sexual abuse and sexual acting out.
- C. Managing acting-out behaviors.
- D. Recognizing problems associated with substance abuse.
- E. Dealing with a child's separation from parents.
- F. Adolescent emancipation issues.
- G. Recognizing stresses related to caring for foster children.
- H. Learning how to structure activities.
- I. Foster parent training shall include a discussion of Foster-Adoption, including:
  - 1. Foster parents do not become prospective adoptive parents until a child is legally free;

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- 2.. They have made a formal written manifestation of their objective intent to accept placement of a child for adoption; and
3. They have the right to withdraw from the adoption process before finalization of the adoption.

45122 ELIGIBILITY

DCFS licensed foster parents are eligible to participate in department-sponsored training upon authorization by the DCFS social worker or licensor. Regional Administrators may require foster parents to successfully participate in FosterParentScope training.

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45123 PROCEDURES FOR ACCESS

The social worker consults the licenser and/or regional procedures for access to this service. Home Finders are a resource for information to social workers regarding availability within the region. See Chapter 5000, section 5181.

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**4513 FOSTER PARENTS - ANCILLARY SUPPORT SERVICES**

**45131 SERVICE DEFINITION**

Ancillary supports allow for the purchase of specific goods or services that contribute to effective quality care in foster care. Ancillary supports can include, but are not limited to:

- A. Purchased recreation activities for children in care.
- B. Recreational and craft supplies.
- C. Other equipment that enhances safe, quality care.

**45132 ELIGIBILITY**

Licensed foster parents are eligible upon authorization by the social worker. Such services are not an entitlement and may be discontinued at the discretion of the social worker, based upon availability of funds and/or an assessment of the needs of the child, the family, and the foster family.

**45133 PROCEDURES FOR ACCESS**

The social worker consults regional procedures to access ancillary support services for foster parents. Home Finders are a resource to provide information on regional availability of this service.

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**4514 FAMILY SUPPORT NETWORKS**

**45141 SERVICE DEFINITION**

Each individual family's extended family, tribe, friends, and other lay or professional helpers who help resolve current issues of concern constitute a support network. Informal support networks reduce social isolation that may contribute to CA/N and may provide the resources to assist in reduction of family conflict. Supportive networks may be more helpful than professional services because they are generally a life-long part of the client's life.

**45142 ELIGIBILITY**

All DCFS clients are eligible for the service.

**45143 PROCEDURES FOR ACCESS**

- A. The social worker uses "reasonable efforts" in locating and contacting extended family members, friends, and lay helpers for potential support and/or placement resources.
- B. The social worker is encouraged to develop informal family support network alternatives to professionally-provided services when possible.
- C. The social worker provides the family support network consistent information and support, within the limits of laws on confidentiality.

**45144 OTHER SOURCES**

- A. The RSN, DDD, and local schools may have projects in some communities to facilitate the development/maintenance of family support networks. The social worker is encouraged to explore those systems for help in coordinating a family support network.

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- B. Participation in an organization that has culturally-specific ties may reduce isolation for some individuals.
- C. Families may have support available to them through their church. Churches support many social service and recreational programs.
- D. Special interest support groups, including support groups for parents who have experienced a SIDS death or parents with developmentally disabled or medically fragile children, can be helpful and supportive to parents.
- E. Recreational activities can be especially valuable to families needing support. Many non-profit recreational organizations provide scholarships or reduced tuition.



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**4515 FAMILY HOME SUPPORT SERVICES**

**45151 SERVICE DEFINITION**

- A. Family Home Support Services (FHSS) provides supportive, culturally appropriate, in-home, skill-building services in partnership with DCFS client families. Services are provided as part of a comprehensive case plan to clients of DCFS. Services may be offered on weekends and beyond normal working hours. Overnight in-home service may be provided in emergent cases where all other appropriate placement options have been determined to be inappropriate.
  
- B. Services provided by Home Support Specialists (HSS) include:
  - 1. Teaching and demonstrating basic physical and emotional care of children, including child development and developmentally appropriate child discipline.
  - 2. Teaching homemaking and other life skills, including housekeeping, economical shopping, nutrition and food preparation, personal hygiene, financial budgeting, time management and home organization, with consideration given to the family's cultural environment.
  - 3. Helping families obtain basic needs. Networking families with appropriate supportive community resources; e.g., housing, clothing and food banks, health care services, and educational and employment services.
  - 4. Providing emotional support to families and building self-esteem in family members; aiding family members in developing appropriate interpersonal and social skills.

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5. Providing client transportation/supervision of visits on a time-limited basis.
  6. Observing family functioning, assisting the social worker in identifying family strengths as well as areas needing intervention or remediation, reporting to the social worker on the family's progress in skill-building, family functioning and other areas defined in the case plan.
  7. Providing individual care services, including child care and household management on an emergent, time-limited basis when necessary to maintain a family that is in crisis.
- C. FHSS is not intended to provide long-term maintenance for a family, is not a housekeeping service, and is not interchangeable with CHORE Services. Requests for on-going or repetitive child care or household maintenance are not appropriate for FHSS.

45152 ELIGIBILITY

The following criteria determine eligibility, contingent upon available funding, for FHSS:

- A. The family must be a current DCFS client.
- B. The case plan must document the need for teaching, skill-building, or community networking.
- C. Alternatively, an emergent need exists in which the temporary use of an HSS will prevent out-of-home placement. Such situations include:
  1. The temporary absence or incapacity of the primary caretaker, when it is anticipated that other suitable substitute care will be found within 72 hours.

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2. The one-time provision of household chores when the condition of the home may necessitate out-of-home placement.
- D. Families with adolescents are eligible for this service.

45153 Procedures for Access

- A. The social worker initiates the referral and gives it to the FHSS supervisor/coordinator. Referrals for FHSS shall list specific areas for HSS intervention with a family.
- B. The FHSS supervisor/coordinator evaluates the request for service eligibility and determines priority for service within available full time equivalent (FTE) staff resources.
- C. The FHSS supervisor/coordinator gives service priority to cases where the service is in support of time-limited objectives to improve family functioning or to maintain a family in crisis. Priority cases have one or more of the following characteristics:
  1. There is high risk of out-of-home placement and indication that HSS intervention will reduce that risk. This may include planned skill-building services or emergent, one-time provision of household chores, material resources, or child care, including overnight services. The purpose is to maintain a family having a crisis.
  2. There is probability of continued out-of-home placement and indication that HSS intervention will enhance family reunification.
  3. There is need to provide supportive services to a family when a child returns home from out-of-home placement.

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4. There is need to provide support services to foster parents or relative care providers in order to stabilize and maintain placement.
- D. Except in case of emergency provision of service, the social worker initiates a case planning staffing with the HSS and other appropriate individuals prior to initiation of services to set FHSS service planning goals and expectations and to discuss any issues the HSS should be aware of in dealing with the family. The social worker informs the HSS of any known or suspected issues affecting personal safety prior to contact with the family.
  - E. On-going case consultation between the HSS and the assigned social worker shall occur on a regular basis. As part of regular supervisory conferences, review of the need for continued FHSS shall occur.

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**4516 HEALTH SERVICES FOR MOTHERS AND CHILDREN**

**45161 SERVICE DEFINITION**

- A. Services available to detect risk factors that might affect the health or growth of the baby early in the pregnancy. Health related services designed to assist parents with infants and young children. Programs offering health screening, assessment, and treatment for children. Health services provided through the Early and Periodic Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) or Healthy Kids Program and Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program.
  
- B. DCFS also contracts with local health departments to provide public health nursing services in-home for families who need them.

**45162 ELIGIBILITY**

Parents with infants and young children who are eligible for the Medicaid program are generally eligible for Healthy Kids services. The family's social worker determines eligibility for DCFS contracted public health services.

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**4517 MEDICAL/DENTAL SERVICES FOR CHILDREN IN OUT-OF-HOME CARE OR RECEIVING OTHER SERVICES**

45171 SERVICE DEFINITION

- A. Services available through Medicaid to meet the medical, dental, hearing, and vision needs of children. Preventive care shall be provided through the federal Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) program, known in this state as the Healthy Kids program.
- B. The Medicaid periodicity schedule for Healthy Kids examinations is:
  - 1. Five screening examinations during the first year of life.
  - 2. Three screening examinations between one and two years of age.
  - 3. One screening examination for each 12 month period between ages two and six.
  - 4. One screening examination for each 24 month period after age six and through age 20.
- C. All children in out-of-home care must receive Healthy Kids examinations at least annually.

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- D. Initial Healthy Kids examinations for children entering foster care are to be obtained prior to placement when possible or within 30 days of placement. The examination shall be an EPSDT examination, or, if it is determined that the child has had an EPSDT examination within the periodicity schedule time-frames, the examination shall be identified as an inter-periodic screen. A current EPSDT/Healthy Kids examination will be necessary in order to access additional treatment services for children; e.g., mental health services, drug/alcohol treatment, TCD, rehabilitative treatment services/group care, or personal care services.

45172 ELIGIBILITY

All children in DCFS-paid out-of-home placements are eligible for Medicaid services. However, to be eligible the child must have a Social Security number. Some children receiving other services may also be eligible for Medicaid.

- A. Children not previously on Medicaid may be issued a medical card through the SSPS process. The local office may issue emergency coupons.
- B. Non-DCFS-paid relative caretakers must apply for medical services for the child either through an application for AFDC as a non-needy relative through the local CSO or through a mail-in application, DSHS 14-380(X), for medical only.
- C. Children receiving Medicaid services at the time of placement may not be authorized for medical through DCFS until their managed care medical coverage through AFDC or the medical-only "H" program is terminated in the CSO.

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- D. With the approval of the Regional Administrator or designee and within limited funds available, the social worker may authorize elective medical services, such as orthodontics or corrective surgery to correct a disfiguring condition, not covered by Medicaid. The social worker must accompany each request for such medical services with verification of denial of payment by the Medical Assistance Administration, including following administrative appeal. Social workers shall obtain parental consent, or a court order authorizing the department to consent, to provision of any medical or dental services, including surgery, that are neither routine nor emergency services.

45173 PROCEDURES FOR ACCESS

- A. So that medical services provided through medical coupons will be paid, the following procedures must be followed:
1. Clearance must be obtained through the ITIS/ACES system prior to the authorization of medical coupons by DCFS.
  2. Medical coupons (for Medicaid-enrolled children) issued by DCFS must have the exact duplicate information to the family's original card, based on the information obtained through ITIS/ACES.
  3. Children must be served only by the assigned managed care plan until their removal from the AFDC grant or from the "H" program. Children remaining on their family's AFDC grant must continue to be served by their previously assigned Healthy Options provider unless or until the assigned provider gives permission to access services elsewhere. The name and phone number of the child's Healthy Options plan is available through the ITIS/ACES system.
  4. Social Security numbers must be included on SSPS when medical coupons are authorized.



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5. No use of alternate tie-breakers or other means to circumvent the ITIS/ACES system will be allowed.
- B. The DCFS social worker, for DCFS children, and private child placing agency staff, for DCFS-funded children for whom those agencies are responsible, must make every effort to determine if each child has a Social Security number.
1. If the child does not have a Social Security number, the DCFS social worker refers the matter to the Federal Funding Specialist, who will apply or cause an application to be made for a Social Security number during the month the child begins to receive services, including but not necessarily limited to out-of-home care, that may be Medicaid-eligible.
  2. For a child without a Social Security number being served by a child placing agency and funded by DCFS, the private agency staff must apply or cause an application to be made for a Social Security number during the month the child comes into care or begins to receive services that may be Medicaid-eligible.
- C. Once a child is determined not to be/no longer to be included on their family's Medicaid managed care plan (Healthy Options), authorization shall be completed by opening the appropriate SSPS code.

45174 OTHER SOURCES

- A. Medical/behavioral services that are required for a child to maintain in school may be eligible for payment through school district sources. The social worker may request, or advise the parents of the child to request, an evaluation for special education. Required services are authorized after assessment and the development by the school of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for the child.

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- B. Civic groups such as the Shriners, Crippled Children's Service, Kiwanis, and the Lions Club often provide funding for special needs services.
- C. See section 4526 for information regarding Medicaid Personal Care (MPC) Services.

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**4518 DRUG/ALCOHOL SERVICES**

**45181 SERVICE DEFINITION**

Assessment, treatment or monitoring services provided to an individual or family to assist a client in maintaining sobriety.

These may include both in-patient and out-patient services. DCFS contracts or pays for substance abuse services in a variety of ways depending on the availability of state and federal funding. Most adults without income are referred to ADATSA programs contracted through the Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse (DASA). Several DCFS regional offices contract for urinalysis monitoring. Substance abuse treatment components exist within many DCFS contracted rehabilitative/residential care programs for adolescents. Specific services needed are determined through a drug and alcohol assessment provided by a qualified professional.

**45182 ELIGIBILITY**

DCFS clients where drug and/or alcohol abuse is suspected are eligible for available services.

**45183 PROCEDURES FOR ACCESS**

- A. The social worker consults regional procedures for utilization of local drug and alcohol abuse programs within their communities. Obtaining information from the client regarding the availability of insurance coverage is essential to determining the range of resources that are available for any individual client.
- B. The social worker refers clients without resources to the local DSHS Community Service Office (CSO) to determine if they are eligible for state and/or federally funded assessment and treatment services.

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45184 OTHER SOURCES

- A. Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, Alateen, and Alanon are self-help organizations that are free and available in most communities in Washington State.
- B. Many communities fund specialized programs to meet the needs of particular populations or groups.

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**4519 HOME BASED SERVICES**

**45191 SERVICE DEFINITION**

Home Based Services (HBS) are designed to prevent or remediate problems which may result in out-of-home placement. Such services are provided in the context of a comprehensive permanency plan and may include:

- A. Basic goods and services; e.g., food, clothing, shelter, furniture, health, utilities, transportation.
- B. Paraprofessional services; e.g., parent aides.
- C. Parent training.
- D. In-home counseling to prevent out-of-home placement.

Services may be provided by contract in some DCFS regions.

**45192 ELIGIBILITY**

For a family or individual to receive HBS, the following conditions must be met:

- A. The client has a case open for CPS, CWS, or FRS services.
- B. Services may be provided to the family of origin, relatives, or foster families when the intent of HBS is to maintain or reunify a permanent or long-term stable home for the child.
- C. The family is willing and able to cooperate with HBS services.
- D. In the social worker's judgment, the child can be safely maintained in the home or be safely returned to the home within the next three months with HBS services.

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- E. There is funding available through the HBS budget to provide HBS services.

45193 PROCEDURES FOR ACCESS

- A. The social worker follows regional procedures to authorize services.
- B. The worker opens the appropriate SSPS payment code and sends a copy authorizing services to the provider.
- C. The worker applies for Title IV-A/CEAP and sends a completed application to the federal funding specialist.
- D. During the course of the service, the worker is encouraged to maintain contact with the HBS provider to review the progress of services. The worker shall immediately notify the HBS contractor if a CPS referral on the family has been received.
- E. Following completion of service, the worker receives a closing summary from the contractor and then terminates payment through SSPS.

45194 OTHER SOURCES

Some of the components of service provided by HBS are available from other sources in some communities. Workers may explore private charitable and religious organizations for help with the provision of concrete services, the RSN for availability within "wrap-around" funds, and DDD for parent education for developmentally disabled parents. Community Public Health and Safety Networks are another possible resource.

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**4520 HIV/AIDS SUPPORT SERVICES**

45201 SERVICE DEFINITION

DCFS provides coordination and information and referral within each region for locating appropriate medical and support services for clients with HIV or AIDS and for assisting social workers with administrative policy and law specific to casework with clients who may be HIV positive.

45202 ELIGIBILITY

Clients who are at risk of becoming or who are HIV positive are eligible for the service.

45203 PROCEDURES FOR ACCESS

The social worker consults with their regional AIDS coordinator regarding HIV statute and policy whenever an issue surfaces that involves HIV. Specific confidentiality statutes apply regarding sharing information about HIV status. Testing for HIV also is governed by specific statute. Refer to the *Operations Manual*, chapter 5000, section 5700, for state policy and guidelines on blood borne pathogens.



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**4521 PSYCHOLOGICAL/PSYCHIATRIC SERVICES**

45211 SERVICE DEFINITION

Services to provide psychiatric and psychological evaluations and treatment to implement a permanency plan, to prevent CA/N, to prevent out-of-home placement, or to make placement/permanency planning decisions. See section 4539, below, for information regarding Inpatient Mental Health Treatment for Children. In general, there are two main types of psychological/psychiatric funding sources available for utilization by DCFS: Title XIX/Healthy Kids (EPSDT) services through the Regional Support Networks (RSN) and DCFS direct funded services.

The RSNs in the state are the conduit for mental health services for recipients of Medicaid. Serving as Prepaid Health Plans, these networks receive and distribute all state and federal mental health dollars to the community mental health centers, institutions, and other certified mental health providers.

45212 ELIGIBILITY

- A. Under Healthy Kids Services, Medicaid-eligible children and their families are provided specific mental health evaluation and treatment. For eligible children under 19 years of age, mental health services must be determined to be medically necessary as a result of a Healthy Kids/EPSDT health screen.
- B. Medicaid-funded mental health services must be the first choice for treatment. DCFS-funded services are to be used only when all other payment resources have been exhausted. Families or children are eligible for DCFS direct-funded psychological/psychiatric services under the following circumstances:
  - 1. Parents or children with an active CPS, FRS, or CWS case.
  - 2. All RSN resources have been exhausted or the child/parent is not eligible to receive the service under a Healthy Kids plan.

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3. The child/family has demonstrated it doesn't have the financial resources or insurance to pay for the service.
4. Funding is available to provide the service.
5. Services are only available from DCFS-contracted providers.

45213 PROCEDURES FOR ACCESS

- A. Children and families can access RSN funding by presenting at any mental health provider which is certified to accept Medicaid. For Healthy Kids services, the following steps shall be taken:
  1. The social worker refers Medicaid-eligible children and families for a Healthy Kids screening utilizing regional procedures.
  2. If the child does not have a current Healthy Kids/EPSTDT examination, the social worker must schedule a Healthy Kids examination to be completed within 30 days.
  3. For situations involving inpatient treatment, see section 4539, below.
  4. DCFS social workers supply mental health screeners and providers with the information they request to make screening decisions and to provide mental health services.
- B. For DCFS direct-funded psychological/psychiatric services, the following steps shall be taken:

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1. The social worker determines that Healthy Kids services are not available and that funding is not available for the service through other sources listed below.
  2. The social worker authorizes psychiatric/psychological services utilizing the authorization guidelines in paragraph A above and regional procedure.
- C. The social worker authorizes psychological/psychiatric procedures using current SSPS codes and send a copy of the authorization to the provider.
- D. The worker requests a final report and terminate payment.

45214 OTHER SOURCES

- A. If the need for the service is primarily to support the child's ability to stay in school, funds for evaluations/treatment may be available through the local school district. The social worker may contact the child's school, or have the child's family contact the school, and make a referral to determine if the child is eligible for special education services.
- B. DDD may provide psychiatric/psychological evaluations and/or behavior management training or treatment for developmentally disabled children living in their own homes or parents.
- C. The JRA or local juvenile probation offices may provide similar services for delinquent children.
- D. Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), General Assistance-Unemployable (GA-U), and SSI) evaluations may be a resource. If the child has a current or recent SSI application, the social worker shall ask the SSI facilitator to access the SSI file for current medical or psychological assessments.

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**4522 INCOME MAINTENANCE**

**45221 SERVICE DEFINITION**

Services to provide financial assistance to meet the basic needs of a family for housing, utilities, food, clothing, etc.

**45222 ELIGIBILITY**

DCFS refers individuals and families to Economic and Medical Field Services' (EMFS) CSOs for determination of eligibility for specific income maintenance programs such as Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) or GA-U. Eligibility for some federally funded financial maintenance programs, such as Social Security disability and SSI, are determined by the federal Social Security Administration.

**45223 PROCEDURES FOR ACCESS**

- A. As part of initial and on-going family assessment, the social worker assesses the family's ability to maintain financially to meet basic needs. When it appears that the family may have little or no income, the social worker assesses the reasons contributing to the situation (e.g. injury, lay-off, divorce, lack of needed job skills) and refers the family to the CSO or other appropriate agencies for determination of eligibility for benefits.
- B. When a child who may be eligible for federal disability payments is in the home of their parent or guardian, the social worker refers the parent to their local Social Security office for information on applying for benefits. SSI facilitators in each region can provide technical assistance to a family/child needing to make application for SSI or survivor's benefits.

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- C. When a child is in out-of-home care and it appears that the child may be eligible for federal disability benefits, the social worker makes a referral to the Social Security disability specialist in the DCFS regional office to begin the process of determining benefits.
- D. The social worker completes the federal funding forms and provides them to the federal funding specialist, who determines fund source for children in out-of-home care.

45224 OTHER SOURCES

- A. Clients whose jobs have ended may be eligible for unemployment benefits.
- B. The Division of Child Support (DCS), formerly the Office of Support Enforcement, will assist in the collection of child support with parents who are due court-ordered child support and have been unable to collect it.
- C. Some clients injured in the course of employment may be eligible for financial assistance through the Department of Labor and Industries (L&I).
- D. Many communities and non-profit charitable organizations maintain private, non-profit sources for food and clothing for families and individuals in emergency need. Schools and churches may also maintain food and clothing banks. The Community Public Health and Safety Networks may contribute to this resource.
- E. While not providing income maintenance, private non-profit credit counseling services are available in many communities to assist individuals in managing debt.

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- F. Food and formula supplements are available for some low-income women with infants through the WIC program to help promote healthy infant development.
- G. Families and children of U.S. military service veterans may be eligible for veteran's benefits provided through the Veteran's Administration.

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**4523 HOUSING**

**45231 SERVICE DEFINITION**

Services to assist an individual or family obtain housing. Services consist of information and referral, coordination, advocacy, and case management to assist clients with housing needs. Contracted Independent Living Skills (ILS) programs for adolescents are available to assist youth emancipating from foster care with counseling regarding the location of housing.

**45232 ELIGIBILITY**

DCFS clients with either no housing or inadequate housing are eligible for the service. Homeless youth may be eligible for out-of-home care services through DCFS when they have been determined eligible for placement following a CWS assessment. CPS referrals are not accepted on a family if the only reason for the referral is homelessness.

**45233 PROCEDURES FOR ACCESS**

- A. The social worker works with a family to obtain housing through referrals to the CSO and, in emergencies, through direct referral to emergency shelter programs in the local communities. EMFS can provide the social worker with information on how to assist clients who need to apply for available publicly funded housing through the federal Section 8 or other programs, including those operated through the state Department of Trade, Community, and Economic Development (CTED).
- B. In accordance with regional procedures, the social worker refers adolescents emancipating from foster care to regionally contracted ILS programs for education and counseling regarding housing needs.
- C. For placement in out-of-home care for children, the social worker follows procedures outlined in this chapter.

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45234 OTHER SOURCES

- A. Many communities provide shelter programs for youth with funding through the Runaway Youth Act for runaways.
- B. Housing advocacy/case management are often provided through the RSN for clients with a mental illness.



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**4524 EDUCATIONAL AND JOB TRAINING SERVICES**

45241 SERVICE DEFINITION

Services to assist individuals to complete their education or to locate employment or training that would qualify them for employment. DCFS direct services consist of information and referral to state, federal, and community funded programs. DCFS contracts regionally with community agencies to provide educational and job counseling services for youth emancipating from foster care. See the ILS program description.

45242 ELIGIBILITY

DCFS clients who need education, job training, or employment.

45243 PROCEDURES FOR ACCESS

- A. The social worker refers adults who need to complete their high school diploma or General Equivalency Development (GED) certificate to the school district nearest the client's home for information regarding programs available in the local community.
- B. The social worker refers youth emancipating from foster care to the regionally contracted ILS program for career and job counseling utilizing regionally established procedures.
- C. Adults or youth who are seeking employment may be referred to the Employment Security Department, Job Service Center office, for listings of job openings and other services available to help find employment.

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45244 Other Sources

- A. Services are available through colleges, universities, and vocational institutes to provide career counseling, job training, and education for individuals. Financial Aid Offices and Career Counseling Offices in those institutions provide information and assistance.
- B. Private Industry Councils (PIC) in communities coordinate and administer job training programs available from the federal government. The Employment Security Department provides information about the availability of such programs. Information on other federal programs such as Job Corps, providing training for young adults, and Summer Youth Employment Programs for low-income youth can also be accessed through the Employment Security Department.
- C. DVR and L&I provide services to train workers who have had injuries or disabilities so that they can regain employment.

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**4525 INDEPENDENT LIVING SKILLS SERVICES - ADOLESCENTS**

**45251 DEFINITION**

The ILS program prepares youth to live as adults when they reach majority age and leave placement.

Typical activities include, but are not limited to, an assessment of needs and services to build tangible skills in education, vocation, income maintenance, and daily living. Services are also provided in the "intangible skills" area, which includes ego support, dealing with issues of separation and loss, anger management, parenting, and other counseling areas.

**45252 ELIGIBILITY**

Children ages 16 and older that have been in DCFS paid out-of-home care for any length of time since their 16th birthday are eligible. Referrals are made by the child's social worker to contracted providers within the region.

**45253 PROCEDURES FOR ACCESS**

- A. The social worker shall develop an Independent Living Plan as part of the ISP for youth 16 years of age or older that are in placement. The youth and placement resource (foster parent or group care staff) will meet and develop the plan with the social worker.
- B. The social worker determines eligibility of youth 16 to 21 years of age for vendor provided ILS services within their DCFS region. There is one exception: Vendors can continue serving youths, no longer receiving DCFS services, in their program past their 18th birthday, until their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday.

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- C. Youths who do not meet the eligibility criteria in paragraph B, above, who are age 18 or older, have not been served by DCFS, and who are currently receiving vendor provided ILS may be continued in service until their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. The vendor may not add additional non-DCFS youth.
- D. The social worker provides a copy of the current ISP and any other additional information needed to the ILS provider. The social worker communicates with the vendor regarding what an Independent Living Plan (ILP) needs to include for a particular youth.
- E. The ILS Regional Liaison shall approve requests for the purchase of any "concrete goods" over \$100.00 and up to \$200.00 (e.g., work clothes, special equipment, etc.) that contribute to the completion of the ILP.
- F. Children who have been on SSI/SSA benefits while in foster care need assistance to apply to be their own payee. Some youth may have had Special Needs Trusts established. IL needs may be met with funds from these trusts.

45254 OTHER SOURCES

There are a variety of agencies that provide IL related services to youth. These include:

- A. The Employment Security Department, PICs, and the Joint Training and Partnership Act (JTPA) for employment resources.
- B. Schools, colleges, and vocational institutes can provide information regarding educational goals and assistance with tuition reductions/ waivers or financial aid. Schools also offer ILS classes, pre-vocational classes, and part-time on-campus jobs.

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**4526 PERSONAL CARE SERVICES**

**45261 DEFINITION**

Medicaid Personal Care Services (MPC) are defined as those that assist with direct personal care, such as personal hygiene, dressing, bathing, eating, toileting, ambulation, transfer of a client, positioning of a client, self-medication, body care, travel to medical services, essential shopping, household assistance including meal preparation, laundry, housework, wood supply, and medically-oriented tasks directed at the client or the client's immediate environment that are necessitated by a client's handicapping condition. For a child under age 18, these are tasks that exceed what is required by normally developing children of the same age.

MPC do not include tasks which clearly should be provided by medically licensed professionals. Personal care tasks are to be specific to the eligible client and are not to be provided for other family members. Meal preparation, laundry, and housework shall only be included for clients who live in their own homes, except by exception to policy in unusual and well-documented instances. Supervision hours may not be paid to a primary caretaker MPC provider; i.e., a foster parent or dependency guardian. Supervision and household assistance may only be authorized when at least one direct personal care task is needed.

RCW 74.09.520; WAC 388-15-820; WAC 388-15-910

**45262 ELIGIBILITY**

- A. To be eligible for MPC, a client must meet the following conditions:
1. Certification as a Title XIX Medicaid-eligible categorically needy medical assistance client.

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2. Programmatically eligible; i.e., has been determined due to a handicapping condition to need at least one Medicaid personal care task to remain in community residence.
  3. Live in his/her own home, in the home of a relative care-giver, in a licensed and contracted adult family home, a licensed boarding home under contract with the department, a children's foster family home, or a children's group care facility.
- B. Eligibility begins upon date of signature on the *Comprehensive Assessment* form. The annual review date is based on the date of the *Comprehensive Assessment* form, not the date of service authorization.
- C. The department shall not authorize chore services or adult family home add-on services to individuals qualifying for MPC when their needs can be met within the scope of the Medicaid personal care program.
- WAC 388-15-830
- D. For children in their own home: If the child is a client of DDD, that division is responsible for determining eligibility and authorizing services. If the child may be eligible for DDD services, the social worker shall refer the family for a DDD intake evaluation. If the child is not eligible for DDD, the case is the responsibility of DCFS to assess for MPC. If the child is not a DDD client, or is awaiting DDD evaluation, the CSO shall determine if the child is Title XIX categorically needy. The DCFS social worker is responsible for referring the family to the CSO for financial eligibility determination. If it is determined that the child's personal care service plan should be handled by DCFS, the social worker follows established procedures.

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45263 Procedures for Access

- A. The social worker complete the DSHS 14-396, *Comprehensive Assessment* (child) form, for the initial assessment of all referred children. This shall be done during a home visit in the presence of child and caretakers. The social worker may fill out DSHS 15-213(X), *Personal Care Physician's Authorization*, to submit the list of proposed services to the client's attending physician. The number of hours authorized shall be based on the client's need for assistance as determined through the assessment process and includes only the need for personal care services exceeding the level of age-appropriate care.

Copies of the *Comprehensive Assessment* form must be sent to the service recipient, parent/guardian/representative, and the Area Agency on Aging that provides nurse oversight. The service plan section, and any other relevant sections of the form, must be sent to the provider before service begins.

- B. The social worker may obtain a signed authorization from the physician or mental health professional prior to authorization of MPC.
- C. Either directly or through a provider agency, the social worker determines that the personal care provider is qualified. The provider must complete the *Personal Care Provider Experience/Training Statement*. The social worker or provider agency screens all applicants to ensure general qualification criteria are met and performs routine criminal history checks on all aides engaged in the provision of MPC. Background checks should have already been completed in the case of foster parent providers. The social worker shall complete a Provider Agreement for each personal care provider. Home care agency providers need not complete this form as it should have been completed at the time the contract was done.

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The social worker must file the above identified documents in the document section of the child's service record. When all of the above documentation is complete, MPC may be authorized.

- D. Personal care providers shall not be a parent, spouse, or child of the client; shall be at least 18 years old; have adequate physical health to meet the needs of the client; know how and when to use a telephone and seek help; be willing to complete needed training; have knowledge and ability to perform personal care tasks or the capacity to learn; have knowledge of acceptable standards of performance; possess sufficient communication skills to implement written plans of care, have ability to observe changes in the client's health status; have ability to respond to emergencies without supervision; demonstrate acceptance of clients' individual differences and preferences; have ability to work independently; and be willing to provide references.
  
- E. The social worker opens payment on SSPS. The service begin date can be no earlier than the date of the *Comprehensive Assessment*.
  - 1. If the foster parent or dependency guardian is the MPC provider, the worker shall use SSPS code 4910. Dependency guardian means that the guardianship was established through juvenile court.
    - a. Payments made to foster parents or dependency guardians providing MPC to their foster/relative children is not considered taxable income. This service code does not report income to the federal Internal Revenue Service (IRS), and these providers are not considered employees of the department.

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- b. The maximum number of hours authorized is 60 per month. The Regional Administrator/designee may approve an Exception to Policy (ETP) by signing the *Comprehensive Assessment* form to increase the hours to a maximum of 116 per month. An ETP is also required for providing household assistance to foster parent providers. Supervision hours may not be authorized.
2. If the provider is not a foster parent or dependency guardian, they are considered an individual provider, and the social worker authorizes service using SSPS code 4920. Individual employees are not considered employees of the department, and payments are taxable income.
  - a. The maximum number of hours authorized is 60 per month. With an ETP signature on the *Comprehensive Assessment* form, the maximum number of hours is 160 per month.
  - b. Service includes both direct personal care tasks and supervision hours. Household assistance may also be authorized.
3. An agency provider is an employee of a home care agency. The social worker authorizes payments using SSPS code 4940.
  - a. The social worker must verify with the Regional Contracts Coordinator the status of the contract between the department and the home care agency.

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- b. The cost per hour is higher for home care agencies, so the number of hours authorized will always be less than if a foster parent or individual provider is used. The maximum amount paid to the home care agency may not exceed the cost of paying for 160 hours provided by an individual provider.
  - c. To determine the cost of 160 MPC hours, the social worker multiplies 160 times the current hourly rate for individual providers. The number of MPC hours to be provided by the home care agency MPC provider cannot result in a monthly payment higher than the amount yielded from the above formula. The number of hours can be any combination of direct task hours and supervision hours.
- F. The social worker completes the DSHS 14-395, *Interim Assessment* form, at least annually with an in-person interview or whenever significant changes occur that would affect the number of personal care hours allowed. Financial eligibility must also be redetermined annually for children in their own homes. An ITIS/ACES search will accomplish this.
- G. The social worker provides the Area Agency on Aging providing nurse oversight with copies of all assessments, reassessments, and authorizations for personal care services no later than 10 days after the authorization date.
- 1. A registered nurse shall visit the child at least annually, but more frequently if requested by the social worker. The oversight nurse is expected to:
    - a. Review the child's medical and/or mental condition.

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- b. Review the service plan for necessary revisions and recommended revisions, if needed.
  - c. Review need for continued care.
  - d. Observe the provider performing MPC tasks, assess need for additional training, and provide needed training.
  - e. Document providers' ability to perform tasks and their training needs.
  - f. Assist in problem resolution.
2. Results of the nurse oversight visits shall be forwarded to the social worker, and, if recommendations for revisions are included, the social worker reassesses the client and amends the service plan or communicates with the nurse the reasons why changes were not made. The social worker advises the nurse of the decision and results within 15 working days after receipt of the nurse's visit summary which recommends change.
- H. MPC is a Title XIX medical service and requires the same official notification as other department denials of medical services. The social worker must give written notice to service recipients when services are reduced or denied, giving specific reasons and WAC references for the denial, information on how to appeal, and timeliness for appeal.

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**4527 RELATIVE PLACEMENT**

**45271 CHOOSING RELATIVES FOR PLACEMENT**

When placement is necessary, the social worker shall search for appropriate relatives to care for the child prior to consideration of placement in other types of out-of-home care. Preferred relative placements are those where the child is comfortable living with the relative, the relative has a relationship with the child, and the relative is assessed by DCFS to be capable and willing to cooperate with the permanency plan for the child. See Chapter 5000, section 5231, for assessment procedures. The relative(s) must be able to provide a safe home for any child placed by DCFS, and each child placed in the home must have their own bed or crib if s/he remains in the home beyond 30 days. Non-related family members shall be considered as potential resources.

**45272 ELIGIBILITY**

Children whom DCFS has assessed to need out-of-home care and for whom an appropriate relative is available.

**45273 PROCEDURES FOR ACCESS**

**A. Relative Search**

1. At the time placement is first considered, the social worker attempts to locate relatives who can care for the child. This includes asking parents and the child who in their family might be available to care for the child and evaluating requests from family members who wish to be considered as a placement resource.
2. When it is not possible to complete a relative search prior to the initial placement, the social worker continues searching for appropriate relatives after the initial placement.

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3. The social worker notes in the narrative considerations and conclusions, including statements as to why the relative is not being pursued as a resource at the time of such consideration.

B. Legal Authority for Placement

Legal authority to place is needed with relative placements either through a police pickup order, court order, or voluntary consent to place agreement with parents.

C. Assessment

1. When a potential relative placement resource has been located, unless an emergent placement, the social worker completes a criminal history/background check on the relative and assesses suitability of the relative prior to placement. If an emergent placement, the background check will be initiated immediately after the placement.
2. To determine if the home is minimally adequate for the care of children, the social worker, including after-hours staff, visits the relative's home prior to initial placement. If a child is placed with a relative by night staff following a home visit, then the ongoing social worker also visits the home within the first week of the child's placement.
3. In those situations where questions about appropriateness arise, the social worker may enlist the assistance of a foster home licensor or other staff skilled in conducting home studies in evaluating suitability of the home and family.
4. See Chapter 5000, section 5230, for requirements regarding home studies and for licensing requirements and exemptions.

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D. Information Sharing

Either prior to or soon after placement, the social worker shall have a candid discussion with the relatives to inform them of the following:

1. The reasons for the placement.
2. Full disclosure of the child's needs and characteristics.
3. The agency plan for the child's parents, relatives, and the care providers.
4. The legal process. If a child is dependent pursuant to a proceeding under chapter 13.34 RCW, the social worker shall keep the care provider informed regarding the dates and location of dependency review and permanency planning hearings pertaining to the child.

E. Continuing Services

1. At critical decision points when permanency planning options are being re-evaluated, the social worker re-evaluates the possibility of relative placements. Family members who might not have been available when the child was first placed may later become an option for permanent placement.
2. The social worker provides case management support to relative caretakers in the same manner as any other type of placement. This means that the relative is provided with information about needed training and support as funding is available and that face-to-face contacts with the child while in a relative placement are scheduled on a quarterly basis.

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D. Financial Support

For relatives needing financial support to care for the child, the social worker may assist the family to apply for AFDC through the CSO. See Chapter 5000, section 5232.A.

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**4528 REGULAR RECEIVING CARE**

**45281 SERVICE DEFINITION**

Receiving home care is out-of-home care provided in licensed foster homes which are designated to provide emergent or short-term care. Receiving home care is temporary care not to exceed 30 days. Receiving home care is used when need for placement is immediate, and time does not allow for planning to place directly into regular foster care or other alternate care.

**45282 PROCEDURES FOR ACCESS**

- A. The social worker first determines that relative care is not available.
- B. The social worker locates and contacts an available, appropriate receiving home parent utilizing the locally determined placement system. For example, in some offices, placement in receiving care is accessed through a Home Finder or placement desk. In other offices, social workers contact the receiving home parent directly.
- C. To assist the receiving home to make a decision about the child, the social worker provides the receiving home parent with information about the immediate condition of the child, the child's behaviors, school and medical information, background information, and specifics of the permanency plan that will affect the child and the placement. For example, the worker will let the receiving home parent know what behaviors to expect, what the visitation plan is, what the foster parents' responsibilities are, when the child next needs to see a doctor or other professional, and where and when the child is likely to be moved.
- D. The social worker clarifies future visits to the receiving home and provides the receiving home with written background information and emergency numbers upon placing the child.



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- E. The social worker completes the following paperwork after placement:
  - 1. Open appropriate SSPS codes and complete the CAMIS placement module.
  - 2. Complete a federal funding packet (all Title IV-E and IV-A/CEAP documents), answer Categorical Criteria questions in CAMIS, and send the packet to the DCFS federal funding specialist within 10 days of placement. Utilize local procedures to notify the SSI facilitator of placement of an SSI/SSA eligible child or for screening for SSI of a special needs child.
  - 3. Notify the licensor of placement of the child in a particular home.
- F. For Title IV-A in-home services, the social worker completes a IV-A application and sends it to the federal funding specialist.
- G. The federal funding specialist shall notify the CSO Financial Services Specialist of the child's placement if the child is on AFDC and, in all cases, the Division of Child Support (DCS) and provide a copy of the authority to place in care.
- H. Receiving care is meant to be very short term care. However, in rare instances, it may become necessary to request an authorization from the Regional Administrator or designee, according to regional procedures, to extend receiving care beyond 30 days. A child is not to be moved to another receiving home simply to avoid requesting an extension.

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**4529 SPECIALIZED RECEIVING CARE**

**45291 SERVICE DEFINITION**

Specialized receiving care is short-term licensed foster care. Certain receiving homes have been identified as specialized receiving homes to serve some children who are in conflict with their parents, runaways, and other children with special needs. This type of care is short-term, emergency care for thirty days or less.

**45292 PROCEDURES FOR ACCESS**

- A. The social worker determines that relative care, regular receiving care, and Crisis Residential Center (CRC) care are not available or are inappropriate prior to placement in specialized receiving care.
- B. The social worker locates and contacts an available, appropriate specialized receiving home parent utilizing the locally determined placement system.
- C. The social worker provides the specialized receiving home parent with information about the immediate condition of the child, the child's behaviors, school and medical information, background information and specifics of the permanency plan that will affect the child and the placement. For example, the worker will let the specialized receiving home parent know the visitation plan, what the foster parents' responsibilities are, when the child next needs to see a doctor or other professional, and where and when the child is likely to be moved.
- D. The social worker clarifies future visits to the specialized receiving home and provides the specialized receiving home with written background information and emergency numbers upon placing the child.
- E. See section 45282 for procedures regarding federal funding.

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**4530 FOSTER CARE**

**45301 SERVICE DEFINITION**

Foster Care is temporary out-of-home care in a family home that is licensed to provide this service. Foster parents are part of the professional team working to complete the permanency plan for the child and his/her family.

**45302 ELIGIBILITY**

Children for whom DCFS has legal authority to place in out-of-home care are eligible for the service. Legal authority includes a transfer of custody signed by a police officer, a court order, or a voluntary consent signed by the child's parent. See section 4306 of this chapter regarding procedures for Voluntary Placement Agreements. The child must be under the age of 18 unless in school to obtain a high school diploma or equivalent certificate and have been in out-of-home placement on their 18th birthday.

**45303 PROCEDURES FOR ACCESS**

- A. The social worker determines that appropriate relative care is not available prior to placement of the child in foster care.
- B. The social worker locates and contacts an available, appropriate foster home parent utilizing the locally determined placement system.
- C. If the placement is a cross-cultural placement, the social worker informs the foster parent of DCFS responsibilities toward finding a relative or foster home that is similar and familiar to the child. The social worker assists the foster parent by providing clear information and consultation/resources if needed to care for a particular child.
- D. In instances where placement is not emergent, the social worker shall arrange pre-placement visits to reduce the anxiety of the child around the placement and to familiarize the child with his/her temporary family. When possible and appropriate, parents shall be involved in pre-placement visits. Unless emergency preempts such involvement, the child's social worker shall be involved in the pre-placement visits and the actual placement in the foster home.

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- E. To reduce conflict between DCFS and foster parents about the temporary nature of foster care, social workers need to be clear at the time of placement, and regularly thereafter, about the long term and permanency plan for the child.
1. To help the foster parent decide if they can care for the child, the social worker provides the foster home parent with information about the immediate condition of the child, the child's behaviors, school and medical information, and specifics of the permanency plan that will affect the child and the placement.
  2. The social worker clarifies dates of future visits to the foster home and provides the foster home with written background information and emergency numbers when placing the child. Most regional offices have designated forms for providing information to foster parents. Specific information to be provided to the foster parents includes:
    - a. Child's full name, birth date and legal status.
    - b. Last school of attendance and eligibility for special education and related services.
    - c. Medical problems/history including name of doctor/ dentist and medical coverage.
    - d. Name and address of parent/guardian.
    - e. Reason for placement.
    - f. Emergency procedures and any special instructions.
    - g. The name and telephone number of the social worker and of the social worker's immediate supervisor.

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- F. See section 45282 and the *Operations Manual*, chapter 11000, for procedures regarding federal funding.
- G. The social worker makes a contact with the foster home within three days following placement to see how the child is adjusting. Following the first contact, the worker maintains, at minimum, quarterly face-to-face contact with the child.
- H. The social worker and the licensor encourage foster parents to keep a record of the child's stay in their home, including any medical reports received by the foster parent, significant developmental milestones, behavior, schools attended, names of all medical providers and dates of visits, immunizations, grades/report cards, friends, pets, and pictures of the child.
- I. Whenever possible or appropriate, the social worker provides parents/guardians with information about the child's adjustment, health, and school progress while in foster care.
- J. The social worker shall visit the foster home and have face-to-face contact with the foster parents and the child no less than once every 90 days and provide casework support to assist foster parents in caring for the child. When there are problems with a placement, the social worker works with foster parents to find resources for resolving problems. For example, specialized training, consultation, or other support may be needed at particular times with particular placements.
- K. The social worker notifies foster parents of the date of scheduled court hearings and gives an opportunity for them to provide the court with information.
- L. When the child's social worker has a specific concern or complaint regarding a foster home, the worker conveys the concerns in writing to the foster care licensor for that home. When the complaint is an allegation of CA/N, the social worker shall make a CPS referral.
- M. Notification to Foster Parents When Moving a Child

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1. When a child has been placed in a foster family home and has then resided in the home for at least 90 consecutive days, the social worker shall notify the foster family at least five days prior to moving the child to another placement, unless one of the following applies:
    - a. A court order has been entered requiring an immediate change in placement.
    - b. The child is being returned home.
    - c. The child's safety is in jeopardy.
    - d. The child is residing in a receiving home or a group/ rehabilitative care facility.
  2. If a child has resided in a foster family home for less than 90 days or if, due to one or more of the circumstances above, it is not possible to give five days notification, the social worker shall notify the foster family home of proposed placement changes as soon as reasonably possible.
- N. If the dependency or tribal guardian chooses to receive foster care payments rather than SSI payments or other cited source in behalf of the child, the assigned staff establishes a trust account with the Trust Fund Unit to be used to meet the cost of care or special needs of the child in accordance with RCW 74.13.060. See the *Operations Manual* for details on establishment of a trust fund.
- O. For a youth 18 through 20 years of age to continue in foster care beyond their 18th birth to complete high school or an alternate education program leading to obtaining a high school diploma or G.E.D., the youth must complete and sign a *Voluntary Placement Agreement (VPA)*, DSHS 09-004(X), and agree to abide by the reasonable rules of the foster family. If the placement or education plan disrupts through actions of the youth, eligibility for CA-supported placement ends.
- P. A developmentally disabled youth age 18 through 20 may continue in DCFS-supported care until the day before the day they reach age 21 in accordance with the intra-agency agreement with the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD). If a DDD-eligible youth has a placement or education plan disruption during this extended eligibility, DDD assumes responsibility for the youth.

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**4531 PRIVATE CHILD PLACING AGENCIES**

**45311 SERVICE DEFINITION**

Foster care services may be provided by DCFS or purchased through a contracted private child placing agency (CPA). DCFS and CPAs have developed relationships for sharing both recruitment and placement responsibilities for children needing out-of-home care. In some cases, DCFS "borrows" foster homes from CPAs to care for children in the custody and supervision of DCFS. In other cases, CPAs borrow homes from DCFS. Some children are in private agency placement and in the custody and supervision of the CPA.

**45312 ELIGIBILITY**

A determination by the CPA social worker that placement is both necessary and appropriate. Private agencies bringing children from other countries for adoption are financially responsible for the child's placement costs if the adoption is not finalized or disrupts prior to finalization.

**45313 PROCEDURES FOR ACCESS**

- A. Upon notice of placement and receipt of a complete referral packet from the contracted private agency, the DCFS social worker opens the SSPS codes for regular foster care and for Private Child Placing Agency Service Fee. The private agency service fee may be continued for up to six months of post-foster care services if the CPA continues to provide services.
- B. See section 45282 for procedures regarding federal funding.
- C. The DCFS social worker is expected to monitor CPA placements for which the department is making payment:



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1. The social worker must receive quarterly progress reports from the CPA for all children whose placements or other services are financially supported by DCFS.
  2. The worker may return any CPA quarterly report that does not meet the expectations of the division. The social worker shall send a letter outlining the division's concerns to the CPA with copies to the regional office licenser and contracts coordinator.
  3. The worker shall stop payment in accordance with regional procedures if the report is not received in the time-frame stipulated in the contract.
  4. The social worker shall inform the regional licenser and contracts coordinator when there are continuous problems with reports or reason to believe that the health and safety of children in a CPA home is jeopardized.
- D. DCFS may pay the contracted private agency for use of the CPA's foster home with the approval of the private agency. Both parties must sign a *DSHS Private Child Placing Agency Agreement/Child in Foster Care*, DSHS 15-190(X), with a copy maintained by the private agency and by DCFS. The social worker follows regionally-designated procedures for accessing services and sharing responsibilities while utilizing CPA foster homes. Some agencies specialize in caring for children with particular types of problems or permanency plans.
- E. Upon a DCFS placement in a CPA home, the DCFS worker initiates the DCFS/CPA agreement form, which designates which agency is responsible for what part of the service plan while the child is placed in the CPA foster home.

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**4532 THERAPEUTIC OR TREATMENT FOSTER CARE**

**45321 SERVICE DEFINITION**

Therapeutic or treatment foster homes are those licensed foster families which have been identified to care for extremely behaviorally/emotionally disturbed children who cannot function in a family home without specialized treatment and expertise. Therapeutic foster parents have specialized skills in managing these children. Often these homes have a pre-determined, designated intensive "package" of services that are delivered to every child placed in the therapeutic foster home. Therapeutic foster care is provided directly through DCFS licensed foster homes and by contract or agreement with other agencies. These services do not include those accessed through Rehabilitative Treatment Services described in section 4533, following. If Treatment Foster Care is provided through a Rehabilitation Treatment Services contract, see section 4533 for provisions for access and management.

**45322 ELIGIBILITY**

Eligibility is determined, in accordance with regional procedures, following assessment of service and placement options.

**45323 PROCEDURES FOR ACCESS**

- A. The social worker determines that appropriate relative care is not available prior to placement of the child in foster care.
- B. The social worker locates and contacts an available, appropriate foster home parent utilizing the locally determined placement system.

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- C. If the placement is a cross-cultural placement, the social worker informs the foster parent of DCFS responsibilities toward finding a relative or foster home that is similar and familiar to the child. The social worker assists the foster parent by providing clear information and consultation/resources if needed to care for a particular child.
  
- D. In instances where placement is not emergent, the social worker shall arrange pre-placement visits to reduce the anxiety of the child around the placement and to familiarize the child with his/her temporary family. When possible and appropriate, parents shall be involved in pre-placement visits. Unless emergency preempts such involvement, the child's social worker shall be involved in the pre-placement visits and the actual placement in the foster home.
  
- E. To reduce conflict between DCFS and foster parents about the temporary nature of foster care, social workers need to be clear at the time of placement, and regularly thereafter, about the long term and permanency plan for the child.
  - 1. To help the foster parent decide if they can care for the child, the social worker provides the foster home parent with information about the immediate condition of the child, the child's behaviors, school and medical information, and specifics of the permanency plan that will affect the child and the placement.
  
  - 2. The social worker clarifies dates of future visits to the foster home and provides the foster home with written background information and emergency numbers when placing the child. Most regional offices have designated forms for providing information to foster parents. Specific information to be provided to the foster parents includes:
    - a. Child's full name, birth date, and legal status.

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- b. Last school of attendance and eligibility for special education and related services.
  - c. Medical problems/history including name of doctor/ dentist and medical coverage.
  - d. Name and address of parent/guardian.
  - e. Reason for placement.
  - f. Emergency procedures and any special instructions.
  - g. The name and telephone number of the social worker and of the social worker's immediate supervisor.
- F. See section 45282 for procedures regarding federal funding.
- G. The social worker makes a contact with the foster home within three days following placement to see how the child is adjusting. Following the first contact, the worker shall maintain, at minimum, quarterly face-to-face contact with the child.
- H. The social worker and the licenser encourage foster parents to keep a record of the child's stay in their home, including any medical reports received by the foster parent, significant developmental milestones, behavior, schools attended, names of all medical providers and dates of visits, grades/report cards, friends, pets, and pictures of the child.
- I. Whenever possible or appropriate, the social worker shall provide parents/guardians with information about the child's adjustment, health, and school progress while in foster care.

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- J. The social worker shall visit the foster home and have face-to-face contact with the foster parents and the child no less than once every 90 days and provide casework support to assist foster parents in caring for the child. When there are problems with a placement, the social worker works with foster parents to find resources for resolving problems. For example, specialized training, consultation, or other support may be needed at particular times with particular placements.
- K. The social worker shall notify foster parents of the date of scheduled court hearings and give an opportunity for them to provide the court with information.
- L. When the child's social worker has a specific concern or complaint regarding a foster home, the worker conveys the concerns in writing to the foster care licenser for that home. When the complaint is an allegation of CA/N, the social worker shall make a CPS referral.
- M. When a child is to be removed from a foster home, the social worker shall send five-day written notice to the foster parent prior to the date of the child's move unless a court order or concern for the child's health and safety requires that the child be moved immediately.
- N. Procedures for contracted or other types of therapeutic foster care vary, depending on the contract or agreement with DCFS. The social worker consults their supervisor, the special placements coordinator, or home finder, and regional procedures for specific guidelines.

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**4533 REHABILITATIVE TREATMENT SERVICES**

**45331 SERVICE DEFINITION**

Rehabilitative treatment services (formerly known as group care and also known as Behavior Rehabilitation Services [BRS]) for emotionally/behaviorally disordered, sexually aggressive, developmentally disabled, or medically fragile children are those services, provided by contract with private child care agencies, to serve children with special needs. DCFS contractors provide rehabilitative treatment services through a continuum that includes enhanced in-home services, therapeutic foster care, and group care.

**45332 ELIGIBILITY**

DCFS will pay for rehabilitative treatment services for a child when DCFS has assessed the needs of the child and family and has determined that these cannot be met with a less intensive service; when a rehabilitative service slot is available that meets the child and family's special needs; and the child has been placed in the available service slot.

**45333 PROCEDURES FOR ACCESS**

- A. DCFS must have custody of children receiving out-of-home services through the department.
- B. Prior to Initiation of Service
  - 1. The child's social worker completes a rehabilitative treatment service packet according to regional procedures which specify what forms and reports accompany a referral request. Usually, these forms include:
    - a. An updated ISP.

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- b. If out-of-home care is planned, legal authority to place the child.
  - c. Immunization and other health and education records.
  - d. Psychological reports, treatment summaries, and medical reports that outline the needs of the child.
  - e. A medical necessity form.
2. When requesting rehabilitative treatment services, the social worker follows regional procedures for referring a child for placement consideration and complies with inter-regional agreements on sharing residential treatment resources.
  3. When dealing with interstate placements the worker shall follow requirements for Interstate Compact for Placement of Children (ICPC).
  4. The social worker arranges the actual initiation of services following acceptance of the child by a provider. Parents, relatives, or prior foster parents with whom the child is comfortable may transport for placement if consistent with regional protocol.
  5. Upon placement of the child, the social worker or designee meets with the facility or program representative to give information about the child and, in concert with the family and provider, develops a treatment plan.

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- C. See section 45282 for procedures regarding federal funding. To maximize access to federal funds, the social worker follows regional procedures for sending a copy of the child's ISP or other documentation as requested to Headquarters at the time of placement and annually thereafter. The ISP or other documentation (e.g., psychological evaluation, medical records) are forwarded for review to the Nursing Care Consultant. If the documentation supports the need for this level of care, the Nursing Care Consultant will write a Statement of Medical Necessity and return it to the region.
  
- D. Following placement and consistent with regional procedures:



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1. The social worker sees that the responsible designated staff has opened payment and medical coupons, using the child's full legal name and Social Security Number.
  2. The worker ensures that, if the child was placed in an emergency such that a medical necessity form could not be obtained prior to service initiation, such authority is established within 30 days.
- E. During the Rehabilitative Treatment Service Period
1. Treatment planning for the child while in rehabilitative treatment services is a collaborative effort between the social worker, the regional rehabilitative treatment service coordinator, the contracted treatment provider, the child and the child's family, and the child's tribe, when applicable.
    - a. Upon initiation of services, the social worker and the contracted rehabilitative treatment services provider develop a written agreement jointly with the child's family which specifies separate and joint responsibilities.
    - b. Discharge planning begins at the time of admission so that the treatment plan is goal directed, with measurable outcomes moving the child to a less restrictive environment as quickly as possible.
  2. The social worker shall see the child face-to-face at least every 90 days when the child is placed in a rehabilitative treatment service slot. During those visits, assessment of the child's health and safety is the primary objective. Additionally, the social worker shall assess progress toward achievement of the case plan and the permanency plan.

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3. The social worker participates in Individual Treatment Planning conferences and facilitate family involvement whenever possible. The social worker has ongoing contact with the provider, who should inform the worker of dates, time, and place of all routinely scheduled treatment planning conferences.
  4. During treatment planning conferences, the social worker stresses the importance of establishing treatment goals that are consistent with the overall permanency plan for the child.
  5. The social worker completes re-assessment of the need for continued rehabilitative treatment services as directed by regional policy and the court.
- F. For youth 18 through 20 years of age, see section 45303 for requirements regarding continued out-of-home care.
- H. Medicaid eligibility and Statements of Medical Necessity are necessary program requirements for Title XIX claims for this program. For information and social worker procedures regarding Medicaid eligibility and Statements of Medical Necessity, see the *Operations Manual*, chapter 11000, section 11252.

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**4534 DEPENDENCY GUARDIANSHIP**

**45341 SERVICE DEFINITION**

Guardianship under a dependency in juvenile court establishes a guardian for the life of the dependency. Generally, a dependency guardian is intending to parent the child until age 18 and is not in need of agency supervision. The court may order continued agency supervision if necessary and appropriate under the circumstances of a particular case.

**45342 ELIGIBILITY**

Guardians may be either relatives or foster parents. Foster parent guardians remain eligible for maintenance from DCFS. Relative guardians normally receive funding under AFDC-Relative Payee through the CSO.

**45343 PROCEDURES FOR ACCESS**

- A. The social worker assists the proposed guardian in the filing of a petition for guardianship. The social worker and the guardian may agree to a supervised guardianship. However, supervision is usually not necessary. See section 4340 for planning procedures.
- B. See section 45282 for procedures regarding federal funding.

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**4535 FOSTER-ADOPTION**

**45351 SERVICE DEFINITION**

A foster-adoptive placement is the placement of a non-legally free child for whom the permanency plan is adoption with an adoptive family who is also licensed to provide foster care, has an approved adoptive home study completed, and is willing to assume the risk of the child being returned to the birth parent(s). However, the foster parents do not become prospective adoptive parents until the child is legally free and they have made a formal written statement of their objective intent to accept placement of a child for adoption. The purpose of the foster care placement is to minimize the number of moves for the child.

**45352 ELIGIBILITY**

- A. DCFS may provide foster-adoption services to children who are determined in permanency planning staffing to be unlikely to return to their birth parents or extended family. Most often these are children whose:
1. Parents' rights to another child have been terminated following a period of service delivery and for whom no significant change has occurred in their functioning in the interim.
  2. Parents have killed or seriously harmed another child through abuse or neglect and in which no significant change has occurred in the interim.
  3. Parents have repeatedly and with premeditation harmed or tortured this child.

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4. Parents have been diagnosed with severe mental illness or psychological incapacity which grossly interferes with their parenting ability and for whom previously delivered mental health services and medication have been unsuccessful in altering the symptoms.

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5. Parents suffer from chronic substance abuse, have not been responsive to treatment, and whose only visible means of financial support has been found in criminal activity.
  6. Parents suffer from problems which, in combination, make prognosis for change extremely poor.
- B. DCFS may deliver foster-adoptive services to non-related families which have completed the following requirements:
1. Have a current foster care license and a completed and approved adoptive home study. The adoptive home study shall be filed with the court at the time the decision is made that the child is legally free and the family will adopt.
  2. Have signed a *Permanency Planning Placement Agreement*, DSHS 15-175, which verifies that the foster-adoptive family is aware:
    - a. That the child may be moved to another home if court ordered or if it is determined the foster-adopt family has interfered with the case plan of return to the parents of origin.
    - b. That the child may be returned to his/her birth family if the birth family's functioning improves, termination of parental rights is not ordered by the court, or if the court orders return for another reason.
    - c. That the child may be placed with relatives if previously unidentified or unavailable relatives come forward and request placement and such placement is in the best interest of the child.

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3. Have completed specialized training in addition to that offered in foster care pre-service training which addresses the special conditions surrounding a foster-adoptive placement. The training requirements and format are determined regionally, except that the training must discuss the limitations and requirements for the child to be legally free before the placement can be considered an adoptive placement.

45353 SERVICES TO THE CHILD

- A. The social worker furnishes all available services normally provided to children in foster care placements to children in foster-adopt or permanency placements. This includes all services aimed at reunifying the child with the parents.
- B. The social worker and supervisor shall have permanency planning staffings for children for whom foster-adopt placements are being considered. If there is a change in permanency planning goals, they will hold another permanency planning staffing.

45354 SERVICES TO FAMILY OF ORIGIN

- A. The social worker gives the family the opportunity to share information regarding relatives who might be appropriate placement options for their child(ren), both at the time of placement and throughout the life of the case.
- B. When no appropriate relative is found for a placement option, the social worker gives serious consideration to the requests of the parent(s) regarding religious or other general characteristics when choosing the foster-adoptive family, provided the worker has determined that the request is in the best interest of the child.

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- C. The social worker informs the birth family regarding their roles and responsibilities and gives detailed explanations regarding visitation and their interaction with the foster-adoptive parents.
- D. The social worker informs the family that, under no circumstances, shall placement with a foster-adopt family curtail their right to reunify with their child if timely progress can be made in the service plan which enables the parent to meet minimum parenting standards.

45355 SERVICES TO THE FOSTER-ADOPTIVE FAMILY

- A. In addition to pre-service training provided to foster and adoptive families, the social worker provides foster-adoptive families with information or training regarding the following topics:
  - 1. The court process, dependency and termination proceedings, statutes, and appeals.
  - 2. Bonding and attachment and separation and loss.
  - 3. Interaction with the child's family.
  - 4. Confidentiality.
  - 5. Impact of placement on the foster-adoptive family.
  - 6. Adoption as a lifelong process and commitment.
- B. The social worker informs the foster-adoptive family of their roles, responsibilities as part of the out-of-home placement team, and the consequences of their actions until the child becomes legally free.
- C. Before placement of a child into the foster-adoptive home, the social worker informs the family of the case situation and the results of the permanency planning staffing. See section 43052.

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- D. Before placement of a child into the foster-adoptive home, the family shall sign a *Permanency Planning Placement Agreement*, DSHS 15-175, acknowledging the potential of the child's move to another home or return home and the continued requirements for the provision of reunification services.
- E. The foster parent formally becomes a prospective adoptive parent when the child becomes legally free and the foster parent has made a formal written statement of their objective intent to accept placement of a child for adoption. The foster parent retains the right to withdraw from the adoption before finalization of the adoption.
- F. Immediately upon the foster parent formally becoming a prospective adoptive parent, the social worker shall provide complete information on the child and its family of origin as outlined in chapter 5000, section 5362.

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**4536 SEXUALLY AGGRESSIVE YOUTH**

**45361 SERVICE DEFINITION**

Evaluation and/or treatment for youth meeting the eligibility conditions below.

**45362 ELIGIBILITY**

For the purpose of funds appropriated for the treatment of sexually aggressive youth (SAY), the term "sexually aggressive youth" means those juveniles who:

- A. Have been abused and have committed a sexually aggressive act or other violent act that is sexual in nature; and
  - 1. Are in the care and custody of the state, or federally recognized Indian tribe located within the state; or
  - 2. Are the subject of a proceeding under chapter 13.34 RCW or a child welfare proceeding held before a tribal court located within the state; or
- B. Cannot be detained under the juvenile justice system due to being under age 12 and incompetent to stand trial for acts that could be prosecuted as sex offenses as defined by RCW 9.94A.030 if the child was over 12 years of age, or competent to stand trial if under 12 years of age.

RCW 74.13.075

**45363 PROCEDURES FOR ACCESS**

- A. Each region shall establish a case review committee to review all cases for which SAY funds are requested.

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- B. The child's assigned social worker submits a written request to the regional committee identifying how/why the child is at risk and is in need of evaluation and/or treatment for sexually aggressive behavior. The worker will include on their referral the name of a proposed provider (a DCFS-contracted SAY provider), the specific needs of the child, the cost of the service, and the duration of service need.
- C. The regional committee, in its review, shall consider the following:
  - 1. The age of the juvenile.
  - 2. The extent and type of abuse to which the juvenile has been subjected.
  - 3. The juvenile's past conduct.
  - 4. The benefits that can be expected from treatment.
  - 5. The ability of the juvenile's parent or guardian to pay for the treatment.
- D. Following approval of the request, payment is authorized through SSPS in accordance with local procedures.
- E. The social worker requests a review by the regional committee before the approved authorization period expires.

**45364 OTHER SOURCES**

Youth who have been adjudicated for a sexual offense and court ordered for community placement and supervision may be eligible for Special Sex Offender Disposition Alternative (SSODA) funds, available through the Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration (JRA).

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**4537 CLOTHING ALLOWANCE FOR CHILDREN IN OUT-OF-HOME CARE**

**45371 SERVICE DEFINITION**

A clothing allowance to supplement a child's clothing supply upon initial placement into out-of-home care or to meet special needs, not met with the standard clothing allowance, while the child remains in out-of-home care.

**45372 ELIGIBILITY**

- A. The Regional Administrator may issue procedures to enable the social worker, after establishing need, to authorize initial, and annually thereafter as long as the child is in out-of-home care, clothing allowances to provide a supplement to a child's clothing supply. The initial and subsequent clothing allowance each may not exceed \$200. This section constitutes a waiver of the \$100 limitation in WAC 388-70-042(3). However, the \$100 limit pertains if the Regional Administrator has not issued written procedures to enable workers to authorize an amount up to \$200. The supplemental clothing allowance is not an entitlement and must be provided within available regional allocations for that purpose.
- B. The Regional Administrator/designee may authorize additional child-specific amounts in accordance with regional procedures following demonstration of need by the assigned social worker.
  - 1. Basic family foster care rates include board, personal incidentals, and clothing. For children in family foster care, supplemental clothing may include, but is not limited to, athletic clothing to enable the child to participate in organized sports activities, clothing for a special social occasion, or special clothing for school or work.

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2. As with family foster care, rates for group/rehabilitative care services include daily maintenance costs, of which clothing is a part. Therefore, additional clothing allowances, following initial placement, may only be authorized to meet special needs, as determined by the worker. These needs may include, but are not necessarily limited to, work clothes, athletic clothing to enable the youth to participate in organized sports activities, or special clothing for school activities.

45373 PROCEDURES FOR ACCESS

- A. The Regional Administrator shall issue procedures to enable social workers to obtain additional clothing allowances in accordance with this section. The regional standard must include a regional limit for initial clothing vouchers that does not exceed \$200.
- B. The social worker must receive written approval in accordance with regional procedures before authorizing an additional clothing allowance.
- C. The regional procedures must, at minimum, include the following provisions:
  1. The social worker completes a social service authorization, DSHS 14-154A(X), for each anticipated vendor, leaving the exact cost of services blank. If a foster parent or group/ rehabilitative service provider chooses to purchase the clothing and be reimbursed by the department, the care provider may be the vendor.
  2. At the bottom of the authorization, the social worker writes:
    - a. The maximum amount authorized; e.g., "NOT TO EXCEED \$200."

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- b. The name of the purchaser. If the purchaser is the social worker, the worker's supervisor must initial the authorization form.
      - c. The clothing items to be purchased. If the exact items are not known, the worker shall use a general description, such as "Miscellaneous clothing for a two-year-old girl."
    3. The social worker routes the client and vendor copy of the authorization to the care provider.
  - D. The purchaser and vendor shall follow the steps for payment to the clothing vendor:
    1. The purchaser goes to the vendor, selects clothing, and, in exchange for the clothing, gives the vendor the Vendor copy of the social service authorization.
    2. The vendor gives the purchaser an itemized receipt for the purchase. The vendor may attach their copy of the receipt to their copy of the DSHS 14-154A(X) so they can be matched with the remittance advice accompanying the warrant.
    3. The purchaser signs the receipt and routes it to the local DCFS office.
  - E. For reimbursement to a foster parent who has made the purchase, the following steps shall be followed:
    1. The foster parent purchases clothing with their own funds within limits on the DSHS 14-154A(X).
    2. The foster parent requests a separate receipt from the vendor for the clothing, signs it, and routes it to the local DCFS office.



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- F. After the purchase, the following steps shall be taken:
1. The social worker compares the DSHS 14-154A(X) to the receipt and resolve any discrepancies with the purchaser.
  2. The worker enters the exact amount of the purchase on the DSHS 14-154A(X) and terminate the service. The termination code must verify that the service was provided.
  3. The local office transmits the DSHS 14-154A(X) to Olympia in accordance with local procedures.
  4. SSPS then issues a warrant to the vendor in the amount authorized.
- G. The vendor receives the warrant, accompanied by form A-2, *Vendor Remittance Advice*, showing the clients and warrant amount. The vendor may match the amount and names on the A-2 with the vendor copy of the DSHS 14-154A(X) and resolve discrepancies with the social worker.

45374 OTHER SOURCES

Resource may be available for special clothing needs through local clothing banks and service organizations.

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**4538 TRANSPORTATION**

**45381 SERVICE DEFINITION**

Transportation activity related to making a placement, necessary during and to support the placement, preventing a placement, or returning a child/runaway who is a dependent in this state.

**45382 ELIGIBILITY**

- A. A child/client of DCFS may be eligible for this service if a transportation need falls within the service definition.
- B. The expenses may be reimbursed upon social worker authorization when the service is consistent with the ISP, supports a permanent plan, or directly prevents a foster/group care placement, and is not payable from another source.
- C. The Regional Administrator shall establish a dollar limit for the total cost of the transportation episode for a child/client, with documented supervisory approval required for amounts above that level.
- D. Within the service definition, the social worker may authorize related travel for the child, parents, relatives, permanent planning resources, and care providers.

**45383 PROCEDURES FOR ACCESS**

- A. The Regional Administrator shall issue procedures to enable social workers to authorize transportation services in accordance with this section.
- B. The social worker must receive written approval in accordance with regional procedures before authorizing transportation services exceeding regional limits.

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- C. The regional procedures must, at minimum, include the following provisions:
1. The social worker completes a social service authorization, DSHS 14-154A(X), for each anticipated vendor, leaving the exact cost of services blank unless it is known. If a foster parent or group/rehabilitative service provider chooses to purchase the transportation service and be reimbursed by the department, the care provider may be the vendor.
  2. At the bottom of the authorization, the social worker writes:
    - a. The maximum amount authorized; e.g., "NOT TO EXCEED \$200." If the travel has already occurred, the social worker opens and closes the DSHS 14-154A/159 in the same action, showing actual amount of payment.
    - b. The name of the purchaser. If the purchaser is the social worker, the worker's supervisor must initial the authorization form.
    - c. The transportation service to be purchased and from whom; for example, "a bus ticket in the amount of \$45.00 dollars to travel from Yakima to Seattle and return using Regional Bus Co."
  3. The social worker routes the client and vendor copy of the authorization to the care provider or user of the transportation.
- D. The purchaser and vendor shall follow these steps for payment to the vendor:
1. The purchaser gives the vendor the Vendor copy of the social service authorization.

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2. The vendor gives the purchaser an itemized receipt for the purchase. The vendor may attach their copy of the receipt to their copy of the DSHS 14-154A(X) so they can be matched with to the remittance advice accompanying the warrant.
  3. The purchaser signs the receipt and routes it to the local DCFS office.
- E. For reimbursement to a foster parent who has provided the transportation, the foster parent submits a signed A-20, *Travel Expense Voucher*, to the local DCFS office.
- F. After the purchase, the following steps shall be taken:
1. The social worker compares the DSHS 14-154A(X) to the receipt and resolve any discrepancies with the purchaser.
  2. The worker enters the exact amount of the purchase on the DSHS 14-154A(X) and terminate the service. The termination code must verify that the service was provided.
  3. The local office transmits the DSHS 14-154(X) to Olympia in accordance with local procedures.
  4. SSPS then issues a warrant to the vendor in the amount authorized.
- G. The vendor receives the warrant, accompanied by form A-2, *Vendor Remittance Advice*, showing the clients and warrant amount. The vendor may match the amount and names on the A-2 with the vendor copy of the DSHS 14-154A(X) and resolve discrepancies with the social worker.

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- H. For Medicaid travel reimbursements to private individuals, the social worker must obtain prior approval from the Medical Assistance Administration's Central Authorization Unit at 1-800-228-6641. If approval is given, the social worker obtains billing instructions from the Central Authorization Unit.

**45384 OTHER RESOURCES**

The social worker attempts to obtain the following resources before committing DCFS to pay transportation costs or authorize payments:

- A. Parents/guardian/family.
- B. Volunteers (individual or organization).
- C. Other states for children who may be the responsibility of the other state.
- D. Schools, especially for education-related transportation needs.
- E. Reimbursement by Medicaid for transportation provided by foster parents, guardian, other family members, or volunteers to/from medical services. If the transportation is for a service covered by a medical coupon, the service should be Medicaid-eligible.
- F. Medicaid using a medical coupon for services from ambulances, cabulances, and taxi providers for medical transportation, requiring prior approval by the Area Medical Unit except in emergency situations.
- G. Foster care transportation funds.

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**4539 IN-PATIENT MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT FOR CHILDREN**

**45391 SERVICE DEFINITION**

Services to provide psychiatric/psychological treatment to children in the care and custody of DCFS in a hospital or clinical setting. See section 4521, Psychological/Psychiatric Services, above, for additional guidance.

13.34 RCW; 71.34 RCW

**45392 ELIGIBILITY**

- A. Children who are in the care and custody of DCFS and who require inpatient mental health treatment are eligible for this service.
- B. No social worker shall seek inpatient treatment of a child in a court-ordered placement (i.e., dependency, Child in Need of Services [CHINS]) without prior written consent of the child's parents whenever possible.
- C. If a parent's prior consent is not possible, then prior approval of the juvenile court is required unless an emergent situation does not allow time for a hearing. In such a case, the social worker will seek court approval within 48 working hours of the placement by requesting a juvenile court hearing.

**45393 PROCEDURES FOR ACCESS**

- A. Children 13 years of age or older may voluntarily commit themselves to inpatient treatment. Actual placement in inpatient treatment for such a children occurs only if the child is accepted through the local Regional Support Network (RSN) screening system.

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- B. Non-Emergent Mental Health Treatment For A Court-Ordered Child
1. The social worker refers the child for a Healthy Kids screening utilizing regional procedures.
  2. The social worker consults his/her supervisor and obtains concurrence to seek inpatient treatment. The social worker may also consult the local Shared Children's Committee or Regional Support Network (RSN) representative prior to formal referral.
  3. For children under court order (i.e., dependency, CHINS), the juvenile court must grant approval to seek inpatient mental health treatment before the social worker formally seeks admission through the local Shared Children's Committee or RSN representative.
  4. Once permission to proceed has been granted by the juvenile court, the DCFS social worker will supply mental health screeners and providers with the information they request to make screening decisions and to provide mental health services.
- C. Emergent Mental Health Treatment For A Child Under Juvenile Court Jurisdiction
1. Emergent treatment must be evaluated, assessed, and deemed as medically necessary by a person specially trained, such as a mental health professional, psychiatrist, or physician. As the result of a mental disorder, the youth's functioning will fall into one of the following categories:

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- a. The youth under age 18 is in danger of serious physical harm or manifests severe deterioration in routine functioning resulting from a failure to receive care essential to personal health or safety;

OR

- b. The youth is a danger to self or others as evidenced by threats or attempts to commit suicide or inflict bodily harm to self or others;

OR

- c. The youth causes substantial loss or damage to the property of others.

- 2. If an emergent situation does not provide time for a hearing prior to inpatient treatment, the social worker will seek court sanction within 48 working hours of placement by requesting a hearing in juvenile court. In such cases, a Healthy Kids examination must occur within 30 days in the absence of a current examination.

D. Non-Emergent Or Emergent Mental Health Treatment For A Child Placed By Voluntary Placement Agreement (VPA)

- 1. In non-emergent situations, the social worker refers the child for a Healthy Kids screening utilizing regional procedures.
- 2. The social worker consults his/her supervisor and obtains concurrence to seek inpatient treatment.

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3. For children placed under a VPA or in parental custody with a service agreement, the custodial parent must provide the authorizing signature for release of information, referral to the Shared Children's Committee or RSN representative, and admission to a facility.
4. If the custodial parent is unavailable, or not in agreement with the need for inpatient treatment, the social worker must file a dependency petition in juvenile court prior to proceeding through the inpatient process. The social worker will request authority to pursue inpatient treatment at the Shelter Care hearing in non-emergent situations.

E. Subsequent Admissions

Any subsequent admissions, emergent or non-emergent, require a new assessment and must follow the procedures outlined above.

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**4540 ADOPTION SERVICES**

**45401 PURPOSE**

The department's adoption program is intended to meet the needs of children who have no legal parents and who are in the department's care and custody by providing opportunities for them to be adopted into stable, nurturing families.

**45402 ELIGIBILITY**

DCFS provides adoption services to any child in the department's custody whose permanency plan is adoption.

**45403 SERVICES TO PARENTS**

- A. The social worker gives consideration to requests of the parent(s) regarding religious or other general characteristics of the adoptive family for their child when those requests are in the best interest of the child.
- B. The social worker must inform Native American parents of the federal/state law requirements regarding the adoption of Native American children and of the department's goals and procedures regarding Native American children. Refer to the ICW Manual.

**45404 SERVICES TO THE CHILD**

- A. The social worker provides ongoing casework and preparation of the child for adoption, which may include:
  - 1. Gathering information to prepare life story books.
  - 2. Counseling the child.

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3. Arranging referrals to various professionals.
- B. The social worker assesses the child's medical and social needs by completing:
1. The life story book.
  2. The DSHS 13-041(X), *Child's Medical and Family Background Report*.
- C. The social worker gives a copy of the completed *Child's Medical and Family Background Report* to the adoptive family before or at the time the child is placed with the adoptive family. The worker shall provide the form to the foster-adopt family and/or relative family planning to adopt the child, following the worker's decision that the family is the adoptive family of choice. The prospective adoptive parents need to read and sign the form. The social worker places the original copy of the form in the child's file for archiving with the child's record.
- D. The social worker refers the pre-adoptive child for an SSI application if not already screened by the SSI facilitator. Funding under Title IV-E for adoption support is available to children eligible for SSI prior to adoption.
- E. Adoption planning occurs before and immediately after termination of parental rights. See section 4330 on open adoption agreements and section 4690 on adoption planning reviews. The goal of review is to explore all possible permanency options available for the child and to choose the best permanency option for the individual child. The reviews are also an opportunity to initiate social and medical assessments if they have not been done, to explore available adoptive family resources, and to develop the recruiting and post-termination case plan for a particular child.

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45405 FAMILY SELECTION AND RECRUITMENT

- A. Family selection and/or family recruitment and matching may be completed through utilization of local or regional adoption consortia and state, regional, and national adoption exchanges.
- B. The social worker refers legally free children who do not have an identified family resource to the Washington Adoption Resource Exchange (WARE) within 30 days of the termination of parental rights.

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1. The social worker sends the WARE Program Manager:
  - a. *Adoption Exchange Child Registration*, DSHS 15-18, and *Child's Medical and Family Background Report*, DSHS 13-041(X).
  - b. A clear photograph of the child.
2. If specific recruitment is desired because the child may be difficult to place, the social worker also sends the DSHS 9-6111, *Release and Consent for Child Specific Recruitment*.
3. The WARE Program Manager then:
  - a. Sends the child's social worker information on potential families.
  - b. Coordinates child specific recruitment activities.
  - c. Upon certain conditions, refers the child to other regional and national adoption exchanges.
  - d. Upon certain conditions approves *Adoption Purchase of Service Child Registrations*, DSHS 10-138.

45406 Placement Decision

- A. The social worker evaluates families referred for a legally free child to determine which of the families can best meet the needs of the child using the following criteria:
  1. The family's ability to meet the physical, cultural, emotional, and mental needs of the child.

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2. The compatibility between the child's personal characteristics and the expectations of all members of the adoptive family.
  3. The specific experiences and/or training the family has had which prepares them to provide for the special needs of the child.
  4. The resources in the family's community which are available to meet the special needs of the child.
  5. The degree to which the family is willing to initiate and participate in medical and/or therapeutic treatment.
- B. The final decision on placement of a child with an adoptive family is be made by the social work staff of the DCFS office which has administrative responsibility for the child. The child's worker makes the final placement selection for families referred from the WARE and other referral sources in conjunction with the CWS supervisor. The DCFS staff consider the following criteria:
1. The child's attachment with the foster family and length of time in the foster care placement.
  2. The ability of the adoptive family to meet the special needs of the child.
  3. The ability of the adoptive family to meet the cultural and ethnic needs of the child.
  4. Willingness to provide long-term contact with siblings who may be placed elsewhere, appropriate birth relatives, former foster families, or other individuals who may have prior relationships with the child.

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5. Whether or not the adoptive family is a birth relative. If a relative, the following factors shall also be evaluated:
  - a. The relatives' previous relationship with the child.
  - b. The relatives' ability to protect the child, if necessary, from the birth parents while avoiding portraying the birth parents in an unnecessarily negative manner.
- C. For foster-adoptive placements, the foster-adoptive family shall sign a *Permanency Planning Placement Agreement*, DSHS 15-175. See section 45315.

45407 VISITATION AND PLACEMENT PLANNING

The child's foster parents may be involved in planning and implementing plans.

- A. The purposes of visitation include:
  1. To initiate contact between the family and the child and to observe the relationship as it develops.
  2. To allow the prospective adoptive parents and child(ren) an opportunity to begin to know each other.
  3. To allow the prospective adoptive family, the adoption worker, the child, and the child's caseworker an opportunity to make a continuing evaluation regarding suitability of the placement.
- B. The child's worker:
  1. Works with the adoptive family to select an appropriate location for the visitation(s).



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2. Accompanies the child on the initial visit.
  3. Discusses each visit with the child and family after they have occurred.
  4. Continues to assess with the adoptive family and the child, as appropriate, whether to proceed with visitation and/or placement.
- C. The length of visits and total amount of time between first meeting and placement will vary. The age and developmental level of the child(ren), their attachment to the foster family, and their emotional readiness to move are all factors to consider. A typical placement transition may include three to five pre-placement visits, with each visit increasing in length until child is actually placed. Open contact between the new family and the family the child is leaving should occur whenever possible and when in the child's best interest.

45408 ADOPTION PLACEMENT SERVICES

- A. For Foster-Adoptive Placements, the social worker needs to refer to section 4536.
- B. For regular adoptive placements, the child's social worker completes the following upon placement of the child:
  1. Provides the adoptive family with a letter permitting them to obtain medical care for the child.
  2. Coordinates/arranges for moving all the child's possessions.
  3. For children registered with WARE, completes and submits DSHS 15-21, *Change of Status*, to the WARE program manager.

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4. Inclusion of the following in the child's case record:
  - a. Certified copies of all legal documents terminating parental rights.
  - b. Signed copy of the *Permanency Planning Placement Agreement*, DSHS 15-175
  - c. A cover memo to the adoptive family worker stating the date of the next six month court review hearing and the address of the court holding jurisdiction.
  
5. Transfers the child's record (all volumes) to the DCFS adoption worker who will be supervising the placement, except in the case of a placement into a private agency adoptive home or into an out-of-state adoptive home.
  - a. For placements within the same local office service area, the child's social worker transfers the child's file for reassignment to the adoption worker.
  - b. For placements into a DCFS home outside the catchment area, the child's social worker transfers the child's file to the receiving adoption worker and maintains a dummy legal file. Legal jurisdiction is retained and dependency reviews continue until the adoption is finalized.
  - c. For placements into a private agency or out-of-state home, the child's file is retained and only copies of necessary documents are provided to the supervising agency adoption worker.

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- d. For out-of-area placements, local protocols shall determine whether the local office adoption worker or child's worker maintains case responsibility pending finalization.

45409 POST-PLACEMENT SERVICES TO THE FAMILY AND THE CHILD

- A. The purpose of post-placement services is to support continuing placement of the child in the family by providing needed services or referrals.
- B. The assigned social worker provides on-going casework supervision of the adoptive placement and coordinate needed support services for the family and/or child. Post-placement support services may include the following:
  - 1. Casework services designed to assist the family and child during the initial adjustment period. Contacts shall be maintained, at a minimum, on a monthly basis and may be face-to-face or telephone.
  - 2. Information and referral to community resources.
  - 3. Formation of and leadership in adoption support groups for parents of adoptive children.
- C. The assigned social worker provides the family with a copy of the adoption support brochure and:
  - 1. Discusses the child's eligibility for medical and/or financial assistance. See Chapter 5000, section 5700.
  - 2. Discusses the ability of the family to adopt without adoption support. In most instances, the worker shall encourage the family to apply for medical support.

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3. Completes applications for adoption support and non-recurring costs as described in section 5700.
  4. Tries to ensure that the family has a signed agreement(s) prior to finalization of the adoption.
- D. At the time when the family, the child, and the adoption worker mutually agree that finalization of the adoption is in the best interest of all persons involved, the adoption worker encourages the family to retain an attorney to file the petition for adoption. If the local court permits, an adoptive parent may petition to adopt without an attorney when there is no need for DCFS to release confidential information; for example, the adoption of an older child when the names of the birth parents are already known to the adopting parents.
- E. The attorney retained by the adoptive family files the petition for adoption. The adoption worker provides the attorney with the following documents and information when the worker is satisfied that finalization is in the best interest of the child and the family:
1. A certified copy of the legal order of termination of parental rights.
  2. *Release and Consent to Adoption* signed by the Regional Administrator or designee or information indicating where to obtain consent if that responsibility does not lie with the Regional Administrator.
  3. Adoption consent from children 14 years of age and older.
  4. A completed *Application for Adoption Re-Registration*, DSHS 9-465, for issuance of the child's revised birth certificate.

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5. The date of filing of the pre-placement report or is intended to be filed with the court.
  6. A copy of the final signed *Adoption Support Agreement* and agreement for non-recurring costs reimbursement, if applicable.
  7. A written request for a copy of the certified decree of adoption after finalization.
- F. The assigned social worker completes court work that includes:
1. Dependency reviews until adoption is finalized.
  2. Individual Service Plans.
  3. Post-placement report.
  4. Notification of GAL and juvenile court that adoption is finalized and obtain dismissal of dependency order.

454101 POST-PLACEMENT REPORT

- A. The court, accepting a petition for adoption, orders a post-placement report to advise the court as to the propriety of the adoption.
1. The department shall be named to complete the post-placement report for a child for whom it provided post-placement services.
  2. The adoption worker completes the *Adoption Data Card*.

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3. If the adoption worker does not intend to appear at the hearing, he/she completes the *Waiver of Notice of Further Hearing*, DSHS 9-54, or the *Acknowledgment of Notice and Declaration of Intent Not to Appear*, DSHS 9-56, provided the departmental recommendation is positive and the parental rights of the child to be adopted have been terminated.
- B. If the post-placement report is negative, the department shall request representation by the Office of Attorney General (or local prosecutor, where applicable) at a hearing on the matter. In this case, the DSHS 9-54 and the DSHS 9-56 shall not be included with the report.

454111 DISRUPTION SERVICES

Disruption services are designed to develop a new placement plan for a child when it becomes evident, prior to finalization of an adoption, that the adoptive placement should not continue.

454121 POST-ADOPTION FINALIZATION SERVICES

Refer to section 4700, Case Resolution/Closure

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**4600 CASE REVIEW**

**4610 GENERAL INFORMATION**

- A. All case plans are reviewed at regular intervals in an effort to ensure that case management for the family is comprehensive in scope, that children receive proper care, and that permanency plans are accomplished in a timely manner. Social workers need to be familiar with case review requirements for different types of case situations.
- B. Case review requirements may differ depending upon the following or other factors:
  - 1. Whether the case originated in CPS, FRS, or CWS.
  - 2. Whether children are in an in-home or out-of-home care situation.
  - 3. Whether there is court involvement.
  - 4. Whether the child is in a cross-cultural placement.
  - 5. Whether the child is a Native American child.
  - 6. Whether the child is in a rehabilitative service placement.
  - 7. Whether the case plan specifies adoption as the permanency plan.
- C. See chapter 2000, section 2562, for requirements relating to Child Protection Team (CPT) staffings.

**4620 SUMMARY ASSESSMENT - RE-ASSESSMENT OF RISK OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

- A. The social worker re-assesses the risk of CA/N utilizing the Summary Assessment Risk Matrix. See Summary Assessment, Chapter 2000.

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- B. The social worker utilizes Summary Assessment Review to evaluate how the risk to the child has changed from the previously completed Summary Assessment. This tool is a key element in determining if service provision has accomplished goals set in the permanency plan for the child. The social worker uses that information to evaluate the permanency planning goals set for the child. For example, if the overall future level of risk remains high and the child has been in out-of-home care for six months with a permanent plan of return home, the social worker may want to re-evaluate the permanent plan to consider termination of parental rights, guardianship, or other plans.
- C. Summary Assessment Reviews are completed on CAMIS for all cases in which the current episode of service and/or placement originating in CPS, for those children who are not legally free.
- D. The social worker completes Summary Assessment Reviews at the following case intervals:
  - 1. Every 90 days for non-court cases served with voluntary service contracts.
  - 2. At case transfer between CPS and CWS.
  - 3. Prior to the return home of a child placed in care due to CA/N.
  - 4. Prior to the re-placement in care of a child who had been returned home.
  - 5. At case closure.
- E. When completing Summary Assessment Reviews for children in out-of-home care, the social worker completes only the following sections:



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1. The risk matrix.
2. The overall level of risk.
3. The finding from the original CPS investigation.
4. Case status.

4630 PERIODIC CASE REVIEW

4631 Legal Requirements

- A. Federal law requires that each child in out-of-home care have a full case review at least every six months from the beginning date of the placement episode. This may be accomplished in a full court review hearing or through a citizen or administrative review.
- B. State law requires that the case of every dependent child be reviewed by the juvenile court every six months from the date of the establishment of dependency or the date of the placement of the child, whichever comes first. Placement is limited to 90 days for children who are in placement as a result of an Child in Need of Services (CHINS) Disposition hearing.
- C. Other types of court hearings or internal staffing may sometimes meet federal requirements for periodic review if:
  1. Parent(s) of the child have been invited to the review or staffing.
  2. One person on the reviewing body is not directly responsible for developing and implementing the case plan.
  3. The review addresses the content of the periodic review.

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4632 Content of Periodic Reviews

Periodic reviews cover the entire case plan for the child. They shall include a review of:

- A. Need or reason for the child's continued placement.
- B. The ISP.
- C. The appropriateness of the type of placement and the permanent plan.
- D. The risk factors which necessitated placement.
- E. Parental compliance with the case plan and progress toward permanency.
- F. The projected date that the permanent plan will be completed.
- G. Whether parents have been notified and/or involved in agency decision-making especially as it relates to changes in visitation, placement, and the child's legal status.

4640 COURT REVIEW HEARINGS

Court review hearings must be held every six months from the date of placement or establishment of dependency, whichever comes first. Six month reviews continue to occur as long as the child remains dependent or until a dependency guardianship has been established.

4650 ADMINISTRATIVE CASE REVIEW

- A. Administrative case review must occur in the following situations:

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1. Court procedures or hearings have not met the federal guidelines or time-frames for periodic review.
  2. The social worker requests a voluntary placement extension beyond six months.
- B. Administrative review may be used for other purposes as determined by the Regional Administrator.
- C. The social worker shall give reasonable advance notice of the date, time, and place of review to:
1. Parents.
  2. Children over the age of 12.
  3. Child's tribe, in accordance with the ICW Manual.
- D. With the exception of the GAL and parents' attorney, parents must give written consent to the attendance of others at the review. Social workers shall encourage such permission. Foster care providers often have valuable information about the child's daily life, medical, educational and emotional condition. They may be invited into the review without parental permission but only for the purpose of giving information about the child's adjustment to out-of-home care and to give the reviewers information on the child's current condition.

4651 Recommendations from Review

The person designated by the review committee shall complete the *Administrative Review Form*, DSHS 05-203, after the review. The Administrative Review Coordinator shall send copies of the DSHS 05-203 to:

- A. The parents of the child.

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- B. The social worker for the child.
- C. Children over 12 subject to the review.
- D. The Native American child's tribe, when applicable.
- E. The private agency social worker responsible for placement of the child, when applicable.
- F. The GAL for the child.

**4660 CITIZEN REVIEW BOARDS**

Communities utilizing Citizen Review Boards have significantly different requirements for court review than non-citizen review counties. Citizen review replaces some court reviews in pilot sites. Citizen review occurs at three months, six months, 12 months, and annually thereafter during the child's placement episode. Reviews are scheduled by the juvenile court Citizen Review Board.

**4661 Preparation for Citizen Review**

- A. The social worker sends a copy of the written parental consent to the local Citizen Review Board within 30 days of placement when a child is placed in out-of-home care without court action. When a child is placed by court order, the court is legally required to notify the Citizen Review Board.
- B. The social worker sends copies of the ISP, DSHS 15-209(X), to the Citizen Review Board at least 14 days prior to any scheduled citizen review.

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4670 PERMANENCY PLANNING HEARING

- A. The juvenile court makes a determination regarding the future status of the child by 18 months of the child's placement episode or by the 12th month of placement for children age 10 and under. To provide reasonable assurance that this has occurred, permanency planning hearings are held for any child in placement by the 18th or 12th month, as applicable, of original placement date and annually thereafter.
- B. The social worker shall notify the child's foster parent(s) or relative care provider(s) of the date and location of permanency planning hearings pertaining to the child.

4671 Preparation for Permanency Planning Hearings

- A. The social worker submits an updated ISP, DSHS 15-209(X), to the juvenile court prior to the permanency planning hearing. This report is submitted within time-frames established by regional and juvenile court policy. The ISP submitted for a permanency planning hearing shall clearly delineate the DCFS recommendations for permanency planning.
- B. While it is always necessary when updating the ISP to review the parents' progress towards improving the conditions leading to the child's placement in out-of-home care, it is particularly important that a careful review of the permanency plan occur at the time of the permanency planning review. If, at this point, the social worker is still recommending to the court that eventual return home will occur, the worker shall carefully describe to the court how this view is consistent with the child's right to early achievement of a safe, permanent home. The worker carefully considers all alternative permanency plans before making a recommendation on either a primary or an alternative plan to the court.

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4680 LICWAC REVIEW

For procedures regarding review of Native American children in placement, the social worker follows the requirements contained in the ICW Manual.

4690 ADOPTION PLANNING REVIEW

- A. DCFS shall conduct two adoption planning reviews on behalf of each child for whom termination of parental rights is being sought or has been achieved. The DCFS reviewers use the DSHS 15-174, *Adoption Planning Review Report*, during the first and second adoption planning reviews. The form provides the basic criteria for selection of adoptive placement with relatives or foster parents. The child's worker completes the form and indicates the adoption or other permanent plan for the child. The worker shall retain a copy of the form in the child's case record.
- B. The goals of these reviews are as follows:
1. To explore all possible permanency resources for each staffed child.
  2. To determine whether adoption or another permanent planning outcome is in the continuing best interest of the child.
  3. To expedite and implement the permanency plan.
- C. These reviews shall be attended, at a minimum, by the child's worker, either or both the child welfare and the adoption supervisor, and the adoption worker.
- D. These reviews shall occur at the following times:

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1. An Initial Adoption Planning Review shall take place within 30 days of the referral to the Office of the Attorney General for termination of parental rights.
2. Another Adoption Planning Review shall take place within no less than 30 days of the order of termination of parental rights.

4691 Adoption Planning Review at Time of Decision to Terminate

A. The purposes of this review are as follows:

1. To initiate a social and medical assessment for each child for adoption planning.
2. To conduct an initial exploration of all possible adoptive resources for the child, including adoption by relatives, foster parents, or by a family registered with the WARE.
3. To decide whether to initiate an adoptive home study, as needed, for a relative or foster parent who appears to be a strong candidate to be the adoptive parent. For foster-adoption, the adoptive home study is normally completed prior to the child's placement.
4. To determine whether the child should be considered for a foster-adoptive placement.
5. To determine an alternative permanent plan for the child if adoption has been ruled out as the placement of choice for the child.
6. To determine the case plan for the child pending the termination of parental rights.

B. If the decision is made to initiate a relative or foster parent adoptive home study, the adoption worker will be requested to do this.

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4692 Adoption Planning Review at Termination

The purposes of this review are as follows:

- A. To review the child's social/medical status as indicated by information compiled since the initial adoption planning review.
- B. To evaluate the relative or foster parent adoptive home study if one was requested at the initial review, and to make recommendations regarding the advisability of the placement.
- C. To determine if the adoptive parents will seek adoption support.
- D. To explore the availability of other adoptive and/or recruitment resources if an adoptive plan has not been developed.
- E. To develop an alternative long-term plan if adoption is not being considered as an option for the child; to document the rationale for not pursuing an adoptive placement.

46100 SUPERVISORY CASE REVIEW

46101 General Case Review

The supervisor shall review all cases at least monthly in case conferences with the social worker in accordance with the supervisory oversight requirements of the *Operations Manual*. The supervisor shall document the review on a log or format as determined by regional, area, or unit policy.



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46102 Services Open Under Voluntary Service Contracts

The supervisor shall review all cases open for services under a voluntary service contract with the family every 90 days. The worker shall close such cases unless written approval has been obtained from the supervisor for continuing service provision.

46103 Services Open Under Court Authority

The supervisor shall review and sign all ISPs submitted by the social worker to the court for court hearings and reviews.

46104 Supervisory Checklist

See the *Operations Manual*, Chapter 6000, section 6200, for requirements for case review using a supervisory checklist.

**4700 CASE RESOLUTION/CLOSURE**

4710 GENERAL

- A. The CPS worker shall complete CPS investigations within 90 days of the date of referral.
- B. FRS episodes of service are concluded within 90 days of the date of referral.
- C. CWS episodes of service are concluded according to the following guidelines:
  - 1. The social worker closes cases open without court action if the supervisor does not provide written approval every 90 days to keep the case open.

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2. The social worker completes the Summary Assessment Risk Matrix, Findings, Narrative and Disposition on CAMIS prior to the closure of any case that originated in CPS for the current episode of service for children who are not legally free.

**4720 CASES ORIGINATING IN CPS WITH NO COURT AND NO PLACEMENT ACTIVITY**

- A. The social worker may close continuing service cases when the problems resulting in CA/N identified in the *Summary Assessment Form* have been alleviated, and no new factors have been discovered which would increase the risk of CA/N.
- B. The worker may close other cases in which there is a continuing risk of CA/N but which are not likely to be resolved through treatment efforts when:
  1. Further voluntary services are not available or are rejected.
  2. There is no plan to file a dependency petition.

**4730 COURT AND/OR PLACEMENT CASES**

- A. DCFS shall not close cases for service while a supervised dependency or CHINS order is in effect or within six months of the time a child is returned to parental care as a result of a dependency order.
- B. The social worker shall complete all forms and narrative recording within 90 days of a decision to terminate services and close a case.
- C. The supervisor shall review both CAMIS and the case folder for accuracy and completeness and sign-off the closure in the case record before closure or transfer to another service.

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- D. For legally free children who are not adopted and the child leaves care and is at least 18 years of age, the social worker prepares the file for archiving and send it to Olympia adoption archives.

4740 CLOSURE OF ADOPTION CASES

Following the completion of adoption finalization, the social worker:

- A. Terminates all DCFS medical and foster care payments effective the last day of the month in which the adoption is finalized.
- B. Forwards a copy of the adoption decree to the local office of the Attorney General or to the court, depending on local procedures, requesting that the dependency of the child be dismissed.
- C. Sends notification of finalization, including a certified copy of the adoption decree, to the regional adoption support program manager, when the child is to receive adoption support services.
- D. Provides notification to the CSO, if it is a relative adoption and the child is receiving AFDC or SSI.
- E. Arranges for notification to the Trust Fund Unit.
- F. Notifies the Social Security Administration if the child is on SSI or SSA Title II, survivor's benefits.
- G. Prepare the child's adoption file for archiving following procedures in the *Operations Manual*, chapter 13000, section 13930. Do not archive any file where SSI or SSA benefits determination is still pending.
- H. Sends the prepared file, including all Title IV-E and IV-A/CEAP documents, to adoption archives.

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- I. Refers the family to any on-going community and adoption support groups as needed and to the Social Security Administration to apply to be Representative Payee for benefits, if applicable.
- J. Provide ongoing support and information and referral as requested and available through DCFS.
- K. Provides other post-finalization services to any adoptive person or family, including:
  - 1. On-going information and referral to community adoptive support services.
  - 2. A copy of the *Search* brochure to persons seeking information.
  - 3. Referral of adoptees to the headquarters adoption program manager to search information from archived records.
- L. Informs the adoptive family in those situations in which trust money is available and instruct the family to apply at the agency providing benefits (e.g., SSI or Social Security) if they wish to receive the trust. The adoptive family must be made aware that their confidentiality cannot be guaranteed if application for these funds is made. The adoption worker shall request the family to confirm in writing if they do not wish to apply for either type of benefit.
- M. If the child is Native American, follow the provisions of the DCFS ICW Manual in providing notification to the child's tribe.

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CHAPTER 5000

CASE SUPPORTS

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**5100 FOSTER FAMILY HOME LICENSING**

**5110 INTRODUCTION**

- A. Chapter 74.15 Revised Code of Washington (RCW), extracted in booklet form DSHS 22-101, and the Minimum Licensing Requirements (MLR) contained in Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 388-73, extracted in booklet DSHS 22-12, constitute the basic practice guide for licensers of foster family homes. This section contains complementary information.
- B. The following is a statement of legislative intent: Children placed in foster care are particularly vulnerable and have a special need for placement in an environment that is stable, safe, and nurturing. For this reason, foster homes should be held to a high standard of care, and department decisions regarding denial, suspension, or revocation of foster care licenses should be upheld on review if there are reasonable grounds for such action.

**5120 INQUIRY**

Staff designated by each Division of Licensed Resources (DLR) Regional Manager shall provide information about foster home licensing requirements, orientation, and pre-service training, upon request. The local DLR Office of Foster Care Licensing (OFCL) office shall establish procedures to give out forms and other pertinent information, either at orientation meetings or by mail. The application packet provided to the potential applicant shall include those documents and materials prescribed by regional or local policy and procedure.

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5130 LICENSING AND RE-LICENSING

5131 Application

- A. The local office shall receive and date-stamp in applications and accompanying documents from prospective foster parents, according to local procedure.
- B. Once the licenser has determined that the applicant has submitted a completed and signed application, the licenser and the Regional Manager shall make a timely decision to approve or deny the license. Each Regional Manager shall establish regional policy to define timeliness.
- C. The local office shall not accept applications for foster family home licenses from department employees, who shall be licensed only in accordance with DSHS Administrative Policy 6.16. See the *Operations Manual*, chapter 8000, section 8120, for limitations on licensing of DSHS staff as foster parents and the role of Child Placing Agencies (CPA).

5132 Licensing Study

The usual steps for processing an application are:

- A. The licenser or clerical person designated by local procedure enters the application information into the Case and Management Information System (CAMIS) licensing module, makes up a file folder, and checks Child Protective Services (CPS) and local office records, including CAMIS, for prior involvement with the agency.
- B. The clerk or licenser mails out reference letters to the people designated by the applicant, with return envelopes stamped with the licenser's name.

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- C. The licenser, or support staff, submits completed forms to conduct a criminal background check, as outlined in the *Operations Manual*, Chapter 5000, section 5500. For applicants who have resided in the state less than three years, finger print checks must be completed for all persons age 16 and above. See section 5500 for steps to follow. The assigned staff completes a DCFS records check in CAMIS as part of the background check.



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- D. Within one week after receipt of the application packet, the licenser makes contact with the applicant to inform them that the process has started and to coordinate a time-frame for the face-to-face interviews. The applicant(s) can also share when they expect to complete their requirements, including TB tests and First Aid/CPR/AIDS training. If the licenser makes initial contact by telephone, he/she follows up with a letter so that the applicant has the information in writing along with the licenser's name and telephone number for future use.
  
- E. The foster family home licenser completes a study of the applicant(s) and family, using the *Foster Home Assessment*, DSHS 10-51, including family interviews to evaluate character, personal history from childhood to the present, marriages and relationships, trauma and crises, coping skills, child care skills and experience, and any other pertinent information which bears on the applicant(s)' ability to care for children.
  
- F. The licenser utilizes two checklists to assure that compliance with MLR is met before the license is issued. The checklists are the *Licensing File Checklist - Foster Family Care*, DSHS 10-182, and *Home Inspection Checklist for Foster Family Care Licensing*, DSHS 10-183.
  
- G. The licenser determines that the applicant(s) have sufficient income to meet their own and their family's personal needs without reliance on foster care payments made in behalf of children in their care. Foster parents shall not be dependent on foster care payments for the support of themselves or their own households. Sufficiency is defined by the AFDC or General Assistance payment standard of income for the household adjusted for family size.
  
- H. The licenser may require the applicant to furnish additional pertinent information.

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5133 Decision on Licensure

- A. All requirements of chapter 388-73 WAC must be met before the individual designated by the Chief, OFCL, signs and issues the license.
  
- B. If the licenser determines that a person is disqualified from association with a child care agency for not meeting minimum licensing requirements of Chapters 74.15 RCW and WAC 388-73, the Regional Manager, or designee, shall give written notice of disqualification to the person. The notice shall state what the person is disqualified from doing, the reasons for the disqualification, and the applicable law under which the person is disqualified.
  - 1. The licenser applies the procedures contained in RCW 43.20A.205, regarding Denial, Suspension, Revocation, or Modification of License, when issuing a notice of disqualification to a person.
  - 2. A licensee under chapter 74.15 RCW may not allow a person disqualified under this section to associate with the licensee's agency. Disqualification of a person may not be contested by a licensee.
  - 3. If a notice of disqualification is based on a CPS finding of abuse and neglect, and after a fair hearing it is determined that the allegations are not supported by a preponderance of the evidence, the assigned social worker and licenser shall amend the records to so state.

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4. The Chief, OFCL, or designee, in accordance with WAC 388-330-030, may remove a disqualification based on conviction of a crime. The Chief, OFCL, or designee may remove a disqualification based on another reason if the disqualified person demonstrates by clear, cogent, and convincing evidence that he or she is sufficiently rehabilitated to warrant public trust and to comply with the requirements of chapters 74.15 RCW and 388-73 WAC.
  
- C. Under the provisions of WAC 388-73-016, EXCEPTIONS TO RULES, the Chief, OFCL, or designee, may issue a time-limited waiver to specific requirements for a specific child, if the waiver does not jeopardize the child's health and safety. With a documented, approved waiver, the license issuing authority may issue the license.
  
- D. Initial License
  1. Private Agencies and Group Care Facilities
    - a. Only the Regional Manager responsible for licensing, through the regional licenser, may, at his or her discretion, issue an initial license, formerly known as a provisional license, instead of a full license to an agency or facility (group care setting or child placing agency).
    - b. The initial license may be issued for a period not to exceed six months, renewable for a period not to exceed two years, to allow the agency or facility reasonable time to become eligible for full license.
    - c. The Regional Manager may not delegate responsibility for issuing an initial license to a CPS, CWS, or FRS child placement worker.

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2. Foster Family Homes

- a. The Regional Manager responsible for licensing, through the foster family home licensor, may, at his or her discretion, issue an initial license instead of a full license to a foster family home.
- b. The Regional Manager may not delegate responsibility for issuing an initial license to a CPS, CWS, or FRS child placement worker.
- c. The Regional Manager shall not grant an initial license to a foster family home unless the following conditions are met:
  - i. The license is limited so that the licensee is authorized to provide care only to a specific child or specific children.

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- ii. The licenser has determined that the licensee has a relationship with the child, and the child is comfortable with the licensee, or that it would otherwise be in the child's best interest to remain or be placed in the licensee's home.
- iii. The initial license is issued for a period not to exceed 90 days.
- d. Before placing a child in a home for which an initial license is being sought or has been granted, assigned staff must complete a home study/assessment in conformity with the requirements of the *CA Case Services Policy Manual*, Chapter 4000, section 4424, and the *CA Practices and Procedures Guide*, chapter 4000, section 4253, and this chapter, section 5230 and 5231.

5134 Re-licensing

- A. Re-licensing occurs when the licensee moves to a new residence and at three year intervals following issuance of the license.
  - 1. The license issued under section 5133 and chapter 74.15 RCW is not transferable and applies only to the licensee and the location stated in the application.
  - 2. For licensed foster family homes having an acceptable history of child care, the license may remain in effect for two weeks after a move, except that this will apply only if the family remains intact.

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- B. Prior to expiration of an existing license, the licenser or support staff, as determined by local procedure, sends a re-application form to the licensee sufficiently in advance of the expiration date of the license to provide time for return of the signed re-application and department action before the license expires. If the licensee submits a signed application before the expiration date, the old license remains in effect until the department acts on the re-application. The licenser sends the forms and documents defined by regional or local procedures to the licensee as part of the re-application packet.



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- C. For renewal of a license, the licenser rechecks the criminal history and DCFS files, including CAMIS, and reviews the experiences of the past licensing period with the licensee.
- D. The licenser makes a home visit to check for continuing compliance with health and safety aspects as outlined in Checklist DSHS 10-183.
- E. The licenser completes the *Foster Home Reassessment*, DSHS 10-50.
- F. The licenser checks to see that the applicant/licensee has updated their Discipline policy, First Aid and CPR training, and that the home meets the health and safety check.
- G. At any time during licensure, the licenser may modify or change the numbers, ages, and types of children on the license, depending on the circumstances and/or wishes of the licensee and the evaluation of the licenser.
- H. The local office shall determine whether to issue a new license per section 5133 above.

5135 Re-Evaluation

- A. The licenser re-evaluates the home for suitability for continuing licensure or adjustment to the license, as well as affect on child(ren) in placement, under the following conditions:
  - 1. Each time a person other than a child in placement moves in or out of the home.
  - 2. The licensed foster parents divorce or separate.
  - 3. Serious illness or death of a licensed provider occurs.

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- B. The licensor shall complete a criminal history and background check as described in the *Operations Manual*, Chapter 5000, section 5500, on each new person residing in the home, shall interview the licensee and other appropriate parties, and request other information and documentation, as necessary, to complete the re-evaluation of the home. The licensor shall document the re-evaluation in the licensing file.
- C. Each licensed facility shall be informed in writing at the time of re-evaluation that it must routinely report all suspected criminal activity and significant events to the licensor in accordance with incident reporting procedures.

5140 COMPLAINT INVESTIGATION

- A. The local or other designated office shall conduct investigations of alleged child abuse or neglect (CA/N) and alleged non-compliance with licensing standards in accordance with *Operations Manual*, Chapter 5000, section 5300.
- B. The local office shall staff each licensing incident report with the CPS investigator, the licensor, their supervisors, social workers for children in the home, and the area manager to assure close communication and clarity of expectations and actions.

5150 ACTION ON LICENSES

- A. In those cases where an investigation has been completed and substantiation of CA/N has occurred and/or serious non-compliance with MLR has been verified (with unsuccessful corrective action measures), the licensor shall consider taking action against the license. A determination as to whether licensing action is warranted shall be made following case staffing and consultation with the Attorney General's Office as provided below.

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B. Probationary License

1. The licenser may issue a probationary license to a licensee who has had a license but is temporarily unable to comply with a rule or has been the subject of multiple complaints or concerns about noncompliance if the following conditions apply:
  - a. The noncompliance does not present an immediate threat to the health and well-being of the children but would be likely to do so if allowed to continue.
  - b. The licensee has a plan approved by the licenser to correct the area of noncompliance within the probationary period.
2. A probationary license may be issued for up to six months and, at the discretion of the licenser and supervisor, may be extended for an additional six months.
3. The department shall immediately terminate the probationary license if, at any time, the noncompliance for which the probationary license was issued presents an immediate threat to the health or well-being of the children.
4. An existing license is invalidated when a probationary license is issued.
5. At the expiration of the probationary license, the department shall reinstate the original license for the remainder of its term, issue a new license, or revoke the original license.

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C. The licenser shall staff the case with all involved DCFS staff, including the CPS investigator, social workers for children in the home, and appropriate supervisory and administrative personnel. The licenser shall formally inform all affected staff of corrective or stop placement actions.

D. Denial, Suspension, and Revocation

When considering denial, suspension, or revocation, the licenser shall confer with the assigned Assistant Attorney General (AAG) to determine appropriate action. If a determination is made to take licensing action, the licenser shall prepare a draft denial, suspension, or revocation (as applicable) letter for review by the AAG. The draft letter shall include:

1. A concise summary of the CPS allegations (if applicable), RCW, and MLR violations, findings, and conclusions.
2. Documentation of corrective action attempted, if appropriate.
3. Detailed citation of all applicable RCW/MLRs violated.
4. Complete information advising the licensee of their administrative hearing rights, including the filing process and time-frames.

E. Upon approval as to form and content by the AAG, the Regional Manager, as the regional licensing authority, shall sign and send the final letter by certified mail to the licensee or other proper method of service as provided in Chapter 43.20A RCW.

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- F. In any adjudicative proceeding regarding the denial, modification, suspension, or revocation of a foster family home license, the department's decision shall be upheld if there is reasonable cause to believe that:
1. The applicant or licensee lacks the character, suitability, or competence to care for children placed in out-of-home care;
  2. The applicant or licensee has failed or refused to comply with any provision of chapter 74.15 RCW, the licensing chapter, RCW 74.13.031, authorizing child welfare services, or WAC 388-73; or
  3. The conditions required for issuance of a license under chapter 74.15 RCW and RCW 74.13.031 have ceased to exist with respect to such licenses.
- RCW 74.15.130(2)

5160 RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF HOMES

Recruitment and retention activities are an on-going state-wide process, with emphasis in the local area on the need for specially skilled homes for specific children. Recruitment is primarily a responsibility of DCFS and a secondary responsibility of DLR and the licenser. Assigned DCFS staff are encouraged to conduct outreach to people of different racial and ethnic backgrounds as part of a regular and periodic effort to recruit new homes.

5170 PLACEMENT ACTIVITIES

5171 Licenser Role

- A. The licensing regulatory functions are designed to safeguard the well-being of children in out-of-home placements. Therefore, the primary duty of a licenser is to periodically review whether the applicant/licensee is in compliance with MLR.

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- B. The licenser does not play a role as a placement worker, but has a secondary responsibility as a resource developer.
- C. The Regional Manager manages the role of licenser under the following conditions:
  - 1. Each Regional Manager develops procedures which specifically outline how staff will carry out licensing and monitoring functions. Such procedures shall address at least:
    - a. Waiver processing and approval.
    - b. Processing of Incident Reports.
    - c. Complaints/corrective actions.
    - d. Shared decision-making.
    - e. Separation of functions for licensers.
  - 2. The local or other designated office shall conduct all investigations of incidents in licensed facilities in conformance with the *Operations Manual*, Chapter 5000, section 5300.
  - 3. The Regional Manager shall, within available resources, arrange for training for licensers and other affected staff specifically designed to provide increased expertise and ongoing clarification of job functions and expectations.

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4. The Regional Manager is expected to maintain a complete separation of child welfare case services from licensing duties in all offices.
5. The Regional Manager shall provide ongoing case consultation with each licensor to identify or eliminate any possible situations that could result in conflict arising from regulatory as opposed to placement issues.
6. The licensor shall staff all problematic licensed homes with the social workers for children placed, the DLR CPS investigator assigned to do incident reports, and involved supervisors. The staffing shall consider, with other issues identified by the group, conclusions of the CPS or licensing investigation(s) and recommendations for corrective action. The staffing shall also consider the cumulative seriousness of multiple complaints.
7. The licensor shall request consultation with the AAG regarding proposed corrective actions resulting from MLR violations.
8. The Regional Manager and the licensor shall discuss and review all requests for waivers and compliance agreements for children's health and safety needs. Neither the licensor nor the Regional Manager shall endorse such a request if it compromises health and safety. They shall seek administrative consultation on a case by case basis.

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9. If a serious issue is identified in a licensed home with or without a finding of abuse/neglect and a conflict occurs between the licensor of the home and the social worker for the child(ren) placed, the assigned supervisors for those staff shall resolve the conflict, consistent with the *Operations Manual*, Chapter 5000, section 5100. The protection of the children involved shall be paramount to any other consideration.
  
10. Where the DCFS supervisor and the OFCL Regional Manager are unable to resolve the conflict between the workers, the Regional Manager and the appropriate Area Manager shall make an effort to resolve the issue. If they are unable to do so, the Regional Administrator and the Chief, OFCL, will make the final decision.

5172 Considerations for Placements

When it is necessary to place a child or sibling group into foster care, the focus of the placement worker and the worker assigned to the child(ren) is first on meeting the child(ren)'s individual needs by providing the least restrictive possible placement. When the assigned worker requests a foster home for a child(ren), the placement worker consults the licensor, as appropriate, and considers the following when identifying a suitable home:

- A. The child(ren)'s proximity to their own home and family to facilitate visitation with parents.
  
- B. Closeness to the child(ren)'s school or child day care so that attendance is not disrupted.
  
- C. Cultural and ethnic compatibility with the foster home.

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- D. In the case of behaviors that pose a danger to other children, a home that has either no children or children older than the child being placed.

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- E. If many medical or counseling appointments are anticipated, the availability of a caretaker or substitute at home, which is essential with medically fragile or severely disabled/special needs children.
- F. The experience and skill level of the foster parent.
- G. The capability of the foster parent to meet the identified needs of the child, such as behavioral or physical needs.

The placement worker uses these primary factors plus other case-specific and unique criteria as guides in searching for the most appropriate placement.

5180 FOSTER PARENT SUPPORTS

5181 Training

- A. The local office licenser shall offer Orientation and Pre-Service Training on a regular basis and sends notice of classes to those potential applicants who have inquired about a license. The licenser has applicants complete Pre-Service Training prior to approving the license, unless attendance has been postponed by a properly authorized waiver, to the extent provided by law and limited to 90 days.
- B. Children's Administration provides more comprehensive training, including FosterParentScope. To be eligible to receive Special Rate and Exceptional Cost payments, a foster parent shall have successfully completed FosterParentScope. The Regional Administrator may reimburse child care and mileage at state rates, upon request.
- C. The licenser identifies and makes available other training opportunities for foster parents, as budgets permit. The licenser shall encourage the foster parents' participation.

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5182 Support Services

- A. The licensor often becomes aware of problems or concerns which arise due to child(ren)'s behavior, payment issues, communication between the social worker and the foster parent, or conflicts regarding case plans. The licensor shall attempt to clear up such questions by providing general information and refer the foster parent to the child's worker, the worker's supervisor, and/or inform the worker and the supervisor of the problems/concerns. At other times, the licensor may convene a meeting of concerned parties to open communication and resolve issues.
- B. The licensor informs the foster parents that they have access to peer support through the state-wide Foster Parents Association of Washington State (FPAWS). The licensor also provides information to foster parents about availability of Foster Intervention/Retention Support Team (FIRST) at the time of licensing, upon request, and at the time of a CPS investigation.
- C. Support services, such as respite care, may be available but can vary from region to region, depending on budgetary allotments and program development. See Chapter 4000, Section 4510, for a description of Respite Care for foster parents. The Regional Administrator shall issue procedures identifying the nature of such services available in the region and the steps the DCFS social worker must take in behalf of the licensee to access them.

5183 Ancillary Supports

The social worker consults regional procedures to access ancillary support services for foster parents. Home Finders are a resource to provide information on regional availability of this service.

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5190 FILE MAINTENANCE

Each Regional Manager shall have staff maintain Family Foster Home Licensing files in accordance with record management requirements of the *Operations Manual*, Chapter 13000, section 13500.

5200 **RELATIVE CARETAKERS AND NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS**

5210 SERVICE DESCRIPTION

DCFS considers relatives, including the non-custodial parent, to be a first priority for placement of children who are removed from their homes, provided the relatives are assessed as being appropriate to the child's needs and to be capable and willing to cooperate with the case plan. See the *Operations Manual*, chapter 8000, section 8120, for limitations on licensing of DSHS staff, including relatives, as foster parents and the role of CPAs.

5220 ELIGIBILITY

Relatives who can assist DCFS and the family in meeting the child's needs are eligible for consideration for placement. Relatives are considered to be those persons who are related to the child by blood, marriage, or adoption. Some relatives who are more distantly related must be licensed as family foster homes.

RCW 74.15.020(4)(a)

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5230 PROCEDURES

A. Relatives of the child exempt from licensing

1. Persons related by blood, marriage or legal adoption, including:

Grandparent	Step Parent	Uncle	Brother
Step Brother	Aunt	Sister	Step Sister
First Cousin	Nephew	Niece	

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Persons of preceding generations related by blood or adoption as denoted by prefixes of grand, great, and great-great.

2. Spouses of the above persons, even after the marriage is terminated.
3. "Extended family members" as defined by law or custom of the Native American child's tribe or, in the absence of such law or custom, a person who has reached the age of 18 and who is related to the child as defined in this section and further including second cousin and brother-in-law or sister-in-law.

Any other relatives must be licensed if DCFS or a child placing agency makes or supervises the placement.

- B. To consider a relative who is exempt from licensing as a caretaker, the social worker completes a home study/assessment. The worker completes the study prior to placement, except in the case of a parent making the placement before DCFS takes custody or pursuant to a Shelter Care order or a Dependency disposition order.

5231 Home Study/Assessment

- A. See Chapter 4000, section 4253, paragraph D, for general requirements for home studies. In addition, the social worker shall document an assessment of appropriateness, including:
  1. A formal criminal history and background inquiry, using the DSHS 14-239(X) to the Washington State Patrol and to local law enforcement.
  2. A review of agency files, including CAMIS, for background information.
  3. An assessment of capability to care for the child.

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4. An assessment of willingness to cooperate with the case plan.
- B. Additionally, the social worker may include in the Home Study/Assessment such things as:
1. Consideration of the emotional relationship between the child and relative(s) and between parent(s) and relative(s).
  2. Characteristics of the relative(s) that will be supportive to the child and parent(s).
  3. Consideration of housing and sleeping quarters.
  4. Distances to services and visitation by the parent(s).
  5. Experience in parenting.
  6. Suitability of relative(s)' physical and mental health to provide for the child's care.
  7. A review of relative(s)' needs and specific supports required for the relative(s) to become or remain an available and capable caretaker.
  8. A review of relative(s)' attitude(s) toward services being provided or potentially provided.
  9. A review of relative(s)' commitment and strengths to prohibit contact by a parent under unsafe circumstances or if otherwise required.
  10. A review of relative(s)' commitment to support and assist if possible in visitations.

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11. A discussion of all possible permanency plans and the relative(s)' attitude(s) toward possible outcomes and their willingness to cooperate in achieving a permanent family for the child, including the relative(s)' degree of interest as a potential permanent family.
- C. The social worker shall note consideration of any relative, and the conclusions, in the case narrative. The worker documents the reason a relative(s) is not being further considered as a placement resource at that time. If the worker completes a home study document, he/she will reference it in the narrative.

5232 Maintenance Funding

- A. Many relatives are eligible for Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) payment on behalf of the child as a relative of specified degree. WAC 388-24-125(1)(a) lists these relatives and includes those relatives identified in section 5230(A) above with the exclusion of "step" relatives and "extended family members" as defined by tribal law or custom that are not included in section 5230(A)(1) or (2).
- B. Relatives who are not of the specified degree, as defined in WAC 388-24-125, are eligible for state-funded foster care, provided they are licensed as foster family homes. Examples are a second cousin of the child, a parent's partner, or the partner's relative.

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- C. Some relatives, provided they are licensed as foster family homes, are eligible to receive foster care funds that are federally matched. They can receive this if the child being placed is eligible for federal funding for the placement. Eligibility is determined by the DCFS Financial Services Specialist. If the child is determined to be federal Title IV-E eligible, then the relative who is also licensed has a choice between receiving foster care (AFDC-FC) payments or public assistance (AFDC-Relative Payee). Since the amount of the foster care payment varies with the age of the child, it may be to the relative's advantage to select public assistance rather than foster care.
- D. The social worker follows the steps outlined in the *Operations Manual*, Chapter 11000, on federal funding, for proper eligibility determination.
- E. Relatives may apply to be the representative payee for SSI/SSA benefits for a related child living with them. If DCFS holds a dependency, DSHS will usually remain payee until dependency is dismissed.

5240 OTHER RESOURCES

A guide for Home Studies is included in the Interstate Compact handbook/ practice guide. See also chapter 4000, section 4527, on placing with relatives.

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**5300 ADOPTIVE FAMILY HOMES WAC 388-70-400-499**

**5310 SERVICES TO ADOPTIVE FAMILY APPLICANT**

The adoption family worker provides services to adoptive family applicants. The adoption worker shall participate in efforts to recruit families who want to adopt children with special needs and who are in the care of DCFS. This activity includes both general recruitment and child specific recruitment. The adoption program manager and the program manager of the Washington Adoption Resource Exchange (WARE) are available to provide consultation and recruitment tools. The use of the word "family" in this section includes single parents.

**5311 Recruitment**

- A. General recruitment is designed to acquaint the public with issues involved with the adoption of children with special needs and to interest families in providing this type of service. The social worker may include the following types of activities in general recruitment:
1. Convene public adoption interest meetings on a regular basis.
  2. Speak at various group meetings to discuss adoption.
  3. Develop a support group of current adoptive parents to participate in recruitment activities.
  4. Develop an adoption booth for placement at fairs, libraries, and other public places.
  5. Work with the media to present prepared Public Service Announcements.
- B. Child specific recruitment is designed to identify a family for a waiting child. The social worker may include the following activities:

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1. Present information about children from the WARE Bulletin and the Northwest Adoption Exchange (NWAEE) photo-listing to families expressing interest in adoption of a child with special needs.
2. Show slide or video presentations of waiting children at public adoption interest meetings.
3. Work with the media to develop regular features of waiting children.

5320 INTAKE

- A. All family inquiries regarding adoption shall be referred directly to the adoption worker.
  1. The worker shall invite the families to an adoption orientation, if one is available.
    - a. Orientation meetings may be held either with individuals or with a group of families to provide the family with sufficient information regarding adoption through DCFS to enable them to decide whether to enter into an agreement to work toward adoption.
    - b. The orientation meetings shall include information regarding the following issues:
      - i. The significance of adoption in permanency planning for children in foster care and DCFS' position that the child is the primary client in adoption services.

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- ii. Adoption of children with special needs, including the types of children awaiting adoption through the department and the resources available to help families that adopt such children.
  - iii. The procedure for a family to follow in pursuing adoption through DCFS, the differences between foster parent, adoptive, and foster-adoptive placements.
  - iv. The legal risk involved in foster-adoptive placements and the placement of legally free children under appeal.
  - v. The legal procedures involved in adoption, the roles and responsibilities of the family and the department in adoption.
- 2. The adoption worker offers families the opportunity to discuss special needs adoption with the worker before they make the decision on whether to pursue this type of adoption.
  - 3. The worker may refer families that decide that they do not want to pursue special needs adoption to private CPAs providing services for families seeking to adopt readily placed children.
  - 4. If a family is inquiring about a specific child, the adoption worker informs the family that pursuing an adoptive home study does not guarantee their adoption of the identified child. The worker also solicits their interest in adoption of other special needs children.

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- B. All departmental requests to initiate an adoptive home study for a foster parent, relative, or interstate adoptive placement shall be referred to the adoption worker or unit.
1. The adoption worker initiates contact with the family when:
    - a. The request for a foster parent or relative home study is the result of the Initial Adoption Planning Review (the first adoption staffing).
    - b. The request for a home study for an interstate adoptive placement has been approved by the Washington state ICPC program manager.
  2. The adoption worker makes contact with the child's worker to review information about the child being considered for adoptive placement.
- C. DCFS shall not accept applications from persons:
1. Receiving adoption services from another agency.
  2. Still in the process of finalizing the adoption of another child.
  3. Employed by the department in the region in which the local DCFS office is located. In accordance with DSHS Administrative Policy 6.16, such persons shall be referred to a local DCFS office in a region other than the region(s) in which the employee resides and works. See the *Operations Manual*, chapter 8000, section 8120, for limitations on certifying DSHS staff as adoptive parents.

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5330 PRE-PLACEMENT REPORT (ADOPTIVE HOME STUDY)

5331 Application Steps

- A. The prospective adoptive parent(s) shall complete the *Adoption Application*, DSHS 10-33, including information regarding the type of child the family wants to adopt. If the family appears to meet the basic criteria for the adoption of dependent, special needs children, then the adoption worker accepts the application. DCFS staff complete home studies only on families expressing an interest in adoption of special needs children who are in the care of DSHS or for whom DSHS is paying the cost of care and who demonstrate basic suitability for such placements.
- B. The adoption worker shall contact at least three (3) personal references (in writing or by telephone), no more than one of whom may be a relative, whose names have been furnished by the adoptive applicants. The worker documents, in the adoptive family case file, these contacts and the information obtained.
- C. Each applicant parent shall submit a copy of the *Adoptive Applicant Medical Report*, DSHS 13-01, completed by their physician.
- D. The adoption worker obtains criminal history checks, using the DSHS 14-239(X), on all persons age 16 or older residing in the home. The worker may conduct criminal history checks on younger persons, if indicated, through the juvenile justice system
- E. The family shall submit a written summary of their financial status, including income, assets, debts, and expenses.
- F. The family shall submit written verification of their marital status; e.g., a photocopy of their current marriage certificate and any divorce decrees.

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- G. If the family has had a home study completed by another agency, the adoption worker shall obtain a signed *Authorization to Release Information*, DSHS 14-12(X), from the adoption applicant(s) and a copy of the file or the home study from the other agency. If another DCFS office conducted a home study, the adoption worker shall request transfer of the service record.

5332 Family Contacts

The adoption worker and the family shall participate in a minimum of four contacts, including at least one home visit. If the applicants are an experienced foster family, or have had a relative home study done and are experienced relative caretakers, the adoption worker may substitute collateral contacts with other DCFS social workers who have been in the home for one of the direct family contacts. The adoption worker explores the following issues during the contacts:

- A. The family's interest in adoption and the characteristics of child(ren) they want to add to their family.
- B. The types of training and/or experiences which the family has had to prepare them to parent the child(ren) they want to adopt.
- C. The emotional maturity of each family member.
- D. The nature of the marital relationship, parent-child relationships, and other interpersonal relationships.
- E. The family's interests, activities, and life style.
- F. The family's expectations regarding children in their family, including approaches and beliefs regarding discipline.
- G. The adjustment of children already in the family; the expectations the children have for adding a new sibling.

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- H. The experiences the family has had in coping with problems; the nature of the family's personal support system.
- I. The family's attitude toward termination of parental rights, the family of origin, adoption, and open adoption.
- J. The family's understanding of the impact of abuse and neglect upon a child.

5333 Decision on Application and WARE Registration

- A. The adoption worker includes in the written *Adoption Pre-Placement Report*, DSHS 10-43, a summary of the information obtained in the home study as well as specific recommendations to the court regarding the suitability of the family for adoption.
- B. If the results of the home study indicate that the family is a good candidate for the adoption of a child with special needs, the adoption worker registers the family with WARE according to the following procedures:
  - 1. The adoption worker completes the *Adoption Exchange Family Registration*, DSHS 15-22, in typed format. The supervisor then signs the form and mails it to the adoption program manager in state office.
  - 2. Whenever the circumstances or interests of the adoptive family change, the adoption worker updates the DSHS 15-22.
  - 3. The adoption worker notifies the WARE program manager if a registered family is transferred to another office for service.

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4. Families registered with WARE are listed by date of receipt of their registration and by the characteristics of child(ren) for whom they have been approved. Both criteria are used by the WARE program manager when referring families.
- C. If the home study gives evidence, or the social worker determines prior to the home study, that the family is a good candidate for adoption of a readily placed child but not a special needs child, the adoption worker may refer the family to a private agency for services.
- D. If the home study gives evidence that the family is not a good candidate for adoption, the adoption worker shall inform the family of specific problem areas identified. If the problem areas appear amenable to treatment, the family may be encouraged to secure the needed help and proceed with the home study when the problems have been resolved.
- E. If the problem areas do not appear amenable to treatment, the family adoption worker shall encourage the family to withdraw. If the family declines to withdraw, the worker shall deny the service request and include a recommendation against placement of adoptive children in the written report, DSHS 10-43. The adoption worker shall send a letter to the applicant(s) outlining reasons for denial.
- F. The social worker may complete the home study following placement with relatives or in a foster-adopt home. In accordance with regional procedures and local court practices, the adoptive family worker files a copy of the pre-placement report (home study) with the court, indicating the name of the child on whose behalf the report is being filed. The adoption worker shall maintain a record of the date on which this report was filed.

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5340 NATIVE AMERICAN ADOPTIVE FAMILIES

For Native American children, refer to the *Indian Child Welfare (ICW) Manual*.

5350 WARE WITHDRAWAL

- A. DCFS shall withdraw families from WARE under the following circumstances, unless an exception is approved by the Regional Administrator:
1. Upon the adoptive placement of a child with the family.
  2. Upon notice of the family's decision to receive adoption services from another agency or through an independent placement.
  3. Upon the family's physical move from the state.
  4. Upon the family or worker's decision that adoption is no longer an appropriate plan for the family.
  5. Upon the adoption worker's learning of the pregnancy of the potential adoptive mother, the worker may pend registration with the approval of the family.
- B. The adoption worker accomplishes withdrawal from WARE by submitting the *Change of Status Report*, DSHS 15-21. Families are also withdrawn when the DSHS 15-21 is forwarded to WARE by a child's worker at the time of placement. The family's worker shall inform the family at any time the family is withdrawn from WARE.
- C. Families that want to be re-registered with WARE following withdrawal must reapply for adoption services and have their home study updated. The adoption worker then submits an updated *Adoption Exchange Family Registration*, DSHS 15-22.

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5360 PLACEMENT PROCESS

5361 Information Sharing

Their adoption worker shares information about children and birth family\_for whom a family is being considered with that family by using the following guidelines:

- A. General information about a referral may be shared with a family each time a referral is made.
- B. Specific, complete available information about a child referred and the birth parents, including psychological and psychiatric evaluations and mental health and drug/alcohol treatment records, shall be shared with a family each time the family is being strongly considered as the adoptive family for the legally free child and the family has made formal application for an adoptive placement. The worker shall provide all information in the department's files, except that which would identify the name or location of the family of origin.
- C. The family's receipt of information about a child, contact with a child's caseworker, contact with a child's foster family, etc., must be governed by procedures that do not violate the confidentiality of the child, family of origin, or foster family.

5362 Placement Selection and Decision

- A. The social worker evaluates families referred for a legally free child or for a foster-adoptive placement to determine which of the families can best meet the needs of the child using the following criteria:

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1. The family's ability to meet the physical, emotional and mental needs of the child
2. The compatibility between the child's personal characteristics and the expectations of all members of the adoptive family.

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3. The specific experiences and/or training the family has had which prepares them to provide for the special needs of the child.
  4. The resources in the family's community which are available to meet the special needs of the child.
  5. The degree to which the family is willing to initiate and participate in medical and/or therapeutic treatment.
- B. The final decision on placement of a child with an adoptive family is made by the professional staff of the DCFS office which has administrative responsibility for the child. The child's worker makes the final placement selection for families referred from the WARE and other referral sources in conjunction with the CWS supervisor. The DCFS professional staff consider the following criteria:
1. The child's attachment with the foster family and length of time in the foster care placement.
  2. The ability of the adoptive family to meet the special needs of the child.
  3. The ability of the adoptive family to meet the cultural and ethnic needs of the child.
  4. Willingness to provide long-term contact with siblings who may be placed elsewhere, appropriate birth relatives, former foster families, or other individuals who may have prior relationships with the child.
  5. Whether or not the adoptive family is a birth relative. If a relative, the following factors shall also be evaluated:

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- a. The relatives' previous relationship with the child.
  - b. The relatives' ability to protect the child, if necessary, from the parents of origin while avoiding portraying them in an unnecessarily negative manner.
- C. For foster-adoptive placements, the foster-adoptive family shall sign a permanency planning placement agreement. See section 45352.

5363 Visitation

The child's foster parents may be involved in planning and implementing plans.

- A. The purposes of visitation include:
- 1. To initiate contact between the prospective adoptive family and the child and to observe the relationship as it develops.
  - 2. To allow the prospective adoptive parents and child(ren) an opportunity to begin to know each other, to form an attachment, and to grieve the losses of the prior relationships that are ending.
  - 3. To allow the prospective adoptive family, the adoption worker, the child, and the child's social worker an opportunity to make a continuing evaluation regarding suitability of the placement.
- B. The child's worker:
- 1. Selects the location of the visitation.
  - 2. Accompanies the child on the initial visit.

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3. Discusses each visit with the child and family after they have occurred.
  4. Decides at each point whether to proceed with visitation and/or placement in consultation with the family and the child.
- C. The length of visits and total amount of time between first meeting and placement will vary. The age and developmental level of the child(ren), their attachment to the foster family, and their emotional readiness to move are all factors to consider. A typical placement transition may include three to five pre-placement visits, with each visit increasing in length until child is actually placed. Open contact between the new family and the family the child is leaving should occur whenever possible and when in the child's best interest.

**5370 POST-PLACEMENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

- A. The purpose of post-placement services is to support continuing placement of the child in the family by providing needed services or referrals.
- B. The assigned social worker provides on-going casework supervision of the adoptive placement and coordinates needed support services for the family and/or child. Post-placement support services may include the following:
  1. Casework services designed to assist the family and child during the initial adjustment period. Contacts shall be maintained, at a minimum, on a monthly basis and may be face-to-face or telephone.
  2. Information and referral to community resources.

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3. Formation of and leadership in adoption support groups for parents of adoptive children.
  4. If an SSI application has not been considered and seems appropriate, the social worker refers the case to the regional federal funding unit, SSI facilitator. An SSI allowance with an application prior to the petition to finalize adoption can mean IV-E funding of otherwise state-funded adoption support.
  5. The assigned social worker provides the family with a copy of the Adoption Support Brochure and asks the family if they are able to adopt without adoption support. The worker shall note the family's response in the child's file. The worker shall complete and submit the family's application for adoption support and adoption non-recurring cost programs to the regional adoption support program manager. The social worker must be sure that the family has a signed adoption support agreement and adoption non-recurring cost agreement before finalizing the adoption.
- C. At the time when the family, the child, and the adoption worker mutually agree that finalization of the adoption is in the best interest of all persons involved, the adoption worker encourages the family to retain an attorney to file the petition for adoption. An adoptive parent may petition to adopt without an attorney when there is no need for DCFS to release confidential information; for example, the adoption of an older child when the names of the birth parents are already known to the adopting parents.
- D. Filing of the adoption petition is accomplished by an attorney retained by the adoptive family. The adoption worker provides the attorney with the necessary documents and information when the worker is satisfied that finalization is in the best interest of the child and the family.
1. A certified copy of the legal order of termination of parental rights.

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2. *Release and Consent to Adoption* signed by the Regional Administrator or designee or information indicating where to obtain consent if that responsibility does not lie with the Regional Administrator.
  3. Adoption consent from children 14 years of age and older.
  4. A completed *Application for Adoption Re-Registration*, DSHS 9-465, for issuance of the child's revised birth certificate.
  5. The date the pre-placement report was filed with the court.
  6. A copy of the final signed *Adoption Support Agreement*, if applicable.
  7. A request for a copy of the certified decree of adoption after finalization.
- E. The assigned social worker completes court work that includes:
1. Dependency reviews until adoption is finalized.
  2. Individual Service Plans.
  3. Post-placement report.
  4. Notification of GAL and juvenile court that adoption is finalized and obtain dismissal of dependency order.

**5371 Disruption Services**

Disruption services are designed to develop a new placement plan for a child when it becomes evident, prior to finalization of an adoption, that the adoptive placement should not continue.

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5380 POST-PLACEMENT REPORT

- A. The court, after accepting a petition for adoption, orders a post-placement report to advise the court as to the propriety of the adoption.
1. The department shall be named to complete a post-placement report for a child for whom it provided post-placement services.
  2. The adoption worker completes the *Adoption Data Card*.
  3. The adoption worker completes the *Waiver of Notice of Further Hearing*, DSHS 9-54, or the *Acknowledgment of Notice and Declaration of Intent Not to Appear*, DSHS 9-56, provided the departmental recommendation is positive and the parental rights of the child to be adopted have been terminated.
- B. If the post-placement report is negative, the department shall request representation by the Office of Attorney General (or local prosecutor, where applicable) at a hearing on the matter. In this case, the DSHS 9-54 and the DSHS 9-56 shall not be included with the post-placement report.

5390 POST-FINALIZATION

5391 Post-Decree Action

See Chapter 4000, section 4740, for actions to take following issuance of the final decree of adoption.

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5392 Post-Adoption Services

- A. Post-adoption services are provided to the adoptive family after finalization of the adoption when those services are needed to support the adoption and to identify community resources necessary to maintain the placement.
- B. Non-identifying information contained in the child's archived record may be obtained for medical or emotional treatment when requested by a treating professional, accompanied by a signed release from the adoptive family or adult adoptee. All requests shall be sent to the Adoption Program Manager in Olympia.
- C. For a Native American child, the family and/or child shall be informed that the Local Indian Child Welfare Advisory Committee (LICWAC) and/or local Indian consultant are available for consultation related to the adoption.
- D. Adoptees seeking identifying information will be requested to consult with the clerk of the court granting the final decree. The court may, at its discretion, issue an order directing the opening of any records of the adoption.

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**5400 CHILD DAY CARE PROVIDERS**

5410 IN-HOME CHILD DAY CARE

5411 Service Description

Child day care may be provided in the child's own home/residence. In-Home care includes a relative care provider, and the care can be in the relative's home, rather than the child's home. For children under the custody or supervision of DCFS, there is a high level of interest in the appropriateness of the In-Home caretaker. However, in-home care providers are not required to be licensed and the parent, relative, foster parent, or pre-adoptive parent is considered to be the person authorizing/permitting the care in their home. For a licensed home, the licensee's employee must undergo a criminal background check.

5412 Eligibility

If DCFS is subsidizing the payment, the caretaker shall meet the following criteria:

- A. Be at least 18 years of age.
- B. Be determined by the social worker to be suitable to provide care.

5413 Procedures

- A. In determining the appropriateness of In-Home child caretakers for a child under the custody or supervision of DCFS, the social worker shall:
  - 1. Consider the age, maturity, and suitability of the caretaker.
  - 2. Complete a *Background Inquiry*, DSHS 14-239, in behalf of the authorizing foster parent for the caretaker.



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3. Complete a DCFS records check in CAMIS and, if the person is listed, gather information from the office(s) and/or files on the person for the foster parent.
  4. If payment will be DCFS-subsidized, review any other eligibility factors regarding the caretaker.
- B. The social worker may complete a background inquiry and CPS records check on behalf of parents, relatives, and pre-adoptive parents provided the child is under DCFS supervision. The social worker should obtain the prospective caretaker's permission to conduct a criminal history and CPS records check.

5414 Other Resources

Refer to the information contained in Chapter 4000, sections 4503 and 4504, for determining the payment authorization process for child care subsidy and consult with the foster family home placement worker and the child day care licenser about possible providers as alternatives through licensed child day care or respite care providers.

5420 LICENSED CHILD DAY CARE PROVIDERS

Supportive to DCFS client families, child day care licensing is administered by the DLR Office of Child Care Policy (OCCP). For more information, see the *Operations Manual*, chapter 9000, section 91300.

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**5500 INDIVIDUALS ENGAGED BY DCFS**

5510 SERVICE DESCRIPTION

Volunteers, students, interns, and any other individual, whether paid or unpaid, engaged by DCFS to provide care, supervision, or treatment for children shall be assessed for appropriateness and capability. Hourly respite care providers who support foster parents are included in this group.

5520 ELIGIBILITY

Prospective employees or volunteers will have appropriately clear criminal history and DCFS record checks as well as the necessary skills and suitability to provide care, supervision, or treatment for children for whom the agency is responsible. Those individuals who will be transporting clients shall possess a valid driver's license recognized by the state of Washington along with adequate insurance coverage.

5530 PROCEDURES

- A. The social worker or Community Resource Program Manager shall have the applicant complete a *Criminal History and Background Inquiry* form, DSHS 14-239, and submit it according to procedures outlined in the *Operations Manual*, chapter 5000, section 5500.
- B. The worker completes a review of DCFS records that may exist, including a CAMIS inquiry.
- C. Local or regional procedures may designate a specific person other than the social worker to complete the above steps.
- D. Approved applicants for volunteer or paid positions shall complete any required documentation applicable to the service they are providing.

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5540 OTHER RESOURCES

There are several handbooks and pamphlets published regarding the use of volunteers in DSHS. Some regional and local offices have Community Resource Program Managers. Respite care providers for foster family homes are often the responsibility of the licenser.

5600 INTERSTATE COMPACT HOME STUDIES

- A. *Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) Handbook*, issued by CA, contains the steps necessary for the social worker to follow to place a dependent child into another state when dependency will be maintained in a Washington court with supervision of the placement required.
- B. The assigned social worker also shall do home studies on parents, relatives, foster parents, and adoptive homes for placement of dependent children from other states as part of the ICPC process. Criminal history checks are required for all ICPC home studies. If the home study is positive and placement is made, the assigned DCFS social worker provides supervision as long as the dependency remains in effect in the sending state. Refer to the *ICPC Handbook* for additional procedures.

5700 ADOPTION SUPPORT

5710 SERVICE DESCRIPTION

DCFS, under authority of RCW 74.13, provides post adoption assistance to prospective adoptive parents to enable them to adopt hard-to-place children. The assistance can take several forms, including medical coverage and financial assistance to meet the special needs of these children.

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5720 ELIGIBILITY

A. Not all children with special needs or conditions are eligible for adoption support. To be eligible, a child must meet all of the conditions described below:

1. Is residing in or likely to be placed in out-of-home care.
2. Is hard to place for adoption as demonstrated by registration with WARE for 90 days or longer without an appropriate family being identified. Reasonable efforts have been made to place the child for adoption without adoption support services.
3. The social worker must fully document pre-existing special needs conditions and efforts to place the child without adoption support before the child's registration with adoption support.

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4. In cases of adoption by foster parents, the following eligibility criteria must be met in order to establish the child as hard to place. However, the child does not need to be registered with adoption exchanges if the following apply. The child must:
  - a. Have been in the foster parents' home for at least six months prior to becoming legally free.
  - b. Have close emotional ties to the current foster family which, if severed, could cause emotional damage to the child.

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- c. The foster family must have been identified as the adoptive family of choice by the agency having custody of the child.
  
- 5. Has one or more of the following documented special conditions that creates a barrier to adoption and contributes to the child being hard to place for adoption:
  - a. Physical or mental disability.
  - b. Emotional/psychiatric disturbance.

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- c. Ethnic background, including race, color and/or language.
  - d. Age (six years or older).
  - e. A diagnosed medical condition which is chronic and/or severe and/or a diagnosed medical risk condition.
  - f. Member of a large sibling group (three or more); or if a sibling group of two, at least one sibling was previously adopted by the family or one of the siblings being adopted is over six years of age).
5. Is legally free for adoption. ACYF-PIQ-82-18
6. Is seventeen years of age or younger at the time the agreement is signed.  
RCW 74.13.109
7. Adoption is the most appropriate plan.
8. Adoption support shall not continue beyond the adopted child's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, becomes emancipated, dies, or otherwise ceases to need support, unless the adoption support program manager determines that continuing dependency after the child reaches 18 years of age warrants the continuation of support.  
RCW 74.13.112
- C. Adoptive family income is not a factor in determining a child's eligibility for adoption support services. ACYF-PIQ-90-02
- D. Funding sources for adoption support will differ according to the funding source available to the child. See the *Operations Manual*, chapter 11000, related to determining financial eligibility.

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1. Federal matching funds are used for maintenance for children who are found IV-E eligible.
  2. Federal matching for Title XIX (Medicaid) and Title XX (social services) are available to all children eligible for adoption support.
- E. If the adoptive parents are unable to continue parenting the child, the adoption support agreement is no longer in effect and the program services are no longer available to the child.

ACYF-PIQ-84-4

- F. Biological parents whose rights have been terminated, but who later adopt their biological child, are not eligible for adoption support.

ACYF-PIQ-86-05

5721 Payment Determination and Standard Adjustments

The regional adoption support program manager considers the factors outlined in the *CA Case Services Policy Manual*, chapter 9000, section 9200, when setting the amount of any payment or payments or in adjusting standards.



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3. State-only moneys are used for a child who is not eligible for federally matched funds and for those agreed-to services which are not matched by federal funds.

5730 PROCEDURES

5731 Application

A. The prospective adoptive family must apply for adoption support services prior to finalization of the adoption. The adoptive family shall submit a separate application for each child being adopted. The terms of the agreement are negotiated between the adoptive family and the social worker, with final approval authority resting with the regional adoption support program manager. See section 5732. The application includes:

1. The social worker and the family initiates the process by completing the application, DSHS 10-62 and DSHS 10-62A, together. The payment which is agreed upon is expected to combine with the parent's resources to cover the ordinary and special needs of the child for an extended period of time.  
ACYF-PIQ-86-05
2. Monthly cash payments to the family cannot exceed the established regular and family foster home special rates. The specific amount of the payment will be determined by an evaluation of the difference between the costs of the child's documented needs and the family, community and state resources available to meet those needs. ACYF-PIQ-86-05
3. If requested by the social worker or the regional adoption support program manager, the adoptive parent must submit a copy of the family's most recent Federal Income Tax Return, IRS 1040, with the application for adoption support.  
RCW 74.13.121

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- B. The worker submits the application, DSHS 10-62 and 10-62A, to the adoption support program manager for approval. In addition to the two application forms, the completed packet includes the following:
1. *Child's Registration*, DSHS 10-061(X), with a brief summary of the child's history, behavior, and primary reasons for the adoption support request.
  2. Reports documenting the child's special need or conditions and diagnosis, including any pre-existing and anticipated medical needs/prognosis. ACYF-PIQ-89-02
  3. A copy of the *Adoption Planning Review*, DSHS 15-174.
  4. *Adoption Support Monitoring Schedule*, DSHS 14-319, indicating the child's funding source for adoption support services.
  5. SSI award letter, if applicable.
  6. Orders of termination of parental rights.
  7. If an open adoption agreement exists, a copy is to be included.
- C. The regional adoption support program manager shall process only completed application packets within 30 days of receipt. The manager shall immediately return incomplete packets to the sender for completion and re-submittal.

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5732 Initial Agreement

An initial agreement for adoption support services must be signed by all parties to the agreement prior to finalization of the adoption. If this does not occur, the family will be ineligible for adoption support except as provided in sections 5734 and 5735, below.

- A. Upon approval of the application, the regional adoption support program manager issues an agreement to the adoptive parents and sends a copy to the service worker, thereby notifying the worker of the agreement and authorized services.
- B. If, after reviewing the agreement, the family has questions or wishes to seek changes in the agreement, they may contact the regional adoption support program manager.
- C. If the family finds the agreement acceptable, they must sign, date and return the full agreement to the regional adoption support program manager. The agreement becomes a binding contract only after all parties to the agreement, including the designated agency persons, have signed.

RCW 74.13.124

- D. Adoption support services shall be continued regardless of where the family resides.

5733 Non-Recurring Costs Agreement

- A. Certain non-recurring adoption expenses may be reimbursed by adoption support. Reimbursement may be made for the following:
  - 1. Adoption fees.
  - 2. Court costs.

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3. Revised birth certificates.
  4. Attorney fees.
  5. Costs related to the adoption home study, required health and psychological examinations, placement supervision, and pre-placement visits (lodging, meals, transportation, etc.).
- B. These costs are available to any family adopting an eligible special needs child, with no income requirement. Non-recurring adoption expenses may be available to children not receiving adoption support services if the child otherwise qualifies.  
45 CFR 1356.41(d) and (f)
- C. The prospective adoptive parent(s) must submit a separate application specific to non-recurring costs reimbursement prior to finalization of the adoption. Claims must be filed within two years of the date of the final decree of adoption.  
45 CFR 1356.41(c)
- D. The regional program manager issues a separate non-recurring costs agreement for each child being adopted specific to the costs of that child's adoption. This agreement must be signed by all parties to the agreement prior to finalization. Without this signed agreement, the costs cannot be reimbursed to the family. This agreement is limited to \$1500 per child and is paid on a reimbursement basis following finalization.  
45 CFR 1356.41(f)

5734 Reconsideration

- A. The department may, within available funds, provide limited adoption support through a reconsideration process if the child met the criteria for ongoing adoption support in Washington state at the time the adoption was finalized. The regional adoption support program manager uses documented evidence available at the time of the adoption to make this determination.

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- B. The child and the child's family shall be current residents of the state of Washington.
- C. The family must complete the application for adoption support reconsideration and provide the adoption support program manager with requested information.
- D. Adoption support assistance must be defined in a reconsideration agreement and is limited to counseling and medical services for corrective/rehabilitative services. Maximum allowable payment per child is \$20,000 under Medicaid.

**5735 Eligibility for Adoption Support after Adoption**

For adoptions occurring in or after the year 1981, certain adopted children may be eligible for subsidy after finalization. The determination of eligibility is based upon the extenuating circumstances at the time of the adoption and other qualifying factors. The child's eligibility for federal funding at the time of adoption will need to be established based upon the information in the archived file. If a family inquires about adoption support for an adopted child, the social worker refers them to the regional adoption support program manager.

ACFY-PIQ-92-02

**5736 Review of Support Payments**

- A. At least once every five years, the regional adoption support program manager reviews the need of any adoptive parent or parents receiving continuing adoption support or the need of any parent who is to receive more than one lump sum payment where such payments are to be spaced more than one year apart.

RCW 74.13.118

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- B. When the regional adoption support program manager deems changed conditions, including variations in medical opinions, prognosis, and costs, to warrant such action, the program manager shall make appropriate adjustments in payments based upon the needs of the child, in the adoptive parents' income, resources, and expenses for the care of such child or other members of the family, including medical and/or hospitalization expense not otherwise covered by or subject to reimbursement from insurance or other sources of financial assistance.

RCW 74.13.118

- C. A parent who is party to an agreement may at any time, in writing, request a review of the amount of any payment or the level of continuing payments.

1. The regional adoption support program manager begins the review not later than 30 days from the receipt of such request.
2. The program manager may make any adjustment retroactive to the date the request was received by the department.
3. If the program manager does not act on the request within 30 days of receipt by the department, the parent may invoke their right to a hearing under RCW 74.13.127.

RCW 74.13.118

- D. So long as the adoptive parent is receiving adoption support services he or she shall, upon request, file with the regional adoption support program manager his or her federal income tax return.

RCW 74.13.121

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APPENDIX A

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The following definitions apply for purposes of the *CA Practices and Procedures Guide*.

"AFTERCARE SERVICES" means the provision of less intensive, ongoing services to youth and their families following the youth's discharge from residential care or in-home services.

"AT-RISK YOUTH": means a juvenile who:

- A. Is absent from home for at least 72 consecutive hours without consent of his or her parent.
- B. Is beyond the control of his or her parent such that the child's behavior endangers the health, safety, or welfare of the child or any other person.
- C. Has a substance abuse problem for which there are no pending criminal charges related to the substance abuse.

RCW 13.32A.030(1)

"BEHAVIORAL REHABILITATION SERVICES": See "After-Care Services," "Continuum of Care," "Group Care," "In-Home Services," "Residential Care," "Staffed Treatment Foster Care," and "Treatment Foster Care."

"CASE PLAN": A written statement by the social worker of the anticipated activities, including service agreements, which are planned in the conduct of the case.

"CHILD," "JUVENILE," and "YOUTH": mean any unemancipated individual who is under the chronological age of 18 years.

RCW 13.32A.030(2)

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"CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT" (WAC 388-15-130):

Publication DSHS 22-614(X) provides a summary of operational definitions. These are acts or omissions which may be considered as indicators of possible CA/N. The factors are not exclusive or inclusive of all possible indicators and may vary by frequency, intensity, or severity. The investigative social worker shall consider all factors in the context of the situation and their impact on the child.

A. Physical Abuse

1. Non-accidental injury to a child which, regardless of motive, is inflicted or allowed to be inflicted by a caretaker.
2. Dangerous acts; i.e., acts constituting a serious risk to a child's physical or mental health, safety, or welfare but which do not result in the child's injury.
3. Cruel and inhumane acts; some parental actions are cruel and inhumane because of the physical and mental pain or injury suffered by children.
4. Physical Discipline: Guidelines for Communication with Parents, Professionals, and Referents

RCW 26.44.015 reads: "This chapter shall not be construed to authorize interference with child-raising practices, including reasonable parental discipline, which are not injurious to the child's health, welfare and safety": And provided further that "nothing in this chapter may be used to prohibit the reasonable use of corporal punishment as a means of discipline."

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Physical discipline of infants is a "dangerous act" placing these children at risk of serious harm. Corporal punishment of any child which meets the criteria for dangerous acts, non-accidental injury, or other similar harm to a child is not reasonable discipline.

The limited use of belts, sticks, switches, paddles, etc., on children may be objectionable but is not illegal. In communicating with parents, DCFS staff shall discourage these forms of discipline and suggest alternatives without defining these acts as abusive.

In general, physical discipline is "reasonable" when:

- a. Physical discipline is used to educate and/or correct a child.
- b. The parent's use of physical discipline is limited in degree and frequency.
- c. Physical discipline is not used on vulnerable parts of the body and does not result in "non-accidental injury."
- d. The parent(s) disciplining the child have control of their own behavior and emotions.
- e. The method of discipline does not constitute a dangerous act.
- f. The child has the intellectual capacity to understand the disciplinary act as a response to the child's misbehavior.
- g. The disciplinary act is not injurious to the child's health, welfare, or safety.

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5. Physical injury by other than accidental means results when any of the following occur:
  - a. Death.
  - b. Disfigurement.
  - c. Skin bruising.
  - d. Impairment of physical or emotional health; or
  - e. Loss or impairment of any bodily function.
6. Substantial risk of physical harm to a child's bodily functioning.
7. Sexual abuse against a child as defined in the criminal code, and includes intentionally touching a child for other than hygiene or child care purposes, either directly or through the clothing, the following areas of a child:
  - a. Genitals.
  - b. Anus.
  - c. Breasts.
8. Acts which are cruel or inhumane regardless of observable injury. Such acts may include, but are not limited to, instances of extreme discipline which demonstrate a disregard of a child's pain and/or mental suffering;
9. Assault or criminal mistreatment of a child as defined by the criminal code.

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B. Physical Neglect

Physical neglect is an act, omission of action, or a pattern of care by the child's caretaker which fails to meet a child's basic physical needs and harms a child or places a child at risk of harm. A child's basic physical needs include need for food, shelter, clothing, medical care, protection, and hygiene. Poverty and homelessness or substandard housing are not cause for intervention on that factor alone. The DCFS social worker shall consider these factors in the context of the family's circumstances and the condition of the child. The presence of a factor may or may not indicate CA/N.

A family's lifestyle, belief system, and/or culture, however unusual, should not be viewed as grounds for a referral of neglect unless the parents' behavior harms or poses a substantial risk of harm to the child's health, safety, or welfare.

Physical neglect includes, but is not limited to:

1. Failure to provide nutritionally sound food in adequate amounts to maintain a child's health and development.
2. Failure to provide adequate and safe shelter. Shelter must provide protection from the elements and be free from health hazards both in the dwelling and on the surrounding property. "Dirty house" referrals must identify factors which place the child at risk.
3. Failure to provide and maintain adequate and suitable clothing appropriate to climate and development of the child.
4. Refusal or failure to obtain and maintain those treatment services necessary for a child's continued health, welfare, and development.



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5. Failure to provide adequate supervision, thus placing child at risk of physical injury or emotional harm.
6. Failure to provide protection from harm.
7. Failure to provide for child's needs for appropriate hygiene.

C. Sexual Abuse/Exploitation

Sexual abuse/exploitation of a child by a caretaker includes, but is not limited to:

1. Sexual Intercourse: Has its ordinary meaning and occurs upon any penetration, however slight. "Sexual intercourse" also means:
  - a. Any penetration of the vagina or anus, however slight, by any object except when such penetration is accomplished for medically recognized treatment or diagnostic purposes; and
  - b. Any act of sexual contact between persons involving the sex organs of one person and the mouth or anus of another, oral - genital/anal contact.
2. Sexual Contact: Any touching of the sexual or other intimate parts of the body done for the purpose of satisfying the sexual desire of either party. Includes touching through clothing.
3. Exposure: The act of exposing one's sexual organs in a manner that, considering the surrounding circumstances, is offensive, sexually suggestive, or otherwise inappropriate.

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4. Inappropriate Touching: Intentional touching, either directly or through the clothing, of the genitals, anus, or breasts of a child for other than legitimate hygiene or child care purposes.
5. Genital - Anal contact.
6. Genital - Genital contact.
7. Encouraging or forcing a child to engage in sexual activity with any person or with animals.
8. Encouraging or forcing a child to engage in sexually explicit conduct.
9. Engaging in activities related to child pornography including permitting, encouraging, or forcing a child to participate in sexually explicit conduct knowing that the conduct will be photographed or be part of a live performance.
10. Promoting prostitution by minors.
11. Permitting, encouraging, or forcing a child to watch sexual activities of others; e.g.:
  - a. Parents or others engaging in sexual intercourse.
  - b. Watching pornography.
12. Allowing or encouraging others to sexually abuse/exploit a child.

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D. Emotional Abuse and Neglect

A pattern of acts or omissions by the caretaker which result in injury or substantial risk of injury to a child's psychological or emotional health or development. The investigative social worker shall assess these factors in the context of the family's circumstances and the child's condition. The presence of a factor may or may not be indicative of CA/N.

1. Rejecting: Behaviors which communicate abandonment or condemnation; the parent refuses to acknowledge the child's worth and the legitimacy of the child's needs.
2. Terrorizing: Behaviors which create a climate of fear; the parent threatens the child with extreme or vague but sinister punishment, or sets unreasonable expectations and punishes the child for not meeting them.
3. Ignoring: The parent is psychologically unavailable to the child, is preoccupied with self and unable to respond to the child's behaviors.
4. Isolating: Behaviors that prevent the child from taking advantage of normal opportunities for social relationships.
5. Exploitative/Corrupting: Behaviors which encourage the child to engage in anti-social or deviant activities, particularly in the areas of aggression, sexuality, or substance abuse, or imposing a role on the child for the parent's self-interest that is beyond the child's capability.

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"CHILD IN NEED OF SERVICES" (CHINS): means a juvenile who:

- A. Is beyond the control of his or her parent such that the child's behavior endangers the health, safety, or welfare of the child or other person.
- B. Has been reported to law enforcement as absent without consent for at least 24 consecutive hours from the parent's home, a crisis residential center, an out-of-home placement, or a court-ordered placement on two or more separate occasions and has exhibited:
  - 1. A serious substance abuse problem or
  - 2. Behaviors that create a serious risk of harm to the health, safety, and welfare of the child or any other person.
- C. Is in need of necessary services, including food, shelter, health care, clothing, educational, or services designed to maintain or reunite the family, and
  - 1. Who lacks access, or has declined, to utilize these services.
  - 2. Whose parents have evidenced continuing but unsuccessful efforts to maintain the family structure or are unable or unwilling to continue efforts to maintain the family structure.

RCW 13.32A.030(3)

"CHILD IN NEED OF SERVICES (CHINS) PETITION": means a petition filed in juvenile court by a parent, child, or the department seeking adjudication of placement of the child. RCW 13.32A.030(4)

"COMMUNITY NETWORK": Working relationships between DCFS, cultural consultants, key informants (lay/professional person), natural helpers (extended families, folk healers), and other agencies to develop cultural responsiveness.

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"CONTINUUM OF CARE": Provision of care from in-home services to highly structured residential care and the ability to provide appropriate services to the child/family.

"CULTURAL COMPETENCE": A set of congruent behaviors and attitudes that enables a professional to learn about the cultural context of a present problem and to integrate that knowledge into a professional assessment, diagnosis and intervention.

"CULTURAL CONSULTANTS": Culturally competent individuals recognized by the department and/or client as a resource to help assess and/or resolve problems relating to cultural issues.

"CULTURAL DIVERSITY": The distinguishable differences in life styles, values, traditions, religions, etc.

"CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE": A pattern of behaviors that incorporates and acknowledges the importance of cultures (competence), the assessment of cross-culture relations (literate), vigilance towards the dynamics that result from cultural difference (effective), the expansion of cultural knowledge and the adaptation of services to meet culturally unique needs (relevant).

"CULTURE": The integrated pattern of human behavior including thought, communication, actions, customs, beliefs, values, institutions, of a racial, ethnic, religious or social group.

"CUSTODIAN": means the person or entity who has the legal right to the custody of the child.RCW 13.32A.030(5)

"DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES":

- A. Adolescent - a child age 12 but less than 18 years.
- B. Child - a born person less than 18 years.
- C. Fetus - the unborn child.

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D. Infant - a child from birth until one year of age.

E. Toddler - a child age one but less than six years.

"ETHNIC": A group designated by customs, characteristics, language, common history and/or racial affiliation.

"ETHNOGRAPHIC INTERVIEWING": Communication with a member of another culture to identify the:

1. Key cultural differences.
2. Meaning of those cultural practices and norms.

"EXTENDED FAMILY MEMBER": means an adult who is a grandparent, brother, sister, stepbrother, stepsister, uncle, aunt, or first cousin with whom the child has a relationship and is comfortable and who is willing and available to care for the child. RCW 13.32A.030(7)

"FAMILY PRESERVATION SERVICES": means in-home or community-based services drawing on the strengths of the family and its individual members while addressing family needs to strengthen and keep the family together where possible and may include:

- A. Respite care of children to provide temporary relief for parents and other care givers.
- B. Services designed to improve parenting skills with respect to such matters as child development, family budgeting, coping with stress, health, safety, and nutrition.

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- C. Services designed to promote the well-being of children and families, increase the strength and stability of families, increase parents' confidence and competence in their parenting abilities, promote a safe, stable, and supportive family environment for children, and otherwise enhance children's development.

RCW 74.14C.010(2)

"FOSTER FAMILY CARE": Care and supervision provided on a 24-hour basis for up to six children in the licensed family abode of the person or persons under whose direct care and supervision the child is placed.

"GROUP CARE": The provision of a safe, healthful environment for youth in a 24-hour licensed facility for more than six children, which provides the basic needs of food, shelter, and the provision of therapeutic services required for the successful reunification of youth with their family resource.

"GUARDIAN": means that person or agency that (a) has been appointed as the guardian of a child in a legal proceeding other than a proceeding under chapter 13.34 RCW, and (b) has the right to legal custody of the child pursuant to such appointment. The term "guardian" does not include a "dependency guardian" appointed pursuant to a proceeding under Chapter 13.34 RCW.

RCW 13.32A.030(8); 13.34.030(5)

"IMMINENT RISK": means, for Intensive Family Preservation Services, when a decision has been made by the department that without intensive family preservation services, a petition requesting the removal of a child from the family home will be immediately filed under chapters 13.13A or 13.34 RCW, or that a voluntary placement agreement will be immediately initiated. 74.14C RCW

"IN-HOME SERVICES": Services provided in the child's home in lieu of out-of-home placement which is equivalent to the level of service intensity required to maintain the child in residential care.

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"INTENSIVE FAMILY PRESERVATION SERVICES": means community-based services that are delivered primarily in the home, that follow intensive service models with demonstrated effectiveness in reducing or avoiding the need for unnecessary imminent out-of-home placement.

RCW 74.14C.010(4)

"OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENT or CARE": means a placement in a foster family home or group care facility or placement in a home, other than that of the child's parent, guardian, or legal custodian, not required to be licensed under 74.15 RCW.

RCW 74.14C.010(5)

"PARENT": means the parent or parents who have the legal right to custody of the child. "Parent" includes custodian or guardian.

RCW 13.32A.030(11)

"PARENTING STATUS":

- A. Custodian - a person appointed by the parent, guardian, or court to provide care for a child.
- B. Guardian - a person appointed by the court to provide care or to supervise a child.
- C. Parent - is the prime person responsible for the care of a child and may include:
  - 1. Adoptive parent - a person the courts grant parental status, rights, and privileges for a child.
  - 2. Birth or natural parents - the persons, male and female, who conceived and gave birth to the child.
  - 3. Custodial parent - the parent with whom the child resides:
    - a. Legal - a current court order designating a parent's right to the child's custody which may include:

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- i. Joint custody.
  - ii. Parenting plans.
  - iii. Shared custody.
  - iv. Sole custody to one parent.
- b. Physical - the parent(s) with whom the child resides or is found.
- D. Step-parent - a person, not the child's parent, who is currently married to the child's parent.
- E. Caretaker - a person who has actual physical supervision responsibility for a child and may include any of the above parenting statuses or a person appointed to provide physical custody.

"PLACEMENT DECISION": The decision to place, or to delay or deny the placement of, a child in a foster care or an adoptive home, and includes the decision of the agency or entity involved to seek the termination of birth parent rights or otherwise make a child legally available for adoptive placement.

42 USC 5115a

"PRESERVATION SERVICES": means family preservation services and intensive family preservation services that consider the individual family's cultural values and needs. RCW 74.14C.010(6)

"PREVENTIVE SERVICES": means preservation services, as defined in 74.14C RCW, and other reasonably available services capable of preventing the need for out-of-home placement while protecting the child.  
RCW 13.34.030(9)

"PROBATIONARY LICENSE": means a license issued as a disciplinary measure to an agency that has previously been issued a full license but is out of compliance with licensing standards.

RCW 74.15.020(6)  
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"RESIDENTIAL CARE": A generic term for group care, residential treatment, and treatment foster care.

"RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT SERVICES": See "After-Care Services," "Continuum of Care," "Group Care," "In-Home Services," "Residential Care," "Staffed Treatment Foster Care," and "Treatment Foster Care."

"SECURE FACILITY": means a crisis residential center, or portion thereof, that has locking doors, locking windows, or a secured perimeter, designed and operated to prevent a child from leaving without permission of the facility staff.

RCW 13.32A.030(12)

"SERVICE AGREEMENT": A formal written description of services to be provided or performed. Agreements are developed by the social worker with the parent and/or the court and any child over age 13 who is to receive or participate in services.

"STAFFED TREATMENT FOSTER CARE": Licensed treatment foster care where the foster parents are professional staff who are hire to provide 24-hour supervision to six or less children residing in a foster home-like setting.

"TEMPORARY OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENT": means an out-of-home placement of not more than 14 days ordered by a court at a fact-finding hearing on a child in need of services (CHINS) petition.

RCW 13.32A.030(14)

"TREATMENT FOSTER CARE": A program designed for children, youth, and their families whose special needs are provided through services delivered primarily by treatment foster parents trained, supervised, and supported by agency staff. In addition to the provision of a safe, healthful environment, foster parents are expected to be members of the treatment team and to perform tasks which are central to the treatment process in a manner consistent with the child's treatment plan.

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"UNEXPECTED DEATH OF A MINOR": A death not resulting from a diagnosed terminal illness or other debilitating or deteriorating illness or condition where death is anticipated.

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