

# Practices and Procedures Guide

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# 1000 Introduction

## Purpose

The Practice and Procedures Guide outlines required policy and procedures for Children's Administration (CA) staff and supports the Revised Code of Washington (RCW), federal laws and regulations.

As the overarching framework, the Children's Administration Practice Model provides the foundation for a clinical model that sets out the philosophy and theory of practice and directs the policies and procedures of the agency toward family centered practice. The framework enables social workers to:

- Prioritize partnership to ensure safety by building a consensus with the family and service providers around the primary safety and risk concerns.
- Locate the problem(s) within the everyday life of the family and identify the individual with the high risk behavior that led to maltreatment through an assessment.

- Help families identify cycles of maltreatment and utilize relapse prevention techniques to prevent further maltreatment.
- Develop co-constructed plans with the family that target the primary area of safety and risk by sorting out information into family and individual level objectives.
- Develop tasks to achieve outcomes that are skill-based and not just measured by compliance.
- Celebrate and document even the smallest success and progress made by the family, and note when improvements have not been made.

CA's practice, which draws from family development theory, relapse prevention theory, and solution-focused therapy, provides a roadmap for establishing working partnerships and targeting pertinent behaviors in an effort to overcome safety threats and prevent problem relapse and recidivism. CA's practice model is informed by **Solution Based Casework**, an evidence-based practice model for assessment, case planning, and casework management in child welfare.

CA's work with families is anchored in the following three beliefs:

- Families encounter common everyday life challenges;
- Dangerous behaviors and safety threats occur within the context of everyday life and service planning for prevention must be directly tied to those events; and
- Service planning must target the reinforcement and development of situation-specific, behavioral relapse prevention skills.

## **CA Policy Transformation and Manual Conversion Format**

The Children's Administration (CA) implemented a new policy format to use in the CA Practice and Procedures Manual effective October 31, 2009.

All future CA policies will be in this new format and will be incorporated into the existing manual. As we go forward, you will see both the old format and the new templates within our policy manual until we can completely transform all policies.

This new format will replace the current format in on-going scheduled policy rollouts. The policy transformation process includes collapsing and removing the *Case Services* and *Operations Manuals*. All future policies will be in the new format and placed in the *Practice and Procedure Manual* as they are implemented. Policy and procedure design include following components:

### **Purpose Statement**

Outlines the reason for the policy and how the policy will support practice.

### **Laws**

**Legal citations** specific to the subject matter contained in the policy. This could include: RCW, WAC and Federal or Public Law citations and hyperlinks.



## Policy

**Policy** - A written statement of principles and positions that define required practice, organizational operations and services required by federal and state laws.

## Procedures

- **Required Procedure** - Mandatory steps to ensure the policy is implemented correctly and includes steps the agency does not want staff to overlook.
- **Suggested Procedure** - Suggested method by which a policy can be accomplished; it provides suggested instructions to carry out a policy statement.

## Additional Template Sections

- Cultural Considerations
- Automated Actions
- Tips
- Forms and Tools
- See Also
- Resources

## Cultural Considerations

### **Family Centered Approach:**

The effectiveness of CA staff's engagement with the family can directly affect their willingness to work with the department. The level of trust and integrity established between the agency and the family often has a direct relationship on the child being able to remain/reunify with his/her family. Everyone who meets the family needs to build positive relationships.

**The definition of family varies from group to group.** While the dominant culture has focused on the nuclear family, African Americans define family as a wide network of extended family, non-blood kin and community. Native American Indian families traditionally include at least three generations and multiple parental functions delegated among aunts and uncles, as well as grandparents and cousins. Different cultural groups also vary in their traditional practices and views of adoption.

Determine if there are **cultural considerations** that need to be addressed as part of the planning process, for example, obtaining information about protocols, such as, how to approach a family, use of a cultural elder, matriarch or patriarch or the need for a culturally appropriate support person.

# 1100. Child Safety

## Purpose Statement

Providing for child safety is part of CA's core mission. Safety is the primary and essential focus that informs and guides all decisions made from Intake through case closure. This includes removal and reunification decisions. Assessing the safety of children is essential in all placement settings (in-home and out-of-home).

## **Laws**

[Public Law 93-247 \(as amended\)](#)

[45 Code of Federal Regulations \(CFR\), Part 1340](#)

[45 Code of Federal Regulations \(CFR\), Part 1357.20](#)

[RCW 13.34](#)

[RCW 74.13](#)

[RCW 26.44](#)

[WAC 388-15](#)

[WAC 388-70](#)

## **Policy**

1. Decisions on child safety are based on comprehensive information, logical reasoning and analysis (not incident-based or reactionary).
2. The safety decision making process must include a continuous assessment of present and impending danger throughout the life of the case.
3. A focus on safety must be maintained from the initial assessment through case closure using required tools to assess, control and manage safety threats.
4. Every social worker will assess the safety of the child for present or impending danger. If present danger exists the worker will take an immediate protective action.
5. A decision that a child is unsafe does not mean the child must be removed.
6. A decision to place a child in out-of-home care is a safety decision. This level of intervention is **only** justified when it is clear that child safety cannot be controlled and managed in the home.
7. Conditions for return home are designed to ensure that children are returned when no safety threats exist or an in-home safety plan can be implemented and sustained. Also there is indication that the parents are moving towards change to control and manage child safety.

## **Resources**

- [Unlicensed Placements Policy](#)
- [Appendix A - Practice and Procedure Guide](#)

- [Shared Planning Policy](#)
- [FTDM Policy](#)
- [Trial Return Home Policy](#)
- [DLR/CPS Use of Safety Assessment and Safety Planning Tools Policy](#)
- [Intake Policy](#)
- [2331\(5\) Response to Serious Physical and Sexual Abuse](#)
- [Service Agreement Policy](#)
- [43081 Dependency Petition Process](#)

## 1110. Present Danger

### Purpose Statement

Present danger can occur at anytime throughout the life of a case and must be assessed on a continual basis. A determination must be made if immediate protective actions are necessary to protect a child and the level of intervention required to keep the child safe.

### Policy

- A. Assess if present danger exists during any contact with a child to determine if an immediate, significant and clearly observable behavior or situation is actively occurring and is threatening or dangerous to a child.
- B. When present danger exists, identify and take immediate protective action(s) necessary to create child safety.

### Procedures

1. When assessing Present Danger in a Family Assessment Response case. Document present danger and protective actions through the Present Danger Assessment at least once during service delivery.
2. In all other programs, document all protective actions taken to manage or control present danger in a FamLink case note using the protective action activity code or through completion of the Present Danger Assessment.
3. When children in CA's care and custody are determined to be in present danger in licensed or unlicensed care, children are removed from that placement. Notify intake [per policy](#).

### Resources

[Present Danger Guide](#)

[Protective Action Guide](#)

[When Children are In Danger - article](#)

## 1120. Safety Assessment

### Purpose Statement

Safety Assessment is used throughout the life of the case to identify impending danger and determine whether a child is safe or unsafe. It is based on comprehensive information gathered about the family at the time the safety assessment is completed.

### Policy

1. A child will be determined safe or unsafe by gathering and assessing comprehensive information about a family's behaviors, functioning and conditions. The information is assessed in order to determine the presence or absence of safety threats.
2. A Safety Assessment is completed at key decision points in a case to identify impending danger and to inform and implement safety plans with families to control or manage those threats.

### Procedures

1. Complete a Safety Assessment at the following key points in a case:
  1. On all CPS and DLR/CPS intakes (including new intakes on active cases) no later than 30 calendar days from date of intake. DLR/CPS follows additional requirements per DLR/CPS Use of Safety Assessment and Safety Planning Tools Policy.
  2. During the completion of the Family Assessment or Assessment of Progress.
  3. Before recommendation to court for unsupervised or overnight visits.
  4. When considering reunification or trial return home.
  5. When present danger exists in the home.
  6. When there is a change of anyone living in the home or a visitor resides on the premises for more than fourteen days and:
    1. A child is in-home, or
    2. A child is out-of-home and having unsupervised visitation in the parent(s) home.
  7. When considering case closure.
2. Review safety assessment at case transfer.
3. Determine if the child is safe or unsafe by:
  1. Gathering and assessing information through a review of CA history of prior reports and service interventions, interviews, and observations. Verify information through source documents and contacts with sources or collaterals. Information collected will include but is not limited to the following:
    1. Nature and extent of the maltreatment,
    2. Sequence of events that accompany the maltreatment,

3. Child functioning on a daily basis,
  4. Parental disciplinary practices,
  5. General parenting practices, and
  6. Adult functioning.
2. Consider and evaluate each potential safety threat against the safety threshold criteria to determine if safety threat(s) exist.
  3. When a safety threat exists, the child is considered unsafe and requires a Safety Plan.
  4. Establish if an in-home or out-of-home safety plan is most appropriate when a child is unsafe using the safety plan analysis criteria in FamLink. When considering an out-of-home safety plan utilize a shared planning or FTDM meeting per policy.
  5. When children in CA's care and custody are determined to be unsafe in licensed or unlicensed care, children are removed from that placement.

## **Resources**

[Information Gathering Questions](#)

[Safety Threats](#)

Safety Threats Guide (CA Intranet)

[Safety Threshold Guide](#)

# **1130. Safety Plan**

## **Purpose Statement**

The Safety Plan is a written agreement between a family and CA that identifies how safety threats to a child will be immediately controlled and managed. The Safety Plan is implemented and active as long as threats to child safety exist and caregiver protective capacities are insufficient to protect the child.

## **Policy**

1. Develop an in-home or out-of-home safety plan with the family to manage the identified safety threats to protect an unsafe child.
2. Safety Plans control or manage threats to a child's safety, have an immediate effect and contain safety services and actions only. These must be immediately accessible and available.
3. Safety planning occurs in the least intrusive manner based on a thorough analysis of in-home and out-of-home options. A decision that a child is unsafe does not always lead to a removal.
4. Out-of-home safety plans must contain conditions for return home.

5. Safety plan participants must be suitable and reliable in order to provide a greater level of protection for the child than the parent can or will provide.
6. Oversight and administration of the Safety Plan is the responsibility of CA.
7. Continuously evaluate and modify the Safety Plan as long as safety threats exist.

## Procedures

1. Develop a Safety Plan with the parent(s) and others immediately when a child is identified as unsafe and either:
  1. Remains in the home,
  2. Is placed in out-of-home care,
  3. Is returned home by a court order, or
  4. Is returning home when the safety threats can be managed or controlled in the home.
2. Follow [FTDM policy](#) when considering out-of-home placement or returning a child home.
3. Follow [SAY policy](#) and [PAAY](#) policy when working with youth identified as SAY or PAAY.
4. Develop one safety plan for the family when a child (ren) remains in the home and another child (ren) is placed out-of-home.
5. DLR/CPS follow additional requirements per [DLR/CPS Use of Safety Assessment and Safety Planning Tools Policy](#) for DLR/CPS.
6. Assess the suitability and reliability of potential safety plan participants not working in their professional capacity. Complete interviews and background checks (BCCU criminal history and FamLink history) by the following:

<b>Participant Role</b>	<b>Required Check(s)</b>	<b>Disqualify Process</b>	<b>Plan Completion</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Parent present (supervised)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ FamLink Check</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Founded Finding waiver approval process at RA level</li> <li>○ FamLink history staff with supervisor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Complete Safety Plan with a Completed FamLink check</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Parent not present (unsupervised)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ FamLink Check</li> <li>○ BCCU Check</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Founded Finding waiver approval process at RA level</li> </ul>	Complete Safety Plan with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Completed FamLink check</li> </ul>

- FamLink history staff with supervisor
- BCCU check requested
- Waiver approval process for any [DSHS Secretary's List of Disqualifying Crimes & Negative Actions](#) by RA or designee

7. Include within the Safety Plan for:

*In-Home Safety Plan*

0. Activities/tasks that control for safety threats or substitutes for diminished caregiver protective capacities.
1. Use of the family's suitable, formal and informal supports in order to manage safety threats.
2. Details for monitoring the safety plan.
3. Supports, safety services and actions at critical times when safety threats exist.
4. Formalize any protective action taken if applicable.

*Out-of-Home Safety Plan*

5. Activities/tasks that control for safety threats or substitutes for diminished caregiver protective capacities.
6. A plan for how the child will be kept safe during any contact with the parent including addressing:
  1. If visits will be supervised and by whom
  2. Transportation arrangements for supervision
  3. Safety considerations while the parents have contact with the child during services
7. A description of how the child will be safe in placement including :
  1. Visits with social worker
  2. Health screens, school, etc.
8. Conditions for return home. Document on the safety analysis and plan tab in comments section.
8. See additional requirements for serious physical or sex abuse cases per [2331\(5\) Response to Serious Physical and Sexual Abuse](#)

9. Supervisor must review and approve all safety plans in FamLink within two business days of entry. Any safety plan developed as a result of the FamLink override must be staffed with the Area Administrator or designee.
10. Supervisor must review safety plans every 30 days.
11. Review and monitor the in-home safety plan twice monthly. Revise the safety plan as threats emerge or are eliminated. This review must be documented in FamLink.
12. Review and monitor the out-of-home safety plan every 30 days. Revise the safety plan as threats emerge or are eliminated. This review must be documented in FamLink.

## **Resources**

[Safety Analysis Guide](#)

[Protective Action Guide](#)

# **1135. Infant Safety Education and Intervention**

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:** October 31, 2014

**Revised Date:** March 31, 2017

**Sunset Review:** March 31, 2021

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## **Purpose**

Children's Administration (CA) is committed to improving child safety outcomes for children under one year of age through early intervention and education with parents and out-of-home caregivers. Children under one-year-old are vulnerable to risk of harm from parental impairment due to alcohol/or drugs, accidental suffocation and serious injury from blunt-force trauma.

## **Scope**

This policy applies to CA staff.

## **Laws**

[P.L. 11-320 Child Abuse Prevention Treatment Act \(CAPTA\) of 2010](#)

## **Policy**



Note: The requirements listed in this policy do not apply to children who are placed out-of-state through Interstate Compact and Placement of Children.

**1. Newborn: Plan of Safe Care**

DCFS staff must:

1. Complete a [Plan of Safe Care DSHS 15-491](#) with the family as required by the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) when a newborn:
  1. Is identified as substance affected by a medical practitioner. Substances are defined as alcohol, marijuana and any drug with abuse potential, including prescription medications.
  2. Is born to a dependent youth.
2. Upload the completed [Plan of Safe Care DSHS 15-491](#) in FamLink.

**2. Birth to 6 months: Period of Purple Crying**

1. DCFS staff will inquire if parents or caregivers have previously received information on Period of Purple Crying when working with families.
2. DLR Licensors will inquire if parents or caregivers have previously received information on Period of Purple Crying when licensing or approving a home study for families accepting placements.
3. CA staff will provide Period of Purple Crying educational materials to any parent/caregiver who has not previously received information.

**3. Birth to One Year: Infant Safe Sleep**

1. CA staff will conduct a safe sleep assessment:
  1. When placing a child in a new placement setting; or
  2. Completing a CPS intervention involving a child aged birth to one year, even if the child is not identified as an alleged victim or an identified child.
    1. The assessment must be completed where the child primarily resides.
    2. DLR CPS investigators will review the licensed facility environment for safe sleep.
2. When licensing or approving a home study with families accepting placements for infants, the home study workers will assess the sleeping environment and educate the family on safe sleep practices.
3. Document the results of the safe sleep assessment.

## Procedures

**1. Birth to 6 months: Period of Purple Crying**

DCFS and home study staff must:

1. Determine if the parent/caregiver (licensed or unlicensed) has already received the "Period of PURPLE Crying" education and DVD/booklet.
  1. If already received, discuss any questions the caregiver may have regarding Period of PURPLE Crying.
  2. If not received:

1. Provide the "Period of PURPLE Crying" education and DVD/booklet. Review and discuss the information outlined in the booklet. The following key points should be relayed to caregivers:
    1. Teach what the letters "PURPLE" stand for as well as why understanding normal infant crying is important.
    2. Reinforce to families that if an infant is crying and they become frustrated they should put the infant down in a safe environment.
    3. Explain that caregiver's frustration due to Period of Purple Crying may cause the caregiver to shake the baby which can result in significant, if not life threatening, effects.
  2. Play the 10 minute "PURPLE" video for the caregivers after your presentation of the booklet if resources are available.
    1. Emphasize the importance of the material presented.
    2. Reinforce to the caregivers that all persons who will be caring for their infant should review this information.
    3. Remind caregivers about the 17-minute soothing film on the DVD to help caregivers understand ways to soothe their baby and cope with inconsolable crying periods.
  2. Document in a case note or provider note:
    1. When the caregiver receives or has previously received the Period of Purple Crying education and materials, or
    2. If the caregiver refused to discuss the Period of Purple Crying materials.
- 2. Birth to One Year: Infant Safe Sleep**
- DCFS and home study staff must:
1. Complete a safe sleep assessment with the parent or caregiver by:
    1. Reviewing and assessing the child's sleeping environment using the [Infant Safe Sleep Guidelines DSHS 22-1577](#) with parents or caregivers of infants younger than 12 months during the *first in-person* meeting.
    2. The DCFS caseworker must also review these guidelines at each subsequent [health and safety visit](#).
  2. Engage the parent or caregiver to create a safe sleep environment if one does not exist. This includes DCFS staff providing parents and unlicensed caregivers with a co-sleeper or pack and play as soon as possible if the child does not have a safe and separate sleeping area. DLR will not approve a home study without a safe sleep environment.
  3. Consult with his or her supervisor when there are additional risk factors, e.g., substance abuse, mental health issues, etc., associated with a parent or caregiver's ability to maintain child safety and a safe sleep environment.
  4. Include the following documentation:
    1. Results of safe sleep assessment (if needed) in a case note, Investigative Assessment, FAR Family Assessment, Comprehensive Family Evaluation, home study or provider note.

2. If the caregiver refused to participate in the process of creating a safe sleep environment for the child.
3. Any safety concerns or risk factors identified in licensed facilities will be immediately shared with the licensor.

## Forms and Tools

[Infant Safe Sleep Assessment Guidelines \(DSHS 22-1577\)](#)

[Safe Sleep for Your Baby Every Time brochure - Available in English and Spanish](#)

A program of the Safe Sleep campaign:

<http://www.nichd.nih.gov/sts/about/Pages/default.aspx>

The following free materials (available in English and Spanish) from the [Safe to Sleep](#) campaign and will be available in local offices for distribution to families caring for infants under the age of one year:

- [Safe Sleep for Your Baby: Reduce the Risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome \(SIDS\) and Other Sleep-Related Causes of Infant Death](#)(available for a variety of target audiences including grandparents)
- What does a safe sleep environment look like? [Reduce the Risk of SIDS and Other Sleep-Related Causes of Infant Death](#)

[Honor the Past, Learn for the Future](#): Reduce the Risk of SIDS and Other Sleep-Related Causes of Infant Death (American Indian/Alaska Native Outreach)

## Resources

A Program of the National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome - [www.dontshake.org](http://www.dontshake.org)

# 1140. Family Assessment/Assessment of Progress

## Purpose Statement

Conducting an assessment of the family is a process of gathering information to gain a greater understanding of how a family's strengths, needs and resources affect child safety, well-being, and permanency. Assessments are completed in partnership with the family to understand what everyday life challenges and individual caregiver patterns of behaviors contribute to child safety threats that are to be addressed in case planning.

## Policy

- A. Family members must be included in the assessment process.

- B. Assessments must include information and input from professionals and other collateral contacts that have knowledge of the child and family.
- C. Assessments of the family are completed at key decision points in a case. Assessments identify the enhanced protective and diminished protective capacities directly related to the identified safety threats.
- D. Information contained in the [Investigative Assessment \(IA\)](#) help to determine investigation findings and includes the SDMRA tool, whether alcohol or controlled substances contributed to alleged abuse or neglect, and case disposition
- E. Information contained in the [Comprehensive Family Evaluation \(CFE\)](#) and the FAR Family Assessment (FAR FA) help to develop the Case Plan.
- F. The CFE and FAR FA also assist in updating the Case Plan by evaluating a parent's progress in services designed to increase protective capacities and reduce or eliminate safety threats.
- G. Decisions to reunify are based on safety. The decision to reunify a child with a family is made when no safety threats exist or an in-home safety plan can replace an out-of-home safety plan.

## **Procedures**

- A. Complete:
  - 1. The Investigative Assessment within 60 calendar days of Children's Administration receiving the intake.
  - 2. The Initial CFE within 45 calendar days of a FVS or CFWS case assignment (include supervisor approval in FamLink).
  - 3. The Far FA upon case closure, no later than 90 days from intake.
- B. Update the CFE:
  - 1. Every 90 days after the completion of the prior CFE on FVS cases.
  - 2. A minimum of every 6 months or when a new ISSP report to the Court is required for a CFWS case.
  - 3. When an identified family or individual level objective has been achieved.
  - 4. When conditions for return home have been achieved.
  - 5. When developing or changing a case plan.
  - 6. Prior to case closure.
- C. Complete the FAR FA and CFE with the family to address changes in behaviors, conditions and attitudes related to safety.
- D. Assess conditions for return home when updating a CFE. Review how the safety threat(s) is or is not being managed by the caregiver, how the parent is incorporating service provisions into their daily life and if the safety threat can be managed in the family.

## **Resources**

[Investigative Assessment Guide](#)

[Comprehensive Family Evaluation Guide](#)

## 1150. Case Plan

### Purpose Statement

The Case Plan specifies what must change to reduce or eliminate safety threats and increase the parent or caregiver's protective capacities to assure the child's safety and well being. CA co-develops case plans with family members and community partners.

### Policy

1. Case plans are focused, time limited, behaviorally specific, attainable, relevant, and understandable to all.
2. Case plans must focus on behavioral change to reduce safety threats and increase parental protective capacities so that parents can resume the protective function for the family.
3. Case plans must include both family and individual level objectives that are directly linked to the identified safety threats.
4. Each objective must be supported by specific and measurable tasks that outline the action steps needed to successfully achieve each objective.
5. Assigned tasks are action steps that family members, social workers, providers, resources and natural supports are willing and able to do to achieve the objectives.
6. Family and individual level objectives provide the basis for the case plan and involvement with CA. Once objectives are achieved, CA's involvement with the family ends.

### Procedures

1. Develop case plans with the family, providers, resources and natural supports as applicable during a face-to-face meeting or shared planning meeting.
2. Complete a Family Assessment when developing a case plan and complete the Assessment of Progress when changing or ending the case plan.
3. Develop Voluntary Case Plans when the family meets criteria per Service Agreement Policy and Court Ordered Case Plans when the family meets criteria per [43081 Dependency Petition Process](#).
4. Create an Initial Voluntary Case Plan for a period up to 90 calendar days. A subsequent Case Plan may be developed for an additional 90 calendar days with supervisor approval. If services are extended beyond **180 calendar days, AA approval is required.**
5. Connect objectives to the safety threats identified through assessment. Objectives should not change throughout the life of the case.
6. Include required objectives based on the identified safety threats and needs of the family as assessed by the Safety Assessment(s) and information obtained through working with the family. Objectives include:

1. Primary Family Level Objectives (FLO)
2. Secondary FLO
3. Individual Level Objectives (ILO)
4. Child Action Plan (out-of-home care only)
7. Include at a minimum the following under both the family and individual level objective on the initial case plan:
  1. A specific and measurable plan.
  2. Provider/service/natural supports/social worker to assist in the development of this plan. Include social worker's role in acquiring resources.
  3. A process of how and who this plan will be shared and by when.
  4. How progress will be documented and celebrated.
8. Follow the same format for updated and ongoing case plans. Reflect the continued use of a provider, resource, social worker or natural supports.
9. Attach any provider plan developed with the parent(s) to the case plan when presented in court.
10. Identify the underlying and contributing factors associated with the safety threats so the factors can be addressed within the case plan.
11. Identify and coordinate the services needed for the:
  1. Reduction or elimination of safety threats to the child.
  2. Enhancement of parental protective capacity to change conditions, circumstances or behaviors contributing to the identified safety threat.
12. Evaluate and measure progress in the assessment of progress based on the behaviorally-specific objectives required and described in the case plan.
13. Update and revise the case plan when reunifying the child. The case plan must address the transition process for children and parents per [Trial Return Home Policy](#). Continue assessing identified objectives after child returns home.

## 1160. Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC)

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:** September 29, 2015

**Revised Date:** January 26, 2016

**Sunset Review:** September 29, 2018

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### Purpose

To identify, document and determine appropriate and culturally competent services for children or youth in the placement, care or supervision of Children's Administration (CA) who are at risk

of or are victims of commercial sexual exploitation or sex trafficking. This includes dependent children who are legally free, in out-of-home placement, on an in-home dependency or participating in the Extended Foster Care program.

## **Scope**

This policy applies to all DCFS staff.

## **Laws**

[PL 113-183](#) - Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act

[PL 106-386](#) - Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protections Act of 2000

[RCW 9.68A.100](#) - Commercial Sexual Abuse of a Minor – Penalties

[RCW 9.68A.101](#) - Promoting Commercial Sexual Abuse of Minor - Penalty

[RCW 9.68A.102](#) - Promoting Travel for Commercial Sexual Abuse of a Minor - Penalty

[RCW 9.68A.103](#) - Permitting Commercial Sexual Abuse of a Minor - Penalty

[RCW 26.44.020](#) - Definitions

[RCW 26.44.030](#) - Reports – Duty and Authority to Make – Duty of Receiving Agency – Duty to Notify – Case Planning and Consultation – Penalty for Unauthorized Exchange of Information – Filing Dependency Petitions – Investigations – Interviews of Children – Records – Risk Assessment Process

## **Policy**

1. Children or youth in the care and custody or under supervision of CA will receive a screening for CSEC when:
  1. The child is age 11 years or older and receiving Child and Family Welfare Services (CFWS) either in-home or out-of-home.
  2. There is suspicion that the child/youth may be a victim of sexual exploitation or sex trafficking.
  3. The child/youth has returned to placement after missing from care.
2. Any CA staff who suspects or learns that a child or youth has been sexually exploited will follow the mandatory reporting statute and make a report to intake.
3. A report to law enforcement will be made within 24 hours when any child or youth is identified as being a victim of sexual exploitation or sex trafficking regardless of whether or not the child or youth believes he or she has been victimized.
4. A shared planning meeting will be held for all children or youth identified as at risk of being or confirmed as a CSEC.

## Procedures

### 1. Screening Children and Youth for CSEC

The following staff will screen children or youth at risk of or suspected of being CSEC:

1. CHET workers who are co-assigned will screen all youth age 11 years and older at initial placement. Missing from Care Locators who are co-assigned will screen youth missing from care who have returned from a run episode.
  2. Assigned CFWS workers will screen all dependent children and youth:
    1. Aged 11 years and older at the time of CFWS case opening if not screened by a CHET worker. This includes children who remain in-home or are placed out of home.
    2. When a youth returns from a run episode if there is not a Missing From Care Locator co-assigned.
    3. When there is an allegation or suspicion that the child/youth is a victim of sexual exploitation or sex trafficking.
- ### 2. Reporting New or Suspected Sexual Exploitation or Sex Trafficking
1. Any CA staff who suspects or learns that a child or youth has been sexually exploited or sex trafficked will follow the mandatory reporting statute and make a report to CA intake.
  2. CA staff will report to law enforcement within 24 hours when any child or youth is identified as being a victim of sexual exploitation or sex trafficking. CA staff will document a report to law enforcement in a case note with date and time of report, law enforcement agency, name and phone number of person taking the report.
- ### 3. Case Planning/Services
1. The assigned CFWS worker will conduct a [shared planning](#) meeting to address service needs including but not limited to:
    1. Safety
    2. Placement stability
    3. Permanency Plan
    4. Social activities/Prudent Parenting Standards
    5. Cultural needs
    6. Education
    7. Substance Abuse/Mental Health treatment
    8. Independent Living Skills Program (ILS)
  2. The assigned CFWS worker will refer children or youth confirmed as commercially sexually exploited or sex trafficked for medical screening and specialized CSEC services as available and appropriate.
  3. The assigned CFWS worker will assess and address any additional identified health or safety concerns.
  4. The assigned CFWS worker will document the case plan and services in FamLink under the “Shared Planning” tab and/or case plan.

## Forms and Tools



- CSEC Screening Tool (DSHS 15-476)

## See also

- [Practices and Procedures 2200 Intake](#)
- [Practice and Procedures 1710 Shared Planning](#)

# 1170. Domestic Violence

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:** March 31, 2017

**Policy Review:** March 31, 2020

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## Purpose

To recognize and understand the dynamics of domestic violence (DV) in families through the universal screening process and to determine the impact of DV on child safety through the specialized DV assessment.

## Scope

This policy applies to all Children's Administration intake workers, Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) caseworkers and Division of Licensed Resources (DLR) staff.

## Laws

[RCW 26.44.020](#) Definitions

[RCW 10.99.020](#) Definitions

[RCW 10.99.030](#) Law enforcement officers - Training, powers, duties - Domestic violence reports

[RCW 26.50.010](#) Definitions

[RCW 26.50.250](#) Disclosure of information

[RCW 42.56.240](#) Investigative, law enforcement, and crime victims

## Policy

1. Universal DV screening is routinely conducted at key points in a case to determine if DV is present. DV screening includes interviews and review of records and available databases.
2. If DV is determined to be present in a case through universal screening, CA staff must conduct a Specialized DV Assessment which is an interview protocol, not a tool.
3. Information gathered during the DV screening and the Specialized DV Assessment, is used in addition to the gathering questions to complete the Safety Assessment and determine if a safety threat to the child exists.
4. If DV poses [present danger](#) to a child, CA staff must take immediate protective actions necessary to address child safety.
5. If DV poses a safety threat to a child in his or her **biological parent or legal caregiver's** care, the worker must:
  1. Develop an in-home safety plan per the [1130. Safety Plan](#) policy if the safety threat(s) can be immediately controlled and managed in the home.
  2. Ensure protection of the child and take necessary steps to place the child in out-of-home care if the safety threats cannot be immediately controlled and managed in the home.
6. If DV poses a safety threat to a child while in **licensed or unlicensed** care, he or she must be removed from that placement per [1120. Safety Assessment](#) policy.
7. CA intake workers must offer DV resource information to the **referrer** on all intakes (screened in or out) when DV is identified and the referrer is not familiar with DV resources.
8. CA caseworkers must offer DV resource information to the **adult victim in an open case** when DV is identified.

## Procedures

1. The [intake](#) worker must ask the referent the following universal DV screening questions on all intakes:
  1. Has any adult used or threatened to use physical force against an adult in the home?
  2. If so, the intake worker must ask, "Who did what to whom?"
2. The CPS, FVS, CFWS caseworker must:
  1. Conduct universal DV screening through individual and separate interviews with all parents, caregivers, adults and children in the home even if DV was not identified at intake to determine:
    1. If DV is present?
    2. If so, who is the adult victim?
    3. If so, who is the DV perpetrator?
  2. Conduct universal DV screening at the following key points:
    1. At first contact with a family. If this is not possible, at the next available opportunity. If a parent refuses to meet separately, consult with the supervisor and document the parent's refusal to meet in a case note.
    2. A new screened in intake.
    3. Case transfer

4. [Re-assessment of safety](#) (e.g. moving to unsupervised visits, transitioning home, changes in household composition, etc.).
  3. The DLR/CPS investigator must conduct universal DV screening when investigating child abuse or neglect (CA/N) allegations involving a biological family.
  4. The DLR licensor must conduct universal DV screening when completing a home study.
3. Specialized DV Assessment Interview Protocol
  1. When DV is identified, the assigned caseworker, DLR/CPS investigator or licensor must conduct a to determine if the DV poses a threat to child safety or compromises the family's ability to address other CA/N. This assessment is accomplished via interviews, review of records and available databases for all of the following information:
    1. DV perpetrator's pattern of assaultive and coercive tactics.
    2. Impact of DV on the adult victim.
    3. Impact of DV on the child.
    4. Adult victim, perpetrator and community protective factors
    5. The lethality of the DV.
  2. Follow [1130. Safety Plan](#) policy if DV poses a threat to child safety.
4. Documentation
  1. The intake worker must document the outcome of the universal screening questions in the Additional Risk Factors narrative box of the intake. If the allegation of CA/N involves DV the intake worker must document the information in the Allegation/Concern narrative box.
  2. The assigned caseworker must document the outcome of the universal DV screen in the [Structured Decision Making Risk Assessment \(SDMRA\)](#) tool, narrative sections of the [investigative assessment](#), Family Assessment Response Family Assessment (FARFA), and Comprehensive Family Evaluation (CFE), and reports to the court as applicable.
  3. The assigned caseworker must document the outcome of the specialized DV assessment, if conducted, in a case note.
  4. The DLR/CPS investigator must document the outcome of the universal DV screening and specialized DV assessment interview protocol of the DV in a case note and in the DLR Risk Assessment Matrix, as applicable.
  5. The DLR licensor must document the outcome of the DV screening and specialized DV assessment interview protocol in a provider note or the home study, as applicable.
  6. Safety planning information for the victim or children must be documented in a case note, labeled **confidential DV safety plan** and include the confidential information:
    1. The identity of a victim or witness to the crime.
    2. The identity of the DV victim if the victim has filed a complaint with an investigative or law enforcement agency and there is an open criminal investigation.
    3. The location of a DV program, including shelters and transitional living facilities.

4. The victim's address information, if he or she signed up for the Address Confidentiality Program (ACP). If the victim is participating in the ACP, use the P.O. Box address that is assigned to them through the Secretary of State.

## Resources

- Refer to the Social Worker's Practice Guide to Domestic Violence for DV screening, assessment, and case planning located under the Domestic Violence tab on the CA intranet
- Statewide DV resources
  - Statewide DV Hotline telephone number 1-800-562-6025 V/TTY.
  - [Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence](#)
  - [DSHS/CAs DV site](#) (shelters, victim, and perpetrator programs)
  - [Address Confidentiality Program](#)
- Databases to identify previous DV:
  - CA case history in FamLink and MODIS
  - ACES
  - BARCODE
  - [WA State Courts](#)
  - Law enforcement reports

# 1700. Case Staffings

[Dependency Timeline & Schedule of Case Staffings](#) (PDF)

## Purpose Statement

All staffings engage parents in the shared planning process to develop family specific case plans focused on identified safety threats and child specific permanency goals. Working in partnership with families, natural supports and providers helps identify parents' strengths, threats to child safety, focus on everyday life events, and help parents build the skills necessary to support the safety and well-being of their children. The shared planning process integrates all CA staffings.

## Policy

1. Engage families, natural supports and providers in case planning. Schedule staffings in a location and time that meets the needs of the parent(s) and their participants whenever possible.
2. Identify all relevant case participants.
3. Schedule staffings to correspond with planning for court hearings whenever possible.
4. Multiple issues impacting children and families may be addressed in one meeting rather than separate meetings held for each issue.
5. Utilize staffings to assist you and the family to develop or review resources or approaches to address child safety.

6. Prepare for staffings by determining how the participants can contribute to the case discussion and planning.
7. Utilize the [concurrent planning](#) process to develop child specific permanency goals.

## Resources

Practice Model Website on the Children's Administration Intranet

## Forms

[DSHS 14-474 Shared Planning Form](#)

## Related Staffings

[43104. Multi Disciplinary Staffings for Youth Exiting Care \(age 17.5\)](#)

[4533. Behavior Rehabilitative Services \(BRS\) Staffing](#)

45431. Foster Care Assessment Program (FCAP)

[10.01 Local Indian Children Welfare Committee \(LICWAC\)](#)

# 1710. Shared Planning

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:** September 1, 2006

**Revised Date:** October 31, 2016

**Policy Review:** October 31, 2020

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## Purpose

Children's Administration uses a Shared Planning model to work with families in addressing a variety of needs across the life of a case. The Shared Planning model includes families, youth, relatives, fictive kin, natural supports and others who can assist in the development of a plan that prioritizes child safety and meets the support and service needs of parents, children and caregivers. An inclusive model provides an opportunity for information to be shared, case plans to be developed and decisions made that will support the safety, permanency, and well-being of children.

## Scope

This policy applies to all Division of Children and Family Services staff.

## Laws

[RCW 13.34.067](#) Shelter Care, Case Conference, Service Agreement

[RCW 13.34.145](#) Permanency Planning Hearing

[RCW 74.13.341](#) Transition plan - Qualification for developmental disability services

[RCW 74.13.540](#) Independent Living Services

[RCW 74.14A.020](#) Services for Emotionally Disturbed and Mentally Ill Children

[PL 113-183](#) Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act

## Policy

1. The Shared planning model is used for the following meetings which must occur within the required timeframes or when required due to circumstances:
  1. [Family Team Decision Making \(FTDM\)](#)
  2. [Shelter Care Case Conference](#)
  3. [Child Health and Education Tracking \(CHET\)](#)
  4. [Permanency Planning Meeting](#)
  5. [Adoption Planning Review](#)
  6. [Placement Staffing](#)
  7. Mental Health and Substance Abuse Treatment Planning
  8. [Behavioral Rehabilitative Services](#)
  9. [17.5 Transition Staffing](#) (currently referred to as the Multi-Disciplinary Staffing (For Youth 17.5) in FamLink)
  10. [Foster Care Assessment Program \(FCAP\)](#)
  11. [Local Indian Child Welfare Advisory Committee \(LICWAC\)](#)
  12. Tribal Staffing
  13. End-of-life care
2. Participants listed on the Guide to Shared Planning Meetings must be invited to shared planning meetings.
3. Incarcerated parents must be provided access and opportunities to participate in shared planning meetings.
4. The child's safety, permanency and well-being must be discussed during shared planning meetings.
5. [Visitation](#) must be discussed during the meeting when children are placed out-of-home care. [Visitation](#) discussions will include a review of the visitation plan, level of supervision necessary to ensure the safety of the child, transportation and efforts to include relatives and family supports.
6. All shared planning meetings must be documented on the [Shared Planning form DSHS 14-474](#) in FamLink.

## Procedures

1. The assigned caseworker or supervisor must:
  1. Conduct a shared planning meeting within the timeframes or circumstances described in the [Guide to Shared Planning Meetings](#).
  2. Ask youth age 14 and older to identify at least two support persons to attend the meeting who are not the caseworker or caregiver.
    1. One of the individuals selected may be designated to be the youth's advocate when discussing normal childhood activities under the reasonable prudent parenting standard.
    2. Any individual identified by the youth must be able to act in the youth's best interest.
    3. If the caseworker or tribal agency has good cause to believe the youth's identified support person is not acting in the best interest, he or she may be asked to leave the meeting.
  3. Invite participants indicated on the [Guide to Shared Planning Meetings](#) a minimum of five calendar days before the meeting, when possible. If not possible, the effort to invite participants will be documented in a case note.
  4. Provide alternative methods to participate in the shared planning meetings such as conference calls and video conferencing.
2. If the child, caregiver or parent is unable to attend the shared planning meeting his or her input will be presented by the assigned caseworker and will be considered.
3. During the meeting, the assigned caseworker or supervisor will:
  1. Present a case history and the child and/or family's current situation.
  2. Provide participants the opportunity to present information and engage in the shared planning process.
  3. Identify family strengths and community and cultural supports.
  4. Address and review the following (when applicable):
    1. Safety
      1. Safety assessments
      2. Safety plans
      3. Services needed to reduce safety concerns and increase protective capacities.
    2. Permanency
      1. Progress toward achieving a permanent plan and appropriateness of the case plan to address safety threats and barriers to reunification.
      2. All primary and alternate permanency plans.
      3. Compelling reasons if a TPR has not been filed within 12 months of child's OPD.
      4. Placement stability
        1. Appropriateness of current placement.
        2. Child's adjustment in the placement.
        3. The need for services to reduce risk of disruption.
      5. Efforts to place siblings together and/or maintain sibling visits or contacts.

6. Parent-child visits and level of supervision needed to manage safety threats during visitation.
  7. Sibling visits.
  8. Relative search efforts, status of Tribal affiliation, involvement and notification to relatives and tribes.
  9. Plan to maintain community and cultural connections.
3. Well-being
1. Mental health, physical health and well-being of child, including medical information and needs.
  2. Alternative plan for assessment and treatment if child has been denied mental health or substance abuse services.
  3. Services to support healthy development and attachment. This includes normal childhood activities under the reasonable and prudent parenting standard.
  4. The child's connections with siblings and other relatives. For youth 16 and above, this includes discussing skills and strategies to safely reconnect with any identified family members and providing guidance and services to assist the youth.
  5. Child's education status, needs and supports. Assign tasks and responsibilities as appropriate for child's education including but not limited to, school enrollment, transportation, referrals for school based services.
  6. Results of the CHET screening and other assessments if available. If CHET results are not available, present results at the next scheduled shared planning meeting.
  7. Services and activities needed to support the youth in his or her transition to adulthood:
    1. For youth 14 years of age or older as part of transition planning:
      1. Education
      2. Employment
      3. Housing
      4. Health insurance
      5. Mentors and continuing supports
    2. For youth 15 years of age and older status of referrals to Independent Living Services contract providers.
  8. Cultural and/or tribal connections.
4. Document all information discussed during shared planning meetings in FamLink using the [Shared Planning form DSHS 14-474](#) within the required documentation timeframes. Documentation includes all persons who were invited and attended the meeting.
5. Create and update the following documents when needed:
1. Safety Plan
  2. Parent, Child, Sibling Visitation Plan and referrals
  3. Comprehensive Family Evaluation
  4. Court Report



5. Case plan
6. Education Plan
7. Transition Plan

## Forms

- [Shared Planning DSHS 14-474](#)
- [Transition Plan for Youth Exiting Care DSHS 15-417](#) (currently named Transition Plan for Youth Exiting Care)
- [Shared Planning Parent Information Sheet DSHS 15-260](#)

## Resources

- [Family Team Decision-Making \(FTDM\) Practice Guide](#)
- [Caregiver Guidelines for Foster Childhood Activities](#)
- [www.caseylifeskills.org](http://www.caseylifeskills.org)
- [Guide to Shared Planning Meetings](#)

# 1720. Family Team Decision Making Meetings

## Purpose

Family Team Decision Making (FTDM) meetings bring people together who are involved with the family to make critical decisions regarding the removal of child(ren) from their home, changes in out-of-home placement, and reunification or placement into a permanent home.

## Laws

[RCW 13.34.067](#)

[RCW 13.34.145](#)

## Policy

1. Family Team Decision Making (FTDM) meeting must occur within the required timelines.
2. The required participants must be invited to the FTDM meeting.
3. FTDM meetings must be documented in FamLink using the Shared Planning Form and case note.

## Procedures

1. Conduct a FTDM meeting within the following timeframes (Convene additional FTDM meetings as needed):
  1. **Prior** to removing a child and anytime out-of-home placement of a child is being considered.
  2. **If** a child is placed into protective custody by law enforcement, the FTDM must be held as soon as possible and no later than 72 hours of the placement and always prior to the shelter care hearing.
  3. **Prior** to moving a child from one placement to another.
  4. **Prior** to reunification of a child with parent(s) or exiting from care.
2. Invite the following participants to the FTDM meeting when possible:
  1. Parent(s)
  2. Youth (developmentally appropriate)
  3. Youth's mentor (if applicable)
  4. Family members/relatives
  5. Caregivers (if parent(s) agree)

**Note:** Parent(s) must agree for Caregiver(s) to attend a FTDM when conducted in place of a Case Conference.

6. Tribe(s)
7. Community partners
8. CASA/GAL/Attorney(s)
9. Other identified by child or family
10. Agency staff as needed:
  1. Social Worker Supervisor (attend if possible but not required)
  2. CHET Worker
  3. Adoption Worker
  4. Placement Coordinator

**Important:** If the child, caregiver or parent is unable to attend the FTDM meeting, their input will be presented and considered in the decision-making process.

3. Document meeting attendees in the Shared Planning Section of FamLink within the required documentation timeframes. (*Include any decisions reached and any plans made at the meeting, include items needed from those responsible for tracking issues in a case note,*).

## Resources

[Family Team Decision-Making \(FTDM\) Practice Guide](#)

# 1730. Shelter Care Case Conference

## **Purpose**

Provide an opportunity to develop and specify in a written case plan the expectations of both CA and the parent regarding the care and placement of their child.

## **Laws**

[RCW 13.34.067](#)

[RCW 74.14A.020](#)

[RCW 13.34](#)

## **Policy**

1. Following Shelter Care and no later than thirty days prior to Fact Finding hearing CA will facilitate a conference to develop a written service agreement.
2. Required participants must be invited to the Shelter Care Case Conference.

## **Procedures**

1. Schedule a Case Conference meeting when the court establishes shelter care and no later than thirty days before the Fact Finding court hearing.
2. Invite to the case conference the following individuals:
  1. Parents
  2. Youth (as developmentally appropriate)
  3. Parents and youth's assigned counsel
  4. GAL or CASA
  5. Tribe(s)
  6. Other persons identified and agreed upon by the parties
3. Develop a written case plan including the expectations of CA and the parents regarding the care and placement of the parent's child.
4. Document the Case Conference within the Shared Planning Page in FamLink.

## **Forms**

- Case Plan

# **1740. Child Protection Teams (CPT)**

## **Purpose**

Child Protection Teams provide confidential, multi-disciplinary consultation and recommendations to the Department on cases where there will not be an FTDM, and there is a

risk of serious or imminent harm to a young child and when there is dispute if an out-of-home placement is appropriate.

## **Laws**

[Executive Order 12-04](#)

[WAC 388-15-033](#)

## **Policy**

1. Regional Administrators (RA), or their designee, must establish and maintain at least one Child Protection Team in each region.
2. Child Protection Teams will include at least four selected professionals that provide services to abused and neglected children or their families.
3. Child Protection Team recommendations are advisory to CA staff.

## **Procedures**

1. Child Protection Teams participants may include:
  1. Law enforcement
  2. Physicians, and/or other medical professionals
  3. Mental health/substance abuse counselors
  4. Educators, CASA's, foster parents
  5. Domestic Violence advocates and/or experts
  6. DSHS staff with specific and complementary skills/knowledge to a CPT
  7. Other Mandated Reporters
  8. Professionals who play a significant role with the family
2. Staff are required to submit a [CPT Case Presentation Summary](#) to the CPT Coordinator:
  1. In all child abuse or neglect investigation cases in which the assessment requires the Department to offer services, and a Family Team Decision Making (FTDM) meeting will not or cannot be held, and the child's age is six years or younger; and
  2. In all child abuse and neglect cases where serious professional disagreement exists regarding a risk of serious harm to the child and where there is a dispute over whether out-of-home placement is appropriate.
  3. When the Department chooses to bring a case to CPT believing that such a consultation may assist in improving outcomes for a particular child.
3. CPT Coordinators must:
  1. Coordinate and manage CPT membership, recruitment, training, scheduling, record -keeping including CPT recommendations, reporting and communication for the CPT.
  2. Provide in writing the CPT staffing recommendations to the assigned worker and supervisor following the staffing.

3. Maintain a tracking system to document activity for staffings and recommendations.
4. Document the CPT in the Shared Planning section in FamLink per Shared Planning FamLink Manual.

## Forms

- [DSHS 15-266 CPT Staffing Recommendations](#)
- [DSHS 15-268 CPT Case Presentation Summary](#)

## Resources

- Child Protection Team Volunteer Handbook

# 2000. CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES

## 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 388-15-130 through 388-15-134, and WAC 388-70-095.

## Goal

1. 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.
2. CPS is a program available in all geographic areas of the state of Washington on a 24-hour basis.

## Service Description

The purposes of CPS are to:

1. Receive and assess referrals from the community alleging child abuse and neglect (CA/N).
2. Assess risk of future abuse or neglect to children.
3. Investigate intakes alleging CA/N or the risk of CA/N.
  1. Determine the existence of CA/N.
  2. Assess risk of abuse and neglect to children by performing a comprehensive assessment, using the risk assessment model.
4. Provide early intervention information and referral services to advise parents about services to strengthen families and prevent serious or continuing CA/N:

5. 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 and permanent home for a child.

## **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 Process and Response**

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:** 1972

**Revised Date:** March 31, 2017

**Policy Review:** July 1, 2021

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## **Purpose**

Children's Administration (CA) receives and processes reports of child abuse and neglect, requests for services, and provides information and referral according to federal and state law on a 24-hour basis.

## **Scope**

This policy applies to all CA intake staff.

## **Laws**

[RCW 9A.16.100](#) Use of Force

[RCW 13.34.030](#) Juvenile Court Act - Definitions

[RCW 13.34.360](#) Safety of Newborn Children Act

[RCW 26.44.020](#) Abuse of Children - Definitions

[RCW 26.44.030](#) Abuse of Children - Reports

[RCW 46.61.687](#) Child Passenger Restraint

[RCW 74.13](#) Child Welfare Services

[RCW 74.15](#) Care of Children, Expectant Mothers, Persons with Developmental Disabilities

## Policy

1. The intake worker will:
  1. Conduct a comprehensive interview with any referrer, including making reasonable efforts to learn his or her name, address, and telephone number, and conduct a FamLink person search for all persons, victims, perpetrators, parents, and family members listed in the intake.
  2. Contact and document collateral source information in order to complete a comprehensive intake when:
    1. Sufficient information is not available from the referrer to determine the intake screening decision or appropriate response time.
    2. It is necessary to verify or clarify a child abuse or neglect (CA/N) allegation.
  3. Process reports with allegations of CA/N, circumstances placing a child at [imminent risk of serious harm](#) and requests for services specific to CA from any source and in any form, and document in an intake.
    1. **Sufficiency Screening**

Screen in intakes for Child Protective Services (CPS) intervention if the following sufficiency screening criteria are met:

      1. The alleged victim is under 18 years of age.
      2. The allegation, if true, minimally meets the WAC definition of CA/N or it is alleged a child's circumstances place him or her at imminent risk of serious harm.
      3. The alleged subject has the role of a parent, acting in loco parentis, or unknown; or
      4. The subject is providing care in a facility subject to licensing by DSHS, Division of Early Learning (DEL), or in state-regulated care.
    2. **Allegations of CA/N or Imminent Risk of Serious Harm**

Utilize the FamLink intake, Chronicity Indicator, and Structured Decision Making (SDM) Intake and Intake Practice Guides located on the CA intranet to determine assignment to CPS Investigation, Family Assessment Response (FAR), or for Division of Licensed Resources DLR/CPS.

      1. Screen in for:
        1. **CPS or DLR/CPS Investigation** when there is an allegation(s) of:
          1. Sexual abuse or sexual exploitation.
          2. Serious physical abuse or serious neglect.
          3. Physical abuse to a child three years or younger.

4. Abuse or neglect reported by a physician, or a medical professional on a physician's behalf, regarding a child under age five.
5. Injury or bruise on a non-mobile infant, birth to twelve months regardless of the explanation about how the injury or bruise occurred.
2. **CPS or DLR/CPS Investigation** when a report is received from a commissioned law enforcement officer stating a parent has been arrested for Criminal Mistreatment in the fourth degree. [RCW 9A.42](#)
3. **CPS Investigation** when:
  1. Child or youth in the household is having sexualized contact or engaging in sexual behaviors with other child or youth in the home. (See reference for behaviors that may be considered [common for childhood development](#)).
  2. There is an open dependency case involving the child victim or household.
  3. A dependency action involving the child victim or household was closed within the previous 12 months.
  4. An alleged victim or subject has been in three or more intakes screened in for investigation **or** Family Assessment Response in the past 12 months.
4. **CPS Family Assessment Response (FAR)** when it is indicated on the Structured Decision Making Screening Tool.
5. **DLR/CPS Investigation** when there is an allegation of CA/N in a facility subject to licensing by DLR or Department of Early Learning (DEL) or the facility is state regulated. Follow the intake requirements in the DLR CA/N Handbook – Investigating Abuse and Neglect in State-Regulated Care.
2. Screen in CPS Risk Only reports when a child is at imminent risk of serious harm and there are no CA/N allegations. These include but are not limited to reports:
  1. From law enforcement about a sexually aggressive youth under age 8.
  2. From the prosecutor's office about a sexually aggressive youth under age 12 who will not be prosecuted.
  3. Involving CA/N allegations of an individual(s) age 18-21 who resides in a state-regulated or licensed facility, or facility subject to licensing.
  4. Of a child at imminent risk of serious harm on an open Department of Children and Family Services case.



5. Of a child at imminent risk of serious harm in the care of a licensed or unlicensed provider.
3. Screen in reports made by a physician licensed under [RCW Chapter 18.71](#) 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 the child is returned home. [RCW 26.44.030\(8\)](#)
4. Screen in reports from anonymous referrers when alleged CA/N meets the sufficiency screening criteria or there is imminent risk of serious harm and one or more of the following exists:
  1. There is a serious threat of substantial harm to a child.
  2. The allegation(s) includes conduct involving a criminal offense that has, or is about to occur, in which the child is the victim.
  3. A member of the household has a prior founded report of child abuse or neglect within three years of receipt of the intake.  
Inform the referrer that, if he or she remains anonymous and the allegation(s) appears to carry a lower risk, the intake (with the exception of DLR/CPS) will be screened out and not be assigned for investigation.
5. Screen in all reports of CA/N or imminent risk of serious harm involving a facility or a facility subject to licensing, regardless of the anonymity of the referrer.
6. Screen in reports involving a newborn exposed to substances (alcohol, marijuana and all drugs with abuse potential; including prescription medications) to the following pathways:
  1. **CPS (Investigation or FAR) or DLR/CPS Investigation** when there is a CA/N allegation(s).
  2. **CPS Risk Only** when there is no CA/N allegation but the newborn is one of the following:
    1. [Substance affected](#) (as identified by a medical practitioner)
    2. [Substance exposed](#) **and** risk factors indicate [imminent risk of serious harm](#).
3. **Requests for services for a family or child (Non CPS)**
  1. Screen in intakes for:
    1. **Family Voluntary Services (FVS)** when a parent or legal guardian requests services in the home or temporary placement of a child, and there is no anticipated court involvement.
    2. Family Reconciliation Services (FRS) when receiving a request from a youth age 12-17, parent (custodial or noncustodial), caregiver, law enforcement, Tribal social worker or CA, HOPE Center or Crisis Residential Center

(CRC) staff when at least one family member is voluntarily requesting one of the following:

1. A family assessment for a Child in Need of Services (CHINS) or an At Risk Youth (ARY) petition.
2. CA assistance for a family experiencing immediate family crisis due to conflict or a youth exhibiting high risk behaviors.
3. The following pathways when receiving reports from a Crisis Residential Center (CRC), Hope Center, or Overnight Youth Shelter involving a runaway youth and there are no allegations of abuse or neglect:
  1. FRS for youth age 12 and older.
  2. FVS for youth under age 12
4. The following pathways when requests are received for services involving commercially sexually exploited children/youth and the request is made by the youth, parent, or other community member for.
  1. FRS for youth age 12 and older.
  2. FVS for youth under age 12.
5. **Child and Family Welfare Services (CFWS)** when services are requested for a family or child and the request is appropriate and there is service availability. The caregiver, child, community member, or other child welfare agency may make a service request.
6. **CFWS** when a parent transfers a newborn (birth to 72-hours old) anonymously at a hospital emergency room, fire station, or federally designated rural health clinic if open and personnel are present to accept the child. [See Safety of Newborn Children Act \(Safe Haven law\).](#)
7. **Extended Foster Care (EFC)** services when a youth requests services, and assign to where the youth resides when he or she:
  1. Was dependent and in out-of-home care at age 18.
  2. Has a closed CA case.
  3. Has not yet reached age 19.
8. **DLR/Non-CPS rule infraction** on reports regarding DLR or DEL licensed home or facility that do not contain allegations of CA/N.
9. **IV-E and non IV-E Tribal Placement/Payment Only** on all tribal payment requests, for both open and closed cases, unless it is a modification to an existing payment-only case.
  2. Refer all inquiries regarding adoption to a DLR supervisor.
4. **Indian Child Welfare**

1. Make efforts to determine if a child is affiliated with a federally recognized Tribe. See [Washington State Tribes: Tribal Contact and Coordination Guidelines](#) and Tribal Agreements located on the ICW page on the CA intranet.
  2. If a child or family is affiliated with a Washington state federally recognized Tribe:
    1. Attempt collateral contact with the Tribe prior to making a screening decision.
    2. Document the contact or attempts in the ICW tab in the CA Intake.
    3. Follow [Indian Child Welfare Manual Chapter 1](#).
- 5. Law Enforcement**
1. Consult immediately with the intake supervisor if there is an indication the child may be in present danger and a law enforcement child welfare check may be needed. See [1110. Present Danger](#) policy.
  2. Follow 2570. Mandated Reports to Law Enforcement policy.
- 6. Domestic Violence (DV)**
1. Screen for DV on all intakes by asking the following universal screening questions, “Has any adult used or threatened to use physical force against an adult in the home?” If so, the intake worker must ask, “Who did what to whom?”
  2. Offer DV resource information to the referrer on all screened in or out intakes when DV is identified and the referrer is not familiar with DV resources. Resource information is located at [Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence](#) and the [DSHS/CA's DV site](#).
- 7. Contracted Provider**
1. Screen out CPS intakes regarding a contracted provider that does not have a DLR or DEL license as third party and send the report to law enforcement if an alleged crime has been committed.
  2. Complete a CA Contracts Unit Complaint form (not an intake) when receiving non-CPS complaints regarding a contracted provider that does not have a DLR or DEL license. See Contract Complaint Link on the Contracts Tab on the Intake and CPS page on the CA intranet.
- 8. Alerts and Requests from Other States**
1. Generate an intake when an alert or request is received from another state.
    1. Screen in intakes when the child is in Washington state and there are allegations of CA/N that occurred in Washington state meeting the sufficiency screen or there is imminent risk of serious harm.
    2. Screen out the intake when it is determined that the child is not in Washington State.

2. Screen out intakes with requests for courtesy home walkthroughs or child welfare checks for a child residing in Washington State if there are not allegations of CA/N or imminent risk of harm and refer to appropriate resources (ICPC or Law Enforcement).

**9. After Business Hours, Weekends and State Holidays Intake Response**

1. The intake worker immediately notifies the intake supervisor of an emergent intake (no later than one hour after determining it is emergent).
2. The intake supervisor will contact the after hours supervisor/area administrator for an after hours response when:
  1. A child is in present or impending danger.
  2. A face-to-face cannot be completed during normal business hours.

**10. Additional Requirements**

1. Provide assurance to referrers that CA will make all legal and reasonable efforts to maintain confidentiality of their identification.
2. Inform the referrers the name of any referrer may be disclosed for:
  1. Court proceedings
  2. Dependency or criminal court proceedings
  3. Criminal Investigations by law enforcement including malicious reporting
  4. When the court orders disclosure
3. Inform the referrer that reports or testimony made in good faith have immunity under [RCW 26.44.060](#).
4. Generate an intake regardless of where the child resides in WA state.
5. Generate a new intake on an open case when a report is received alleging a new instance of abuse or neglect. If the intake is screened in, the case will be assigned to a CPS caseworker.
6. Identify a minor child as a subject **only** when he or she is the parent of the alleged victim.
7. Generate and screen out an intake when a report is received about a pregnant woman's alleged abuse of substance(s) (Substances as alcohol, marijuana and all drugs with abuse potential; including prescription medications) **and** if there is no CA/N allegation or imminent risk of serious harm regarding children in her care.
8. Generate a new intake and screen out when staff receives a second report of child abuse or neglect already documented in an intake (excluding facility related intakes) and:
  1. Select the reason code option of "Allegation Documented in Previous Intake."

2. Include the previous intake number in the explanation dialogue box in Decision tab in FamLink.
3. The supervisor must confirm all allegations were previously documented.
9. Complete the following when any child is reported to intake as **Missing from Care** (MFC).
  1. Notify the assigned caseworker and his or her supervisor of any child MFC. Refer to Intake Practice Guide on the CA intranet for notification details.
  2. Document the notification in a case note.
10. Respond to [inquiry only](#) calls by providing resource information as requested and available. Inquiry calls are not documented because there is no CA/N allegation, concern or request for services specific to CA, and do not require screening.
4. Create and document the intake in FamLink on the date and time CA receives the information. Complete the intake according to the following timeframes and intake pathways:
  1. **Four hours:**
    1. Emergent CPS, CPS Risk Only, or DLR/CPS
    2. Family Reconciliation Services (FRS)
  2. **Four business hours** (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday)
    1. Non-Emergent Investigation
    2. FAR
    3. Non-Emergent DLR/CPS
  3. **Two business days**
    1. Information Only
    2. Third Party
    3. CFWS
    4. Rule Infraction
    5. ICPC Home Study. See [5602. ICPC](#) policy.
2. The intake supervisor will:
  1. Review all intakes to make a final screening decision and pathway assignment. The final screening decision is based upon information in the intake and FamLink, and critical thinking that balances child safety, risk and mitigating factors.
  2. Restrict intake/case records during the process of documenting an intake and notify his or her area administrator when it is learned:
    1. The subject, victim, or client is an employee or family member of DSHS, CA, DEL, or ESA.
    2. The case is high profile.
    3. The appointing authority determines it is necessary.
  3. Review the case history and current allegation(s) on all screened out intakes that have the chronicity flag indicated to:
    1. Review and document patterns or history to determine if cumulative harm exists. [RCW 26.44.020 \(16\)](#)

2. Assess if a call back to the referrer or collateral contact is necessary for additional information to make a final screening decision.
4. Review FamLink Desktop alerts during his or her shift prior to clearing intakes. If there is an alert on a child identified in the intake, he or she will notify the assigned office immediately.
5. Document an intake timeframe extension in a case note explaining the rationale within seven calendar days of granting the extension. Extensions (not to exceed two hours) are only approved by the intake supervisor to allow intake staff additional time to complete collateral contacts.

## Procedures

When completing an intake, the intake worker will follow steps outlined in the **Intake Practice Guide** located on the Intake page on the CA Intranet.

## Forms

- Intake Report DSHS 14-260 located on the Intake and Forms pages on the CA Intranet.

## Resources

- [Sexual Development and Behavior in Children](#)
- [Mandated Reporter Toolkit](#)
- The following is located on the CA intranet – Intake and DLR/CPS pages
  - Screening and Assessment Response Policy and Procedures
  - Intake Practice Guide DLR Child Abuse and Neglect Practice Guide
  - DLR CA/N Handbook – Investigating Abuse and Neglect in State-Regulated Care.

# 2221. JURISDICTION

1. Initial jurisdiction in a CPS investigation resides with the office receiving a intake.
2. Primary jurisdiction is the office where the family of the child victim customarily resides. Screened-in intakes will be transferred to this office for case assignment and services, including court intervention, when necessary. Courtesy services may be requested from other offices.
3. 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.
4. 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.

5. Protection of the child is a key concept. The DCFS office having primary jurisdiction must not refuse its role. However, for intakes 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.
6. DCFS determines 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?

## 2310. Initial Face to Face Response Time

### CA Worker Response:

1. The supervisor and assigned worker shall consider as "maximum limits" the timeframes defined in this section for CPS response. Cases may require a quicker response than the timelines defined in this section.
2. The response time begins at the time and date Children's Administration (CA) receives the intake.
3. An **emergent investigation** 24 hour response (from the date and time of the intake) is required for all children who are in [present or impending danger](#).
4. When an emergent investigation intake is assigned to a caseworker during the work week and the child cannot be located, CA after-hours staff will continue to make efforts to make initial face-to-face contact with the alleged child victim(s) over the weekend or holiday. Caseworkers will continue diligent efforts to locate the child until initial face-to-face contact occurs, or it is determined that the child cannot be located. See Guidelines for Reasonable Efforts to Locate Children or Parents DSHS 02-607 on the CA intranet.
5. A **non-emergent investigation or [Family Assessment Response \(FAR\)](#)** (72 hour responses from the date and time of the intake) is required for child(ren) identified as a victim and NOT in present or impending danger.
6. **Prior to the completion of the Safety Assessment**, face-to-face contact is required for all children who are not identified as a victim but are related to the household. For DLR/CPS investigations this only applies to biological, adopted and guardianship children in the household.
7. Face-to-face contact with all children includes, but is not limited to:
  1. Observation of the child(ren).
  2. Observation of the child(ren)'s living environment.
  3. Interview(s) with the child(ren) who have the capacity to communicate.
  4. Pertinent and sufficient information gathered by the caseworker that helps him or her complete an accurate and thorough Safety Assessment and take any steps necessary for child safety. See 2331. Investigative Standards
  5. Completion of the present danger assessment. See 1110. Present Danger

8. When an after-hours worker responds to an emergent or non-emergent investigation intake and has face-to-face contact with the alleged child victim(s), the intake is then assigned to a CPS or DLR/CPS caseworker to:
  1. Continue the investigation on the next business day.
  2. Complete the investigative interview with the alleged child victim(s), if it was not conducted at the initial face-to-face contact.
9. Local offices shall develop protocols for the after-hours caseworker or responding caseworker (if the responding worker is not the worker assigned to investigate the intake) to provide updates on the status of the intake to the assigned caseworker, or to the CPS or DLR/CPS supervisor.
10. If additional victims are identified during the course of an investigation or FAR response, the assigned caseworker is responsible to see that additional victims (based on the original allegation) are added to the Investigative Assessment or FAR Family Assessment intake and the case. If additional victims are identified with new allegations of CA/N, a new intake must be generated.
  1. If additional victims are determined to be in present or impending danger, a worker will have face to face contact within 24 hours from the date and time they are identified.
  2. If determined to NOT be in present or impending danger, a worker will have face to face contact within 72 hours of the date and time they are identified.
11. When law enforcement or other professionals have face to face contact (e.g. welfare check) with the children prior to the caseworker, the caseworker is still required to have face-to-face contact with the child within the required timeframes to assess the child's safety.
12. The caseworker (including the after-hours worker or responding worker) who conducts or attempts to conduct the initial face to face contact(s) must input the action into a CPS Investigation Case Note **within 3 calendar days of the contact or attempt to contact**, noting the date and time of the interview(s).
13. Time Limited Extensions

There are situations when child safety concerns and/or ability to locate alleged child victims may require time limited extensions to the 24 or 72 hour face to face requirements. These include:

  1. When protocols with law enforcement or other community resources (e.g. sexual assault clinics, etc.) exist that require CA to delay having face to face contact with the child in order to assign specialists or to coordinate the investigation, the assigned CA supervisor may approve a time limited extension for the initial face to face contact.
  2. When a child is unable to be located within the 24 or 72 hour timeframe, the assigned CA supervisor may approve a time limited extension for the initial face to face contact. The CA worker shall continue to make efforts to locate and initiate face to face contact with the alleged child victim as soon as possible.

The assigned CA supervisor must review the worker's efforts every:

    1. 3 business days on emergent intake until the initial face to face contact occurs.



2. 5 business days on non-emergent intake until the initial face to face contact occurs.
  3. In situations where a child's safety may be compromised by conducting the initial face to face contact within 24 or 72 hours, the Area Administrator may approve a time limited extension.
  4. When a CPS intake is screened out by an intake supervisor and the assigned field supervisor screens the intake in, the IFF timeframe may be extended. The extension must be approved by the field area administrator. Document the CPS 24 or 72-hour extension in FamLink using reason "Screening Decision Changed to Investigation."
  5. In cases where an intake relates to the alleged abuse or neglect of a child in a licensed facility that is not providing care for children during the weekend or holiday, face to face contact with the child shall occur by the end of the next business day.
  6. The assigning supervisor shall document all time limited extensions to the 24 and 72 hour face to face requirements, including the rationale and the timeframe for the extension, within 3 calendar days of determining that the extension applies.
14. Additional Time Limited Extensions for Emergent Responses
1. When a child is placed in protective custody and transported to licensed foster care (foster home, group care, CRC, etc.) by law enforcement, and the immediate safety issues for that child are addressed, a CA worker shall have face to face contact with the child by the end of the next business day. After-hours field staff shall continue to assist law enforcement with placement and safety assessment when necessary.
  2. When a child is placed on a hospital hold, or in protective custody that does not allow the child to leave the hospital, and the immediate safety issues for that child are addressed, a CA worker shall have face to face contact with the child by the end of the next business day.
  3. In cases where an intake relates to the alleged abuse or neglect of a child in an out-of-home placement, victims of emergent DLR/CPS intakes who are no longer in the facility shall have face to face contact with a DLR investigator within the non-emergent timeframe. Children who have not been identified as victims, who are still in the facility and may be in present or impending danger, must have face to face contact with a CA worker within 24 hours from the date and time the intake is received by CA.
  4. In custody cases where an intake relates to the alleged abuse or neglect of a child by one parent (subject) and the child is residing with the other parent, face to face contact with the child shall occur by the end of the next business day. Children who have not been identified as victims, who are in the care of the alleged abuser and who may in present or impending danger, must have face to face contact with a CA worker within 24 hours from the date and time of the intake is received by CA.
  5. The assigning supervisor shall document all extensions to the 24 hour face to face requirements, including the rationale and the timeframe for the extension,

in FamLink when the intake is assigned to the CPS or DLR/CPS investigator for the initial face to face contact within 3 calendar days.

6. The CI supervisor shall immediately document all extensions to the 24 hour face to face requirements including the rationale for the extension, in a case note when intakes are received after business hours.
7. The CI supervisor and the after-hours supervisor/AA are encouraged to exercise shared decision making regarding the application of policy exceptions. However, when disagreements cannot be resolved regarding emergent intakes, the CI supervisor's decision prevails. The issue may be addressed again the next business day, following established protocols. (CA Practice and Procedures Guide 2220(f) (2-4) & Intake Methods and Procedures sections XX-XXI).

#### 15. Exceptions

1. When a child cannot be located and diligent efforts have been made, or face to face contact cannot occur because the child is deceased or has moved out of state, the assigning supervisor may approve an exception to the face to face policy.
2. The assigning supervisor shall document the exception to the face to face policy within 3 calendar days of determining that an exception applies, including the rationale for the decision, and (when applicable) detailed information about the steps taken to locate the child.

### **After Business Hours Responses**

#### 1. After Business Hours Response to Emergent Intakes

In addition to requirements and exceptions listed above response policies, after-hours staff must follow the requirements outlined below:

1. When it is necessary for an after-hours worker to respond to an emergent intake, the CI supervisor shall contact the on-call after-hours supervisor/Area Administrator (AA) to discuss the circumstances. The after-hours supervisor/AA shall contact the after-hours worker to provide direction regarding worker safety and to coordinate the field response.
2. In emergent DLR/CPS intakes, when it is necessary for an after-hours worker to respond to an emergent intake, the CI supervisor shall contact the on-call after-hours supervisor/AA to discuss the circumstances. When necessary, the on-call after-hours supervisor/AA shall contact the on-call DLR after-hours supervisor/AA for consultation. The after-hours supervisor/AA shall contact the after-hours worker to provide direction regarding worker safety and to coordinate the field response.
3. When there is conflict regarding the after-hours response to an emergent intake, the CI supervisor's assessment prevails.
4. After-hours workers are required to complete a Safety Assessment/Safety Plan in FamLink.
5. The on-call supervisor or AA shall review and verbally approve the Safety Assessment/Safety Plan developed by the after-hours worker. The on-call supervisor or AA shall document their approval of the Safety Assessment/Safety Plan in FamLink within **3 calendar days**.

2. **After Business Hours Response to Non-Emergent Intakes**  
In most cases non-emergent intakes will be handled during regular business hours. However, local offices will develop protocols for responding to non-emergent intakes after-hours (e.g. intake is received during a long holiday weekend) for those instances when an after-hours worker is assigned to respond. In addition to the local protocols after-hours staff must take the following actions:
  1. After-hours workers must complete a Safety Assessment/Safety Plan in FamLink.
  2. The on-call supervisor or AA must review and verbally approve the Safety Assessment/Safety Plan developed by the after-hours worker. The on-call supervisor or AA shall document their approval of the Safety Assessment/Safety Plan in a case note within **3 calendar days**.

## 2331. CPS Investigation

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:**

**Revised Date:** March 31, 2017

**Policy Review:** March 31, 2020

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### Purpose

A Children's Administration (CA) Child Protective Services (CPS) or Division of Licensed Resources (DLR) CPS investigation is conducted when an intake is screened in with allegations of child abuse or neglect (CA/N) or a child is believed to be at imminent risk of harm.

### Laws

[RCW 26.44.030](#) Reports -- Duty and authority to make.

[RCW 26.44.100](#) Information about rights -- Notification of investigation, report, and findings.

[RCW 26.44.185](#) Investigation of child sexual abuse -- Revision and expansion of protocols

[RCW 74.13.031](#) Duties of department -- Child welfare services

[RCW 74.14B.010](#) Children's services workers -- Hiring and training.

### Scope

This policy applies to Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) caseworkers and DLR investigators conducting CPS investigations.

## Policy

1. The regional administrator (RA) or designee must:
  1. Develop CPS guidelines with the military base commander or designee for families living on-post within the region. Guidelines and procedures may include off-post families.
  2. Collaborate with the county prosecutor and CA offices to establish and maintain the county child abuse, fatality and criminal neglect investigation protocols per [RCW 26.44.185](#).
2. The DLR/CPS supervisor and investigators must follow the CA/N section of the handbook "Investigating Abuse and Neglect in State-Regulated Care" located on the CA intranet.
3. The supervisor of the assigned DCFS caseworker must:
  1. Consult with the area administrator (AA) when there is a disagreement between supervisors about an intake screening decision or a CPS investigation identified for transfer to Family Voluntary Services (FVS).
  2. Assign CPS risk only intakes on an open case to the assigned CPS Family Assessment Response (FAR), CPS investigation, FVS or Child and Family Welfare Services (CFWS) caseworker to complete the CPS investigation; including the initial face-to-face contact with the child, safety, risk and investigative assessments. If the case is co-assigned with CPS investigations, assign the intake to the CPS investigation caseworker.
  3. Conduct [monthly supervisor case reviews](#), review all [safety plans](#) and document the reviews in a case note associated with the case.
  4. Review investigations submitted for approval, confirm the case documentation is complete and document the review in FamLink.
  5. Close the case or transfer the case assignment to FVS or CFWS for ongoing services as applicable.
  6. Review and approve timeframe extensions entered in FamLink for investigations that remain open past 90 calendar days from the date and time of intake due to collaboration with law enforcement or prosecutor.
  7. Review CPS cases for a statewide CPS alert through FamLink Help Desk when reasonable efforts to locate the child have been exhausted and either:
    1. The child is believed to be in present danger or unsafe.
    2. The court has authorized pick-up of the child.
  8. If a child is believed to be unsafe and the child's whereabouts out-of-state are known, make a CPS report in that state.
4. The assigned caseworker must observe the following:
  1. Prior to face-to-face contact or investigative interview of a child:
    1. Review the case history, if applicable.
    2. Coordinate with local law enforcement agencies per the county child abuse, fatality and criminal neglect investigation protocols located on the CA intranet, as applicable.

3. Follow [Indian Child Welfare Chapter 1 Initial Intake Indian Child Welfare \(ICW\)](#) policies when there is reason to believe that the child is or may be a member, or is the biological child of a member and eligible for membership in a federally recognized tribe.
  4. Contact the referrer to ensure that the information in the intake is clear and complete, while maintaining confidentiality of case information with non-mandatory reporters. Case information may only be shared with mandated reporters as long as the information is pertinent to the CPS case.
  5. If the investigation involves a military parent or guardian, notify the Department of Defense Family Advocacy Program, if applicable.
2. **Face-to-Face Contacts and Interviews with Children**
    1. Conduct [initial face-to-face \(IFF\)](#) present danger assessment with the victim or identified child within the following timeframes from the date and time CA receives the intake:
      1. 24-hours for an emergent response.
      2. 72-hour for a non-emergent response.
    2. Conduct the investigative [interview](#) with the victim or identified child within ten calendar days from the date and time CA receives the intake if the interview was not already completed during the IFF.
    3. For children who are not a victim or identified child but who reside in the household, make face-to-face contact with each child to assess his or her safety and gather information to complete the safety assessment. The [safety assessment](#) must be completed no later than 30 calendar days from date of intake.
    4. Assess all children in the household for [present danger](#). Take immediate protective action if any child is in present danger.
    5. If a victim, identified child or child residing in the household cannot be located, continue efforts to locate him or her until either the interview or safety assessment occurs or reasonable efforts to locate the child have been exhausted. Follow [2310. IFF](#) policy and see Reasonable Efforts to locate Children or Parents on the CA intranet.
    6. During the investigative interview, follow the [2350. Audio Recording](#) policy for child physical or sexual abuse interviews.
    7. Follow the [6500. Photograph Documentation](#) policy when photographing a child's physical condition or surroundings to document CA/N.
    8. Conduct [monthly health and safety visits with children and parents](#) if the case is open longer than 60 calendar days.
  3. **[In-Person Interviews of the Child's Parent or Legal Guardian, and Alleged Perpetrators](#)**
    1. Notify the child's parents, guardian, or legal custodian:
      1. Of any CA/N allegations made against him or her at the initial point of contact, while maintaining:
        1. The confidentiality of the person making the allegations.
        2. The safety and protection of the child.

3. Integrity of the investigation process.
2. When a child is taken into protective custody.
2. Identify and verify all individuals living in the home and assess for safety threats and risk.
3. Provide [infant safety education and intervention](#) for all children in the household age birth to one year.
4. Inquire about the child's possible membership or eligibility for membership in a federally recognized tribe. Follow [Indian Child Welfare Manual Chapter 3 Inquiry and Verification of Child's Indian Status](#).
5. Conduct a universal domestic violence (DV) screening at key points in a case, i.e., a new intake, case transfer, and re-assessment of safety to identify if DV is present. If DV is identified, follow the [1170. DV](#) policy and ensure all persons (e.g., child, caregivers or alleged perpetrators) are interviewed separately, if possible.
6. If a parent or legal guardian or subject cannot be located, continue efforts to locate him or her or until either the interview occurs, or reasonable efforts to locate the parent have been exhausted. See Guidelines for Reasonable Efforts to Locate Children or Parents on the CA intranet.
4. Safety, Risk and Investigative Assessments
  1. Complete a [safety assessment](#) within 30 calendar days from the date of the intake, and at key decision points in a case.
  2. If a safety threat is identified and cannot be managed with a safety plan, review the case with a supervisor to determine if the child should be placed in out-of-home care.
  3. Complete the [Structured Decision Making Risk Assessment](#) (SDRMA) within 60 calendar days from the date and time CA receives the intake. Services must be offered to family with a high SDMRA score, and may be offered to families with a moderately high score. Ongoing risk assessment continues throughout the life of a case from the initial CPS intake until the case is closed.
  4. Complete the [Investigative Assessment \(IA\)](#) on all investigations within 60 calendar days of date and time CA receives the intake.
  5. Document and submit for supervisor approval, a FamLink timeframe extension for investigations remaining open beyond 90 calendar days from the date and time CA receives the intake due to law enforcement or prosecutor collaboration.
5. Safety Plans
  1. If a safety threat is identified, and can be controlled and managed in the home, complete a [safety plan](#).
  2. Complete a [Plan of Safe Care DSHS 15-491](#) with the family when a newborn is either:
    1. Identified as substance affected by a medical practitioner.
    2. Is born to a dependent youth.
6. Consultations, Evaluations and Referrals

1. Secure a prompt medical evaluation or treatment for a child:
  1. If indicators of serious CA/N exist.
  2. A child is three or younger with a physical abuse allegation.
  3. The alleged CA/N cannot be reasonably attributed to the explanation and a diagnostic finding would clarify the assessment of risk or determine the need for medical treatment.
  4. If the alleged neglect includes concerns that children are deprived of food, underweight, or are starved.
2. Contact the Child Protection Medical Consultant in your region when identification or management of CA/N would be facilitated by expert medical consultation.
3. Seek legal authority for the medical examination if the parent does not comply with the request.
4. Contact the [Washington Poison Control Center](#) at 1-800-222-1222 if consultation is needed about prescribed or non-prescribed medications.
5. Make a referral to Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT) services within two business days of identifying a child younger than three years old with a possible developmental delay. To refer:
  1. Contact the Family Resources Coordinator at 1-800-322-2588 or through the [ESIT web site](#).
  2. Inform the child's parents or legal guardian of the ESIT referral, that the services are voluntary and no cost to the family.
7. Case Coordination and Collateral Contacts
  1. Complete a criminal history background check for emergent placement of a child with an unlicensed relative or other suitable person. A criminal background check may be requested on alleged subjects or adults related to the investigation to assess child and caseworker safety.
  2. Contact law enforcement (LE):
    1. If there is information about a crime that has been committed against a child or vulnerable adult, or the child's welfare is endangered per [2571. Mandated Reports to Law Enforcement](#) policy.
    2. If assistance is needed to:
      1. Assure the safety of a child or staff.
      2. Observe or preserve evidence.
      3. Determine if a child is in need of protective custody.
      4. Enforce a court order.
      5. Assist with the investigation.
  3. Consult with the supervisor if a child is unsafe and LE does not place the child into protective custody.
  4. Interview professionals and other persons who may have knowledge of the child, parent or legal guardian, or the allegations of CA/N including but not limited to:
    1. Non-custodial parents
    2. School personnel
    3. Medical providers

4. Childcare providers
  5. Relatives
  6. Neighbors
  7. Other adults or children living in the home.
  8. Other individuals identified by the parent or caregiver
  9. Tribal social worker, law enforcement or staff
5. Seek expert consultation and evaluation of issues that may pose a child safety threat or risk of imminent harm, e.g., housing inspector, health department or other local authority, etc.
8. Investigating Allegations of Serious Physical and Sexual Abuse
1. Consult with the Child Protection Medical Consultation Network (CP Med-Con) or with a Child Advocacy Center (CAC) physician:
    1. To determine if a child alleged to be sexually abused needs a medical examination.
    2. When there is an allegation of sexual abuse that includes physical injury to the child or the potential for the child to have a sexually transmitted disease.
    3. When the child is seriously injured.
    4. When there is a pattern of injury to a young child because of alleged CA/N.
  2. Ensure the physician examining the child is affiliated with the CP Med-Con or with a CAC. If a child is examined or was previously examined by a physician who is not affiliated with the CP Med-Con or a CAC, refer the case to the CP Med-Con or CA physician so he or she is aware of the current allegations, available medical information, previous injuries and indications the child has been abused or neglected in the past.
  3. Place a child in out-of-home care (except when the court has determined the child is safe to remain in the home) when he or she:
    1. Has suffered a serious non-accidental injury and a safety plan separating the child from the alleged perpetrator cannot be developed.
    2. Is a sibling of a child who has been fatally or seriously injured due to abuse or neglect and a safety plan separating the child from the alleged perpetrator cannot be developed.
    3. Has a parent or legal guardian who has been determined to be unwilling or incapable (i.e., due to mental illness or substance abuse) of supervising or protecting the child and an in-home safety plan cannot be developed to assure the supervision/protection of the child.
    4. Has been sexually abused and a safety plan cannot be developed to protect the child from the alleged perpetrator.
  4. When a safety threat is identified and a [safety plan](#) will keep a child safe in the home, the safety plan must include:
    1. Separation of the child from the person who poses the safety threat.



2. Safety plan participants who can assist in monitoring child safety, will take action to protect the child, and agree to contact the caseworker if the child is in danger. Safety plan participants can include relatives, neighbors, and mandated reporters.
  3. A parent or legal guardian who has the capacity to understand and follow a plan. Promises by parents and caregivers cannot control safety threats.
  4. Regular contact by the caseworker with all safety plan participants.
  5. Prior to allowing contact between the alleged perpetrator and victim:
    1. Consider the psychological harm and physical safety of the child.
    2. Consult with law enforcement, treatment providers and others involved with the family.
    3. Obtain reliable supervision of the contact between the child and the person who poses the safety threat so that the threat is sufficiently monitored.
    4. Obtain supervisor approval.
9. Additional Requirements
1. Follow the [2559. Hospital Hold](#) policy when a child has been placed on a Hospital Hold by a physician or hospital administrator.
  2. Follow the [4536. Sexually Aggressive Youth \(SAY\)](#) policy when investigating SAY intakes.
  3. When any child in an open case is believed to be at imminent risk of serious harm or there is a new allegation of CA/N not included in the original intake, the assigned caseworker must make a report to intake.
  4. Send a False Reporting Letter DSHS 27-070 by certified mail to any person believed to have made a false report of CA/N.
10. Concluding an Investigation
1. Notify all persons named in the intake as alleged perpetrators of the abuse or neglect findings, and his and her rights of review and appeal per [2559B. CPS Investigative Findings Notification](#) policy.
  2. Inform the Washington State federally recognized tribe of the outcome of the investigation when the child meets the definition of an Indian child.
  3. The case must remain open when Family Voluntary Services (FVS) and Child and Family Welfare Services (CFWS) are provided, including placement in out-of-home care through a Voluntary Placement Agreement (VPA) or court order.
  4. Close the case and submit to the CPS supervisor when:
    1. There is no safety threat or the safety threat has been reduced or eliminated, and the parent or legal guardian has the protective capacity to protect his or her child.
    2. There is continuing risk of CA/N which is not likely to be resolved through treatment efforts when:

1. Further voluntary services are not available or accepted, and
2. Court intervention is not necessary or appropriate.
3. The family is unable to be located following the steps to locate in the “Guidelines for Reasonable Efforts to Locate Children or Parents” on the CA intranet. Complete the exception to the face-to-face contact per the [2310. IFF](#) policy.
5. Submit the completed case documentation to the supervisor for case closure or transfer.

## Resources

- [Child's Physical Description DSHS 15-359](#)
- [Understanding the Dependency Process - brochure](#)
- [Washington State Court Forms](#)
- [Using Child Safety as the Basis for Case Closing - article](#)
- [Washington State Child Interview Guide: Quick Reference](#)

Located on CA intranet:

- Child Custody Transfer DSHS 10-157
- Child Protection Medical Consultation Network
- Supervisory Review of Cases

# 2332. CPS Family Assessment Response

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:** January 1, 2014

**Revised Date:** July 1, 2016

**Policy Review:** July 30, 2020

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## Purpose Statement

Family Assessment Response (FAR) is a Child Protective Services (CPS) alternative response to an investigation of a screened-in allegation of child abuse or neglect. FAR focuses on child safety along with the integrity and preservation of the family when lower risk allegations of child maltreatment have been reported.

## Scope

This policy applies to Division of Children and Family Services staff.

## Laws

[RCW 26.44.010](#) Declaration or Purpose

[RCW 26.44.020](#) Definitions

[RCW 26.44.030](#) Reports, Duty and Authority, Duty of Receiving Agency, Duty to Notify, Case Planning and Consultation, Penalty for Unauthorized Exchange of Information, Filing Dependency Petitions, Investigations, Interviews of Children, Records, and Risk Assessment Process

[RCW 26.44.031](#) Records, Maintenance and Disclosure, Destruction of Screened-Out, Unfounded, or Inconclusive Reports, Rules and Proceedings for Enforcement

[RCW 26.44.260](#) Family Assessment Response

[RCW 26.44.270](#) Family Assessment and Recommendation of Services

[RCW 26.44.272](#) Family Assessment, Assessment for Child Safety and Well-being, Referral to Preschool, Child Care, or Early Learning Programs and Communicating with and Assisting Families

[RCW 74.13.020](#) Definitions

[RCW 74.13.031](#) Duties of Department, Child Welfare Services and Children's Services Advisory Committee

## Policy

### 1. Initial Contact with the parent/caregivers

1. Initial contact with the parents/caregivers must be made to:
  1. Inform parents a FAR referral has been made regarding their children.
  2. Explain the FAR pathway and schedule an appointment to meet with the family to review and sign the FAR agreement.

### 2. Safety Assessment

1. All identified child victims in the home must be assessed for child safety within [72 hours](#) of receipt of the intake.
2. All child(ren) in the home not identified as victims must be seen face-to-face prior to the completion of the [Safety Assessment](#).
3. A [safety plan](#) with the family must be completed when safety threat(s) are identified and can be controlled with a plan.
4. When the child's safety cannot be managed with a [safety plan](#), the child will be placed out-of-home by a Voluntary Placement Agreement or dependency petition.

### 3. Family Assessment

1. The parent/caregivers must be provided with written information regarding FAR.
2. Comprehensive information about the family must be gathered to assess child safety and the family's needs and strengths. If photographs are needed, obtain

parental permission before taking pictures of children or the home environment and document in a case note.

3. A case plan must be developed with the family and documented to reduce the risk of harm to the child(ren) based on the needs of the family when the family assessment indicates services are needed.
  4. Tribes will be included in case planning if the child is determined by the tribe to be a member or the biological child of a member and eligible for membership per Chapter 3 Inquiry and Verification of Child's Indian Status of the Indian Child Welfare Manual (ICW).
  5. A meeting with the family must be conducted if they refuse to participate in identified services.
  6. All identified children and parent/caregivers must receive monthly [health and safety visits](#) for cases open longer than 60 days.
  7. All risk only intakes screened-in on an open FAR case will have a completed [CPS investigation](#) by the FAR caseworker.
4. **Case Closure**
1. The case must be closed within 45 days from the date the intake was received.
  2. The FAR case may remain open an additional 45 days to allow for service delivery (paid or unpaid) with parent/caregiver's consent.
  3. The case cannot be open more than 90 days per [RCW 26.44.030 \(13\)](#).
5. **Case Transfer/Assignment**
1. A FAR case will be transferred to CPS investigation if:
    1. There is indication of severe maltreatment or abuse by the parent/caregiver.
    2. The parent/caregiver declines to participate in the FAR program.
    3. The parent/caregiver refuses to allow the FAR caseworker to complete an [IFF](#) or interview the identified child(ren).
  2. Cases will be staffed with the supervisor to determine if the case will transfer or a dependency petition will be filed when:
    1. [Present danger](#) cannot be controlled with a protective action plan.
    2. The child's safety cannot be managed with a [safety plan](#).
  3. A FAR case will be transferred to CFWS if a dependency petition is filed.

## Procedures

1. The FAR supervisor will review the intake and:
  1. Discuss the intake with the CPS investigation supervisor if it needs to be changed to CPS investigations. Reasons for changing the intake must be documented on the Intake Decision tab in FamLink.
  2. Resolve disagreements regarding the pathway with the area administrator.
  3. Discuss with the FAR caseworker whether the child's safety or the integrity of the assessment would be compromised if the parents were notified prior to the completion of the IFF.
2. **Initial Contact with the parent/caregivers and child(ren)**  
The FAR caseworker will:
  1. Contact parent/caregivers by phone when possible to:

1. Inform the parents a Family Assessment Response (FAR) referral has been made regarding his or her children.
  2. Arrange an initial meeting. Unannounced home visits may occur but only when efforts to contact the parents have been unsuccessful.
  3. Explain the FAR pathway.
  4. Discuss the IFF requirements with parent/caregivers and collaborate with them to conduct the IFF within 72 hours based on the outcome of the supervisor's discussion.
2. If the parent declines or interferes with the IFF and safety assessment of the child:
    1. Staff the case with the FAR and investigation supervisors to transfer to investigations. The FAR and investigation supervisors will determine who will be responsible for the IFF and if an extension is necessary.
    2. Document in FamLink when an IFF extension is approved.
    3. Transfer the case to CPS investigation.
  3. Discuss the CPS pathways (FAR and investigation) with the family. If the family chooses to participate in FAR, complete the [FAR Family Agreement DSHS 27-106](#) and obtain parent/caregiver's signature.
  4. Upload the signed FAR Agreement into FamLink no later than 10 calendar days from date of intake.

### 3. **Assessment of Family**

The FAR caseworker will:

1. Assess for [present danger](#) on all children in the home and document in a case note.
2. Take immediate protective action if a child is in [present danger](#).
3. Gather comprehensive information to complete the FARFA including:
  1. Safety Assessment/Safety Plan
  2. [SDM Risk Assessment](#)
  3. [Case Planning](#)
4. Partner with the family to identify collateral contacts to speak with regarding the family's circumstances and the safety of the child(ren).
5. Complete an [Investigative Assessment](#) on all risk only intakes received on an open FAR case.
6. Inquire about the child's possible membership or eligibility for membership in a federally recognized tribe. Follow ICW Manual Chapter 3.0 Inquiry and Verification of Child's Indian Status.
  1. If a child is a member or eligible for membership with a Washington state Tribe, contact the Tribe to:
    1. Determine the Tribe's level of involvement.
    2. Identify any tribal services and resources available to the family.
    3. Review and follow any [Memorandum of Understanding](#) for Washington state Tribes for family's residing on or off a reservation.
7. Report any new allegation of CA/N identified during the assessment, following mandatory reporting guidelines.

8. The FARFA must be completed upon case closure, no later than 90 days from intake
4. **Identify and Provide Services and/or Community Resources**  
The FAR caseworker will:
  1. Develop a [case plan](#) with the family when the family assessment identifies a need for services or community resources. When developing a case plan, it should include providing concrete goods and supports that strengthen the family's ability to safely care for and meet their children's needs.
  2. Conduct a meeting when the family declines services and the [Safety Assessment](#) indicates:
    1. The child is **unsafe** - Complete a Family Team Decision Making meeting to determine:
      1. An in-home safety plan can be implemented.
      2. A safety plan cannot be implemented and out-of-home placement is necessary to ensure the child's safety
    2. The child is **safe** - Meet with the family to discuss how the family's participation in services offered can prevent future allegations of CA/N as opposed to closing the case with no services provided.
5. **Case Transfer/Assignment**  
The FAR caseworker will:
  1. Complete case documentation and FARFA within five calendar days of the decision to transfer.
  2. Staff case with FAR and investigation supervisors to determine how the intake will be assigned when a new intake screens in for:
    1. FAR and the case is open to an investigation caseworker.
    2. Investigation and the case is open to FAR caseworker.
6. **Case Closure:**  
The FAR caseworker will:
  1. Close the case when the family is not in need of services and there is no present danger or identified safety threat.
  2. Send the family the [FAR Closing Letter DSHS 10-498](#) no later than five days after the supervisor approves case closure.
  3. Close the case if unable to locate the family and the Guidelines for Reasonable Efforts to Locate Children and/or Parents has been followed and efforts documented.

## **Forms**

[FAR Family Agreement form DSHS 27-106](#)

[FAR Brochure form DSHS 22-1534](#)

[FAR Participation Agreement form DSHS 27-106](#)

[FAR Assessment Response Closing Letter DSHS 10-498](#)

## Resources

CPS Guide (available on the CA intranet)

Indian Child Welfare Manual (available on the CA intranet)

Guidelines for Reasonable Efforts to Locate Children and/or Parents (available on the CA intranet)

[Protective Action Plan Guide](#)

# 2333. Interviewing a Victim or Identified Child

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:**

**Revised Date:** March 31, 2017

**Policy Review:** March 31, 2021

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## Purpose

To provide direction to Division of Children and Family Services caseworkers and Division of Licensed Resources investigators when interviewing a victim or identified child who has been allegedly abused or neglected or is at imminent risk.

## Scope

This policy applies to CA staff.

## Laws

[RCW 74.14B.010](#)

[RCW 26.44.030](#)

## Policy

1. Before conducting interviews and assessments of children alleged to have been seriously physically or sexually abused, the Division of Children and Family Services

(DCFS) caseworker or Division of Licensed Resources /Child Protective Services (DLR/CPS) investigator must complete the specialized training per [RCW 74.14B.010](#).

2. When conducting interviews, the DCFS caseworker or DLR/CPS investigator must:
  1. Make an initial face-to-face (IFF) present danger assessment with the victim or identified child per the [2310. IFF](#) policy. The IFF is required within the following timeframes from the date and time Children's Administration (CA) receives the intake:
    1. 24-hour emergent response.
    2. 72-hour non-emergent response.
  2. Conduct a comprehensive interview with every victim or identified child who has the ability to communicate within ten calendar days from the date and time the intake is received if not already completed at the IFF.
  3. Complete a face-to-face present danger assessment of children who are **not** a victim or identified child in the intake although are related to the household. Gather information to complete the safety assessment.
  4. Assess if [present danger](#) exists during any contact with a child to determine if an immediate, significant and clearly observable behavior or situation is actively occurring and is threatening or dangerous to a child. Take immediate protective action if a child is in present danger.
  5. Follow the Washington State federally recognized tribe's [Memorandum of Understanding](#), if applicable, when interviewing a child who may be affiliated with a federally recognized tribe.
  6. When a child cannot be located and reasonable efforts have been exhausted, or face-to-face contact cannot occur, consult with the supervisor and follow the [IFF](#) policy.
3. Prior to the interview
  1. The DCFS caseworker conducting the investigative interview or DLR/CPS investigator must interview the child outside the presence of his or her parent, caregiver, alleged perpetrator and sibling or other children living in the household. The interview may be conducted at a school, child care facility, child's home, etc. CA staff cannot transport children for an interview unless the child has been placed in protective custody by law enforcement first or the court has ordered shelter care or the child is dependent.
  2. Parent or Legal Guardian Permission
    1. The FAR caseworker must obtain the parent's permission prior to the IFF and interview unless the child's safety or the integrity of the assessment would be compromised if the parent was notified prior to the completion of the IFF.
    2. The DLR/CPS investigator must obtain the parent's permission prior to the IFF and interview if the child is not in CA care and custody.
  3. Additional requirements

The DCFS caseworker or DLR/CPS investigator will

    1. Review all the allegations, CA/N history and available information to prepare for the IFF and interview.
    2. Coordinate interviews of physical abuse, sex abuse or criminal neglect of a child per the county child abuse investigation protocol located on



the CA intranet. Protocols may authorize an interview of the child by law enforcement, a child advocacy center, another agency or forensic interviewer.

3. Conduct the interview in a neutral environment, e.g., school, child care, whenever possible.
  4. Refer to [Operations 4320. Limited English Proficiency \(LEP\)](#) policy when working with a child with LEP. If the caseworker is bilingual and has passed the required DSHS Bilingual Skills Test(s)/Assessment, he or she may conduct the child abuse interview in the child's language per DSHS Administrative Policy 18.82 located on the DSHS intranet.
4. During the interview
- The DCFS caseworker or DLR/CPS investigator must:
1. Avoid saying or doing anything that could be construed as leading or influencing the child.
  2. Make reasonable efforts to [audio record](#) child interviews when there is:
    1. A CPS investigation involving allegations of physical or sexual abuse.
    2. A CPS family assessment involving a physical abuse allegation, and the child is being interviewed without his or her parent present due to concerns that the safety of the child will be compromised if the parent is present.
    3. Use near verbatim documentation if a child physical or sexual abuse interview is not being audio recorded.
  3. Gather relevant and sufficient information; including observations of the child's appearance and non-verbal communication, to complete the [safety](#) and [risk](#) assessments to determine:
    1. If there are safety threats.
    2. How the child and family are functioning.
    3. Level of risk to the child in his or her environment.
  4. To ensure that the interviews are voluntary, complete the following:
    1. Ask the child during the introduction, if he or she agrees to the interview.
    2. Ask the child if he or she wants another adult present during the interview. Make reasonable efforts to accommodate the child's wishes if he or she indicates yes.
    3. Make a reasonable effort to have the interview observed by another adult so long as the child does not object and the presence of the other adult will not intrude in the interview or jeopardize the investigation.
    4. Ask the child, during the interview, if it is okay to continue or if he or she wants a break. This can be done if the child appears uncomfortable during the interview, or at any time.
  5. Follow [6500. Photograph Documentation](#) policy when photographing a child's physical condition to document child abuse or neglect.
5. After the interview
- The CA caseworker or DLR/CPS investigator must:

1. Notify the parent of the interview 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.
2. Document the interview, including the child's appearance and non-verbal communication, in FamLink within three calendar days of the completion of the interview.
3. Follow the [2350. Audio Recording](#) policy when documenting the interview and ensure the information is in FamLink within ten calendar days of the completion of the interview.
4. When any child on an open case is believed to be at imminent risk of serious harm or there is a new allegation of child abuse or neglect, the assigned caseworker must make a report to intake.
5. If during the child interview, there is information about a crime against a child and the caseworker believes the child is in danger, the caseworker must call 911 and make a law enforcement report. If the child is not believed to be in danger, the caseworker will make a report to intake.
6. The supervisor must confirm:
  1. All child victims or identified children were interviewed.
  2. Allegations of child abuse and neglect were addressed.
  3. Children who are not a victim or identified child who are related to the household, had a face-to-face present danger assessment before the safety assessment was completed.
  4. Child interviews and contacts were documented in FamLink.

## Resources

- [Child's Physical Description DSHS 15-359](#)
- [Safety Assessment DSHS 15-258](#)
- [Safety Plan DSHS 15-259](#)
- Structured Decision Making Risk Assessment on the CA intranet.
- DLR Risk Matrix on the CA intranet.

# 2334. Interviewing Subjects or Family Assessment Response Participants

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:**

**Revised Date:** March 31, 2017

**Policy Review:** March 31, 2021

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## Purpose

To provide direction for Children's Administration (CA) caseworkers in interviewing Child Protective Services (CPS) investigation subjects or Family Assessment Response (FAR) participants who have allegedly abused or neglected a child.

## Scope

This policy applies to CA staff.

## Laws

[RCW 26.44.030](#) Reports -- Duty and authority to make -- Duty of receiving agency -- Duty to notify -- Case planning and consultation -- Penalty for unauthorized exchange of information -- Filing dependency petitions -- Investigations -- Interviews of children -- Records -- Risk assessment process

## Policy

1. The CA caseworker or Division of Licensed Resources/Child Protective Services (DLR/CPS) investigator must:
  1. Conduct individual and face-to-face interviews of each subject or FAR participant. If he or she refuses to be interviewed, consult with the supervisor and document in FamLink.
  2. If the subject or FAR participant cannot be located, continue efforts to locate until:
    1. The interview occurs, or
    2. Reasonable efforts to locate have been exhausted. See Guidelines for Reasonable Efforts to Locate Children or Parents on the CA intranet.
  3. Follow the Washington State federally recognized tribe's [Memorandum of Understanding](#) when interviewing a subject or FAR participant who is affiliated with a federally-recognized tribe.
  4. Prior to the interview
    1. Review all the allegations, child abuse or neglect (CA/N) history and available information to prepare for the interview and ensure all the allegations are fully investigated or assessed.
    2. Coordinate interviews of physical abuse, sexual abuse or criminal neglect of a child with law enforcement or another forensic interviewing specialist per county child abuse investigation protocols.
    3. Refer to [Limited English Proficiency \(LEP\)](#) policy when working with a subject or FAR participant with LEP. If the caseworker is bilingual and has passed the required DSHS Bilingual Skills Test(s)/Assessment, he or she may conduct the child abuse interview in the child's language per DSHS Administrative Policy 18.82 located on the DSHS intranet.

4. If [domestic violence \(DV\)](#) is alleged or suspected, conduct separate interviews of the subject, parent, caregiver, each child in the household and witness, if applicable.
  5. The DLR/CPS investigator must also:
    1. Interview subjects separately.
    2. Notify foster parents about the Foster Intervention Retention and Support Team (FIRST) program.
  6. If a parent or caregiver requests to audio or video record a meeting, inform the parent that CA staff does not consent to audio or video recording of meetings or discussions. Discontinue the meeting or conversation if the parent refuses to cooperate. If a meeting is discontinued, inform the supervisor immediately and document in FamLink.
5. During the interview
    1. Inform the subject or FAR participant of all CA/N allegations at the initial contact except when child safety may be jeopardized. Maintain the confidentiality of the referrer.
    2. Provide information about the subject's rights, including a right to respond to the allegations.
    3. Gather relevant and sufficient information to assess present danger, and complete the safety and risk assessments to determine:
      1. If there are safety threats.
      2. How the child and family are functioning.
      3. Level of risk to the child in his or her environment.
      4. The subject or FAR participant's accessibility to the child.
    4. Conduct universal DV screening per the [DV policy](#), and document the information in FamLink.
    5. Additional requirements
      1. A caseworker must follow the [Indian Child Welfare Manual Chapter 3. Inquiry and Verification of Child's Indian Status](#)
      2. The [FAR](#) worker must also:
        1. Explain the FAR pathway.
        2. Review and upload signed FAR agreement in FamLink.
        3. The CPS or DLR/CPS investigator must also provide information about making and appealing [investigation findings](#).
  6. After the interview
    1. Document the interview, including whether the subject or FAR participant was unavailable or unwilling to be interviewed, by either:
      1. Near verbatim documentation any time an alleged perpetrator makes statements regarding the alleged serious physical or sexual abuse. Information that does not include discussion of the allegations may be summarized.
      2. Upload in FamLink a copy of any near verbatim documentation obtained by a law enforcement officer.

2. Obtain permission from the parent, legal guardian, or caregiver before taking a photograph of his or her home or items inside the home. Caseworkers may take photographs of conditions or items outside the home and in public view without permission. See [Photograph Documentation](#) policy.
  3. Make a report to intake when any child on an open case is believed to be at imminent risk of serious harm or there is a new allegation of child abuse or neglect (CA/N).
  4. If during the subject interview, the subject or FAR participant provides information about a crime against a child or a vulnerable adult and the caseworker believes the child or vulnerable adult is in danger, the caseworker must call 911 and make a law enforcement report. If the child or vulnerable adult is not believed to be in danger, the caseworker will make a report to intake or Adult Protective Services.
2. The supervisor must confirm all alleged subjects or FAR participants were interviewed, and the allegations of CA/N were addressed and documented in FamLink. If the subject or FAR participant was not interviewed, ensure the case documentation includes the reason why the interview did not occur and efforts to locate, if applicable.

## Forms

- [Indian Identity Request form DSHS 09-761](#)
- [Safety Plan DSHS 15-259](#)
- [Plan of Safe Care form DSHS 15-491](#)

On the CA intranet:

- Notification to Parents form DSHS 16-219
- CPS Temporary Custody Notification form DSHS 09-731
- Consent form DSHS 09-412
- Background Check Authorization DSHS 09-653

## 2335. DLR/CPS Use Of Safety Assessment And Safety Planning Tools

1. On all DLR/CPS intakes alleging the biological or adoptive child of a licensee is the victim of CA/N in which the child is not placed in out-of-home care, the assigned DLR/CPS Investigator will complete a Safety Assessment within 30 calendar days. The Safety Assessment may be documented directly in FamLink per [Safety Section policy](#).
2. Once the assigned DLR/CPS investigator has completed a Safety Assessment and Safety Plan, and has determined that there is a need for monitoring of the Safety Plan and/or provision of services, the DLR/CPS Supervisor shall contact the appropriate DCFS Supervisor.

1. The Supervisor will ensure that the appropriate DCFS case assignment will occur to provide monitoring of the Safety Plan and/or provision of services.
2. In the event of disagreement between the DLR/CPS Supervisor and the DCFS Supervisor, the matter will be immediately referred up the chain of command for resolution.
3. As with any case transfer, appropriate staffings will occur to ensure the transition of services to the family.
3. When DCFS staff assume responsibility for the case, DCFS also assumes responsibility for making ongoing decisions about the safety of the child and/or provision of services. DCFS and DLR will utilize joint staffings and shared decision making whenever appropriate, especially if the license remains active. DLR completes the investigation of the allegation.

## 2350. Audio Recording

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:** April 1, 2004

**Revised Date:** March 31, 2017

**Policy Review:** March 31, 2020

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### Purpose

To provide guidance to staff on recording and retaining child interviews and retention of voicemail messages for evidentiary purposes. This policy also provides the agency response when parents or others want to record discussions or meetings with Children's Administration (CA) staff.

### Scope

This policy applies to CA staff.

### Laws

[RCW 13.50.010](#) Definitions—Conditions when filing petition or information—Duties to maintain accurate records and access—Confidential child welfare records.

[RCW 26.44.035](#) Response to complaint by more than one agency-Procedure- Written records.

[RCW 26.44.180](#) Investigation of child sexual abuse—Protocols—Documentation of agencies' roles.

[RCW 26.44.185](#) Investigation of child sexual abuse-Revision and expansion of protocols-Child fatality, child physical abuse, and criminal child neglect cases.

[RCW 70.125.030](#) Definitions.

[RCW 74.14B.010](#) Children's services workers-Hiring and training.

## Policy

### 1. Audio Recording of Child Physical Abuse or Sexual Abuse Interviews

The CA caseworker must:

1. Successfully complete specialized training which meets the [RCW 74.14B.010](#) requirements for conducting interviews with children who are allegedly physically or sexually abused.
2. Follow local law enforcement protocol when a child abuse interview is conducted by law enforcement, a child advocacy center, another agency or forensic interviewer. If CA staff are present during a child abuse interview conducted by another agency or individual pursuant to a local protocol, CA equipment may be used to make an audio recording of the interview if local protocol permits.
3. Follow [2333. Interviewing a Victim and Identified Child Interview](#) policy.
4. Make reasonable efforts to audio record child interviews when there is:
  1. A child protective services (CPS) investigation of physical or sexual abuse allegations.
  2. A CPS Family Assessment Response (FAR) to a physical abuse allegation, and the child is being interviewed without his or her parent present due to concerns that child safety would be compromised if the child's parent is present.
5. Use near verbatim documentation when conducting the interview and audio recording is not possible or appropriate due to any of following:
  1. The child:
    1. Is too young or developmentally unable to verbally communicate.
    2. Refuses to participate if the interview is audio recorded.
    3. Demonstrates emotional distress or discomfort about being audio recorded.
  2. The joint CPS/law enforcement investigation team agrees it is not appropriate.
  3. Another agency is conducting and documenting the interview. CA will request a copy of the interview.
6. Prior to the interview:
  1. If the child interview takes place after the initial face-to-face and child safety will not be compromised, ask the parent or legal guardian for permission before conducting the child interview.

2. If the parent or legal guardian allows the interview, seek permission to audio record the interview. If the parent refuses, document the interview as nearly verbatim as possible.
  3. Permission from the parent or legal custodian to the interview is not necessary when the child has been placed in protective custody or is in the care and custody of CA.
  4. Follow local office procedures to request a qualified interpreter when audio recording a child abuse interview in a language other than English. If the caseworker is bilingual and has passed the required DSHS Bilingual Skills Test(s)/Assessment, he or she may conduct the child abuse interview in the child's language per DSHS Administrative Policy 18.82 located on the DSHS intranet.
  5. Obtain the child's verbal consent to audio record if the child is developmentally able to consent. If the child refuses to be audio recorded, use near verbatim documentation.
7. During the audio recorded interview
    1. Begin the interview by recording:
      1. Your name and role.
      2. Date, time and location of the interview
      3. Child's name
      4. Verbal consent from the child, and permission to audio record.
      5. Whether the child wants a third party present. If so, record the name and position of the third party.
    2. Re-ask the child during the interview if it's okay to continue talking or if the child wants a break.
    3. Record the name and role of anyone entering or exiting the room, and the time the interview is concluded. Once the child leaves the room, also record observations of the child's emotional and physical state during the interview process.
8. After the Interview
    1. Store all CA audio recordings, and audio recordings provided to CA from law enforcement or a contracted provider in the case file or, when compatible, upload into FamLink. Summarize the contents of the audio recording in a case note. Document as applicable:
      1. The name of the interviewer.
      2. The name of the agency providing the copy of the recording.
      3. Date of the interview.
      4. Attendees present for the interview.
      5. Location of the interview.
      6. Child's disclosure or nondisclosure in regards to allegation of CA/N
    2. Follow office procedures in requesting a transcription of the audio recording when any of the following conditions apply:
      1. A child discloses child abuse or neglect during an interview.
      2. A dependency proceeding is commenced or in process.



3. A law enforcement agency, including a Prosecuting Attorney, requests a transcript.
  4. An individual having a legal right to do so requests disclosure of file materials.
  5. An interview is part of a Division of Licensed Resources (DLR-CPS) investigation and there is a founded finding.
3. Document near verbatim interviews in FamLink and include questions establishing a voluntary interview and the child's responses, including:
    1. The child's permission for the interview.
    2. If the child wanted a third-party present.
    3. Who was present for the interview.
    4. Where the interview occurred.
    5. The child's emotional and physical state during the interview process.
  2. If a parent or caregiver requests to audio or video record a meeting, inform the parent that CA staff do not consent to audio or video recording of meetings or discussions. Discontinue the meeting or conversation if the parent refuses to cooperate. If a meeting is discontinued, inform the supervisor immediately.
  3. If retaining a voicemail from a parent or caregiver for evidentiary purposes, complete the following:
    1. Retain the entire message. Do not make any edits or alterations and upload into FamLink. For help, contact [HELP300@DSHS.WA.GOV](mailto:HELP300@DSHS.WA.GOV).
    2. If audio recording of voicemail is not possible, use near verbatim documentation of the entire voicemail message.

## Resources

Located on the CA intranet

- The Quick Reference Guide to Audio Recording CPS Child Interviews
- Interview Protocols
- Child Abuse Interviewing and Assessment Alliance Training
- Law Enforcement Protocols by office

# 2400. CASE PLANNING

## Description

1. Case planning builds on the principles of risk assessment by linking the identified risk factors to their case plan.
2. The CPS worker must follow the requirements of WAC 388-15-131 and WAC 388-70-095 in determining if the reported child(ren) is an Indian child.
  1. Upon initial acceptance of a case for service, the social worker must seek to discover and document whether the involved child is of Indian ancestry. The social worker must do this in every case.

2. Each time the case is transferred from one worker or program to another, the social worker receiving the case must confirm that verification of Indian ancestry has previously been completed.
3. The CPS social worker must develop and implement culturally responsive case plans, consistent with the risk assessment model, designed to reduce the risk of CA/N to children.

## Process

1. 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.
2. The social worker develops a case plan with each available family when services are provided. The social worker completes a service plan 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) and Family Preservation Services (FPS). 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.

# 2421. Emergency Planning for Children in Out-of-Home Care

## Purpose

To store current photographs, height and weight information for children in out-of-home care, in case of a disaster or emergency.

## Policy

The assigned Social Worker will collect and document the following information **within (5) five business days** of a child *entering* out-of-home care (date of OPD):

- Photograph
- Height & Weight

Update photographs and height and weight information as follows:

- Significant changes in the child occur (e.g. change in appearance, major weight loss or gain)
- **Every 6 months** for children less than 6 years old
- **Annually** for children 6 years and older

## Procedure

Store electronic file of child(s) photograph in the electronic Filing Cabinet for their case. Contact your local office RAFT Gatekeeper to have the photograph uploaded. See "Digital Photo Quick Help Guide" for instructions on the file upload steps and naming convention.

### Social Worker Documentation

Document the following information about the child photograph in the electronic filing cabinet in the information management system:

- Child name
- Date photograph taken
- Child age
- Child's height/weight
- Identifying marks/information

For child photographs stored in the case file document the following information on the back of the photograph and place it in an envelope in front of the most current case record binder:

- Date photograph was taken
- Child's date of birth
- Height and weight

# 2440. CPS Service Delivery

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:** March 31, 2017

**Policy Review:** March 31, 2020

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## Purpose

Provide guidance for Child Protective Services (CPS) investigation caseworkers to determine if voluntary services are needed and whether services will be delivered by the CPS caseworker or Family Voluntary Services (FVS) caseworker. Services are directed at eliminating safety threats, preventing placement, reducing risk and increasing the parent's protective capacities to assure the child's safety and well-being.

## Laws

[RCW 26.44.180](#) Investigation of child sexual abuse -- Protocols -- Documentation of agencies' roles.

## Policy

1. The CPS investigation caseworker must:
  1. Determine if voluntary services are necessary and in the child's best interest when there is an identified safety threat on the [Safety Assessment](#) or a moderate high or high risk score on the [Structured Decision Making Risk Assessment \(SDMRA\)](#) by completing all of the following:
    1. Consult with a CPS supervisor and review the following information:
      1. Safety Assessment
      2. Initial interviews
      3. Case history
      4. SDMRA
    2. Consider the following factors:
      1. Identified safety threats.
      2. Existing protective factors within the family and their support system.
      3. Level of family crisis.
      4. Family's ability and willingness to engage in services and achieve their goals within the time period specified.
      5. Services that will help maintain or restore a safe, stable family environment.
      6. Whether safety and protection of the child does not appear to require court intervention.
  2. If voluntary services are expected to last less than 60 calendar days from the intake date and the case is not transferred to FVS, complete the following:
    1. Initiate referrals to service providers or community resources at any time during the investigation when brief services are expected to be completed within sixty days. Examples include:
      1. Removal of health and safety hazards from the home or minor repairs.
      2. The family will benefit from additional resources, e.g., childcare, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), bus pass, public health nurse, First Steps, Women, Infant and Children (WIC), Domestic Violence programs, Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT), or family planning.
    2. Coordinate with family members and community partners when recommending services.
    3. Complete a new safety assessment at key decision points per CA [Safety Assessment](#) policy.
    4. Ensure services paid by CA are completed within the investigation timeframe of 60 days unless there is an extension resulting from law enforcement request per [RCW 26.44.185](#).
  3. If the case will transfer to [FVS](#), initiate referrals to service providers or community resources and work with the CPS supervisor to:
    1. End the CPS assignment if the investigation is complete.

2. Co-assign the case if the investigation is not complete.
4. Consult with the CPS supervisor to determine if court intervention is needed if a family declines services, and any of the following exists:
  1. Safety threats exist and cannot be managed or controlled in the home.
  2. There is a moderate high or high risk score on the SDMRA.
  3. Reasonable efforts have not increased the parent's protective capacities.
5. If a child's safety cannot be managed or controlled in the home:
  1. Initiate a [Voluntary Placement Agreement \(VPA\)](#) when the child is anticipated to safely return to his or her parent within 90 days.
  2. Initiate court intervention if the child is not anticipated to return to his or her parent within 90 days.
2. The CPS supervisor must:
  1. Collaborate with the FVS supervisor when it is determined that FVS is appropriate, and a FVS caseworker is assigned.
  2. Consult with the area administrator (AA) when there is a disagreement about a CPS investigation identified for FVS.
  3. Document in a supervisory case note his or her review of the completed investigation, and transfer to FVS.

## 2540. Investigative Assessment

### Policy

The Investigative Assessment (IA) must be completed in FamLink within 60 calendar days of Children's Administration receiving the intake.

1. A complete Investigative Assessment will contain the following information:
  1. A narrative description of:
    1. History of CA/N (prior to the current allegations, includes victimization of any child in the family and the injuries, dangerous acts, neglectful conditions, sexual abuse and extent of developmental/emotional harm).
    2. Description of the most recent CA/N (including severity, frequency and effects on child).
    3. Protective factors and family strengths.
  2. Structured Decision Making Risk Assessment (SDMRA) tool.
  3. Documentation that a determination has been made as to whether it is probable that the use of alcohol or controlled substances is a contributing factor to the alleged abuse or neglect.
  4. Disposition; e.g., a description of DCFS case status.
  5. Documentation of Findings regarding alleged abuse or neglect. Findings will be based on CA/N codes designated in the intake according to the following definitions:
    1. Founded means: Based on the CPS investigation, available information indicates that, more likely than not, child abuse or neglect did occur as defined in WAC 388-15-009.

2. Unfounded means: The determination following an investigation by CPS that, based on available information, it is more likely than not that child abuse or neglect did not occur or there is insufficient evidence for the department to determine whether the alleged child abuse did or did not occur as defined in WAC 388-15-009. RCW 26.44.020
3. If a court in a civil or criminal proceeding, considering the same facts or circumstances contained in the CA case being investigated, makes a judicial finding by a preponderance of the evidence or higher that the subject of the pending investigation has abused or neglected the child, CA shall adopt the finding in its investigation.
4. When a criminal or civil finding differs from an unfounded finding on a completed investigation or closed case, CA will, upon request, consider the changing the CA/N finding to founded.

#### **Procedure**

When CA staff considers a criminal or civil findings that differs from an unfounded finding on a completed investigation or closed case, they must:

1. Compare the court case with the department case to ensure the same facts are considered.
2. Discuss the judicial findings with the CPS supervisor and Area Administrator to determine if the CA findings should be changed.
3. Send a new CPS Founded letter and follow regular CAPTA procedures, if it is determined the findings should be changed.
5. When a third founded finding is made involving the same child or family within the previous 12 months, CA must promptly notify the Office of the Ombudsman of the contents of the report and disposition of the investigation.

## **2541. Structured Decision Making Risk Assessment®(SDMRA)**

### **Purpose Statement**

The Structured Decision Making Risk Assessment (SDMRA) is a household-based assessment focused on the characteristics of the caregivers and children living in that household. By completing the SDMRA following the Safety Assessment, the worker obtains an objective appraisal of the risk to a child. The SDMRA informs when services may or must be offered.

### **Laws**

[RCW 26.44.030](#)

[Executive Order 12-04](#)

## Policy

1. The SDMRA risk assessment tool is required as part of the Investigative Assessment and is completed on all screened in CPS intakes (includes Risk Only intakes) requiring a CPS investigation.
2. Services must be offered to families with a high SDMRA score.
3. Services **may** be offered to families with a moderately high SDMRA score.
4. Services are not offered to families when observable, verifiable and describable changes have been made within the family that reduces the identified risk in the SDMRA .
5. Cases with a high SDMRA score must be staffed with a Child Protection Team (CPT) for identified child victims aged six years or younger.

## Procedures

1. Complete the SDMRA no longer than **60** days after the intake was received and following the Safety Assessment and prior to a determination to offer ongoing services or a case transfer to another program area. Supervisors may extend the completion date of the SDMRA with reason.
2. When the SDMRA score is "high" and the child is determined **unsafe** through the Safety Assessment then:
  1. Follow the [Safety Plan policy](#)
  2. Follow the [1740 Child Protection Teams \(CPT\) policy](#).
  3. Document "Transferred to Tribal Authority" per ICW Manual on the Investigative Assessment disposition tab when a Tribe is assuming responsibility for providing services and monitoring the family.
  4. Explain why services were not offered or provided to the family in (including when Tribe assumes authority) in FamLink.
3. When the SDMRA score is "high" or "moderately high" and the child is determined **safe** through the Safety Assessment:
  1. Offer services when the SDMRA score is high and both family and individual level concerns exist per [2440 Service Agreement policy](#).
  2. Consider offering services when the SDM score is moderately high and both family and individual level concerns exist per [2440 Service Agreement policy](#).
  3. Services are not offered to families when observable, verifiable and describable changes have been made within the family that reduces the identified risk in the SDMRA.
  4. Follow the [1740 Child Protection Teams \(CPT\) policy](#).
  5. Document the following on the Investigative Assessment disposition tab when services are not offered to the family by CA:
    1. "Transferred to Tribal Authority" if Tribe is assuming responsibility for providing services and monitoring the family
    2. "Other" on the drop down menu and in the text box document an explanation why services were not offered or provided
4. When the chronicity indicator has been identified with a family and the family has a SDMRA score of high, and:

1. Voluntary services are offered:
  1. Refer family to appropriate evidence based or promising programs where available, or
  2. If not available, refer other relevant agency contracted or community services
2. Voluntary services are not offered:
  1. Follow the [1740 Child Protection Teams \(CPT\) policy](#).
  2. Review case with CPS supervisor before case closure

## Resources

- SDM Risk Assessment - Procedures Manual
- [1740 Child Protection Teams policy](#)
- [2440 Service Agreement policy](#)
- [Comparing and Understanding the Differences: Risk of Maltreatment, Present Danger, Impending Danger - article](#)
- [The Differences between Risk and Safety - article](#)

## 2558. Sexually Aggressive Youth

1. Social workers must arrange for the provision of appropriate and comprehensive evaluation, treatment and supplemental services for sexually aggressive youth (SAY) as approved by Regional SAY Teams. See chapter 4000, section 4536 for information regarding services and placement guidelines. RCW 74.13.075
2. 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.04.050
3. CPS must investigate any intakes from law enforcement or a prosecutor's office that allege that a child is a sexually aggressive youth. The purpose of the investigation is 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
4. 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 13.34 RCW.

## **2559. Hospital Holds**

CPS must 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 must detain the child until the court assumes custody. However, if in the opinion of the CPS worker and supervisor, based upon documented evidence and 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, the social worker may return the child to the parent or legal guardian. If the child is returned home, the assigned social worker must monitor the continued safety of the child for a six-month period.

## **2559B. CPS Investigative Findings Notification**

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:** September 1976

**Revised Date:** October 31, 2016

**Policy Review:** January 1, 2020

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### **Purpose**

To inform subjects of the CPS investigative findings including information regarding requests for review of founded findings.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to all Children's Administration staff.

### **Laws**

[P.L. 93-247](#) Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act

[P.L. 111-320](#) Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act Amendment

[RCW 26.44.100](#) Information about Rights and Notification of Investigation, Report and Findings

[RCW 26.44.125](#) Alleged Perpetrators Right to Review and Amendment of Finding Hearing

[WAC 388-15-065](#) Does CPS have to notify the alleged perpetrator of the results of CPS investigation?

[WAC 388-15-069](#) How does CPS notify the alleged perpetrator of the finding?

[WAC 388-15-073](#) What information must be in the CPS finding notice?

## **Policy**

CA staff must:

1. Notify the subject of all approved CPS investigative findings in writing and orally, whenever possible, whether founded or unfounded and provide the [required information](#) regarding the steps necessary to request a CA founded findings review.
  1. Send findings notification to the subject's last known address or known location by certified mail, return receipt requested.
  2. Personally serve the founded findings letter when the certified mail is returned and the department is actively working with the subject on an open case in any program.
  3. If the subject refuses to accept the in-person delivery, CA staff must send the letter certified mail, return receipt requested.
  4. Document:
    1. That the findings letter was provided to subject in the "Delivery Tracking" page in FamLink.
    2. Efforts to inform the subject verbally of the findings will be documented in a case note.
2. If a court in a civil or criminal proceeding, considering the same facts or circumstances contained in the CA case being investigated, makes a judicial finding by a preponderance of the evidence (or higher standard) that the subject of the pending investigation has abused or neglected the child, CA will adopt the finding in its investigation.
3. When a criminal or civil finding differs from an unfounded finding on a completed investigation or closed case, CA will, upon request, consider changing the CA/N finding to founded.
4. Promptly notify the Office of the Family of Children's Ombuds of the contents of the report and disposition of the investigation when a third founded finding is made involving the same child or family within the previous 12 months.
5. Notify the guardian ad litem or court appointed special advocate, if assigned, of the disposition of the investigation.

## **Procedure**

When CA staff considers criminal or civil findings that differs from an unfounded finding on a completed investigation or closed case, staff must:

1. Compare the court case with the department case to ensure the same facts are considered.
2. Discuss the judicial findings with the CPS supervisor and Area Administrator to determine if the CA findings should be changed.
3. Send a new CPS founded findings letter to the subject and follow regular CAPTA procedures, if it is determined the findings should be changed.

## **Forms**

CPS Founded Letter DSHS 09-913 (available on the CA intranet)

CPS Unfounded Letter DSHS 09-912 (available on the CA intranet)

## **Resources**

[2540 Investigative Assessment policy](#)

# **2559C. CPS Investigative Founded Findings Review**

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:** September 1976

**Revised Date:** January 31, 2016

**Policy Review:** January 1, 2020

## **Purpose**

Inform staff of the process to review CPS investigative findings when a review is requested by a subject with a founded finding of Child Abuse/Neglect (CA/N).

## **Scope**

This policy applies to all Children's Administration staff.

## **Laws**

[P.L. 93-247](#) Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act

[P.L 111-320](#) Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act Amendment

[RCW 26.44.100](#) Information about Rights and Notification of Investigation, Report and Findings

[RCW 26.44.125](#) Alleged Perpetrators Right to Review and Amendment of Finding Hearing

[WAC Chapter 388-15](#) Child Protective Services

## Policy

1. A request for review of a CPS founded finding must be received **within 30 calendar days** following the subject's receipt of the notification. If the request is not received within the designated timeframe, the subject has no further right to an internal review, administrative hearing or judicial review of the finding.
2. All CA founded findings reviews must be conducted within 30 days by the regional administrator or Division of Licensed Resources administrator or his or her designee who is above the first level of supervision and was not involved in the original decision-making about the finding. At a minimum, the internal review must include:
  1. A review of the case file, to include the intake, case notes, Investigative Assessment, and the findings information; and
  2. A review of any written information provided by the subject of the intake.
  3. When necessary, the review will include an interview with the assigned worker and/or the worker's supervisor.
3. CA staff must notify the subject of the CA founded findings review results within 30 calendar days from the date the department received the request.
  1. Notification must be in writing by certified mail, return receipt requested to the subject's last known address.
  2. If the results remain founded, the hearing notification letter must include the process to request an Administrative Hearing.
4. CA staff must change the findings in the "Findings" page in FamLink within 10 working days of the decision when a review or hearing overturns the founded finding.
5. All findings will remain in effect as originally determined pending any internal review or administrative hearing.

## Forms

CPS Review Denied Notification form DSHS 27-136 (on Intranet)

# 2571. Mandated Reports to Law Enforcement

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:** 1972

**Revised Date:** July 1, 2016

**Policy Review:** July 1, 2020

## **Purpose**

Children's Administration (CA) must notify law enforcement when a crime has been committed against a child or a child's welfare is endangered.

## **Scope**

This policy applies to all CA staff.

## **Laws**

[RCW 26.44.030 \(4\)](#) Reports—Duty and authority to make—Duty of receiving agency—Duty to notify.

[RCW 74.13.031 \(3\)](#) Duties of department—Child welfare services

## **Policy**

CA staff will:

1. Notify law enforcement when there is:
  - a. Reasonable cause to believe a crime has been committed against a child, or
  - b. An allegation of child abuse or neglect (CA/N) including:
    1. Child fatality or near fatality if child abuse or neglect is suspected.
    2. Non-accidental physical injury of a child.
    3. Sexual Abuse or sexual exploitation.
2. Notify law enforcement verbally or with a written intake report.
  1. Within **24 hours** of receiving an **emergent** report and the child is believed to be in immediate danger.
  2. Within **72 hours** of receiving a **non-emergent** report.
  3. Within **72 hours** when an investigation or Family Assessment Response (FAR) reveals reasonable cause to believe that a crime against a child may have been committed.
3. If a verbal report was made, send a copy of the intake within five calendar days of making the verbal report.
4. Document in FamLink on the intake "referral" tab the following information when sending the report to law enforcement:
  0. Law enforcement agency name.
    1. Date and time the report was sent.
    2. Method the report was sent.
    3. Explanation regarding the reason the report was sent.

5. Make a report to intake when there is a new instance of abuse or neglect on an open case.

## **Forms**

Intake Report DSHS 14-260 located on the Intake and Forms pages on the CA Intranet.

## **Resources**

[Mandated Reporter Toolkit](#)

## **2573. Law Enforcement Assistance**

1. 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.
2. 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.

## **2575. Confidentiality of Records**

CA records are confidential, and CA staff must not disclose them to law enforcement other than as described above. Law enforcement or the prosecutor may subpoena other information from the CA record. See CA Case Services Policy Manual, chapter 4000, section 4120.

## **2576. Conflict of Interest**

1. RCW 26.44.190 requires law enforcement agencies not to permit law enforcement officers to participate in the investigation of alleged abuse or neglect concerning a child with whom the officer is, or has been a parent, guardian, or foster parent. See the CA Case Services Policy Manual, chapter 2000, section 2131.
2. To assist the law enforcement agency to meet this requirement, the assigned CA social worker must inform the law enforcement agency if CA's records indicate that the assigned investigating officer is, or has been, a parent, guardian, or foster parent of the alleged child victim.
3. If the law enforcement agency continues the investigative assignment with an officer who is the current foster parent of the alleged child victim, the CA social worker must remove the child from placement with the investigating officer.

## **3000. Family Voluntary Services**

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:** October 31, 2016

**Policy Review:** October 31, 2020

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## **Purpose**

Family Voluntary Services (FVS) allows parents to voluntarily engage in services to increase their protective capacities and meet the child's safety, health, and well-being needs.

## **Scope**

This policy applies to DCFS caseworkers.

## **Laws**

[RCW 13.32A.140](#) Out-of-home placement - Child in Need of Services Petition by Department - Procedure.

[RCW 26.44.030](#) Reports - Duty to Make

[RCW 26.44.056](#) Protective Detention or Custody of Abused Child

[RCW 43.185C.315](#) Youth Services - HOPE centers - Requirements

[RCW 43.185C.320](#) Youth Services - HOPE centers - Eligibility

[RCW 74.14A.020](#) Services for Emotionally Disturbed and Mentally Ill Children, Potentially Dependent Children, and Families-In-Conflict

[RCW 26.44.195](#) Negligent treatment or maltreatment - Offer of services - Evidence of substance abuse - In-home services - Initiation of dependency proceedings

## **Policy**

1. The following cases are assigned for FVS:
  1. A non-CPS [intake](#), including:
    1. Request for services.
    2. Request for services involving [commercially and sexually exploited children \(CSEC\)](#) under age 12.
    3. Intakes on runaway youth under age 12 who are at a Crisis Residential Center (CRC), Hope Center or overnight youth shelter.

2. Child Protective Services (CPS) investigation or risk-only cases with a requested assignment to FVS because the family has agreed to participate in services and either of the following exists:
  1. A moderately high or high risk score on the [Structured Decision Making Risk Assessment \(SDMRA\)](#) tool.
  2. A [safety assessment](#) has identified a safety threat(s) that can be managed with a [safety plan](#).
  3. Cases requiring six months of child safety monitoring when all three of the following conditions are met:
    1. The child is placed on a hospital hold by the physician or hospital administrator.
    2. The child is placed in protective custody by law enforcement; and
    3. CPS determines the child can return home.
2. The FVS supervisor will:
  1. When a request to transfer a case to FVS is made by the CPS supervisor, collaborate to determine if case transfer is appropriate. An FVS caseworker must be assigned within three days of the request for transfer.
  2. Consult with the area administrator (AA) when there is a disagreement about an intake screening decision or a CPS investigation identified for transfer to FVS.
  3. Assign CPS Risk-Only intakes on open FVS cases to the FVS caseworker. If the case is co-assigned to FVS and CPS investigation, assign the intake to the CPS investigation caseworker.
  4. Conduct [monthly supervisor case reviews](#), review all [safety plans](#) and document the reviews in a case note.
  5. Review FVS cases that remain open (from the FVS assignment date):
    1. Beyond 90 calendar days to determine if continued services are needed and document the decision in a case note.
    2. With the AA when the case is open beyond 180 calendar days, and every 90 days thereafter to determine if continued services are needed, and document the decision in a case note.
3. The FVS caseworker will:
  1. Prior to initial contact with the family:
    1. Review the case file, safety assessment and [Case Plan DSHS 15-259A](#) (if applicable), and all other case information as it becomes available.
    2. Consult with the sending worker to discuss the case including safety, permanency and well-being needs of the child, family's progress in services (if applicable) and any other identified service need.
    3. Complete a case transfer staffing between the sending and receiving caseworkers for all case assignment transfers, and document the staffing in a case note.
  2. Make contact with the referrer, youth or family member on non-CPS intake cases within the following times (excluding weekends and holidays):
    1. 72 hours for a request for services.
    2. 24 hours for a request for services involving commercially sexually exploited children under age 12.



3. 24 hours for intakes on runaway youth under age 12 who are currently located at a CRC, Hope Center or overnight youth shelter.
3. Make contact with the family within seven calendar days from the date a case transfers from CPS Investigation to FVS.
4. Complete the following during the initial meeting with the child and family, and subsequent meetings as needed:
  1. [Assess](#) for present danger. Take immediate protective action if a child is in [present danger](#).
  2. Identify and verify all individuals living in the home and assess for safety threats and risk.
  3. Provide [infant safety education and intervention](#) for all children in the household birth to one year of age.
  4. Inquire about the child's possible membership or eligibility for membership in a federally recognized tribe. Follow [Indian Child Welfare Chapter 3 Inquiry and Verification of Child's Indian Status](#).
  5. Conduct routine and universal domestic violence (DV) screening at key points in a case, i.e., a new intake, case transfer, and re-assessment of safety to identify if DV is present.
5. Complete a new safety assessment at key decision points per CA's [safety assessment](#) policy.
6. Complete a [safety plan](#) with the family if a safety threat is identified and can be controlled and managed with a safety plan.
7. Complete the [Comprehensive Family Evaluation \(CFE\)](#) within 45 calendar days of an FVS assignment, and every 90 days after the prior CFE is approved.
8. Complete an [investigative assessment](#) when assigned a CPS Risk-Only intake and follow [2331. Investigative Standards](#) policy.
9. Conduct monthly [health and safety visits with children, and monthly visits with caregivers and parents](#). (For children age five or younger and residing in the home, complete two in-home visits every calendar month. One of the two in-home health and safety visits may be conducted by a CA contracted provider).
10. Review the case with the supervisor and assess whether to place in out-of-home care when all of the following apply:
  1. Safety or risk cannot be managed with a safety plan.
  2. The family refuses services.
11. Complete the following case planning and service referral activities for children in-home or placed out-of-home under a [Voluntary Placement Agreement \(VPA\)](#).
  1. Develop a [case plan](#) with the family based on the assessment of the family's needs. The case plan must address the moderately high or high risk factors and the identified safety threat(s) for the child.
  2. Initiate referrals to service providers or community resources when needed and available.
  3. If a child is a member or eligible for membership in a federally recognized tribe from Washington state, contact the tribe to:
    1. Determine the tribe's level of involvement.

2. Identify any available tribal services and resources.
  3. Review and follow the [Memorandum of Understanding](#) that CA has with the child's tribe (if one has been completed) for families residing on or off a reservation.
12. Complete the following additional case planning and service referral activities for a child placed out-of-home on a [VPA](#):
1. Review conditions for return home to ensure that children will be safe if returned home or if the children will be unsafe, how the family can manage the safety threat through a safety plan.
  2. Conduct an FTDM or shared planning meeting within 72 hours of placement (excluding weekends and holidays) and prior to return home.
  3. Develop a timely [parent, child and sibling visit](#) plan that includes visits in the least restrictive setting based on risk factors, existing danger, safety threats and protective factors.
13. Transfer the case to Children and Family Welfare Services (CFWS) if a [dependency petition](#) is filed. If the case is co-assigned and is within two weeks of case transfer, the CPS worker will file the dependency petition.
14. When any child in an open case is believed to be at imminent risk of serious harm or there is a new allegations of child abuse or neglect, the assigned caseworker must make a report to intake per [RCW 26.44.030 \(1\)\(a\)](#).
15. Close the case when:
1. The family has completed or is no longer in need of services, and there is no present danger or identified safety threat(s).
  2. The family is unable to be located following the steps outlined in the "Guidelines for Reasonable Efforts to Locate Children and/or Parents" on the CA intranet.

## Forms

- [Case Plan DSHS 15-259A](#)
- Voluntary Agreement Plan DSHS 09-004B located on the CA intranet
- [Indian Identity DSHS 09-761](#)
- [Social Worker's Practice Guide to Domestic Violence](#)

# 3100. FAMILY RECONCILIATION SERVICES

The goal of Family Reconciliation Services (FRS) is to preserve, strengthen, and reconcile families in conflict.

The range of services provided is designed to help families find solutions to their conflicts by developing skills and supports to maintain the family unit. Service delivery begins with the least intensive, least intrusive intervention appropriate in the individual case circumstance.

Services are voluntary, family-focused, and rely on the family's participation. FRS is available at no cost to the family. Participation in FRS cannot be a condition on a family for dismissing a dependency or closing a CPS case. If appropriate, FRS services may be offered to families involved in other CA programs including CPS or CFWS.

FRS is comprised of two service categories:

1. **Assessment & Brief Intervention:** Which are short-term interactions between Children's Administration (CA) staff and the family requesting services. The services are directed towards de-escalating the immediate crisis, defining the goals of the family seeking services, and exploring options to meet those goals. When possible, the family's kinship and community support systems should be utilized.
2. **Contracted Counseling:** When it is determined the family would benefit from services from CA beyond assessment and brief intervention, the social worker may offer the family contracted services based on unique needs of the family. Contracted counseling for FRS primarily consists of Crisis Family Invention and Functional Family Therapy.

There are two principal referral processes to access services within FRS.

1. **New referrals for service:** Families may access FRS Assessment and Brief Intervention and Contracted Counseling through Intake, as defined in section 3200. Foster parents and adoptive families requesting help with their youth due to conflict or youth's high risk behavior may access Assessment & Brief Intervention and Contracted Counseling.
2. **Families currently being served by other CA programs may access FRS Contracted Counseling** as defined below.
  - Families can be referred for this service based on their unique needs and the goals of the family regardless of program type (i.e. Child Protective Services, Family Voluntary Services, or Child and Family Welfare Services). A family does not need to be open to FRS in order to access FRS contracted counseling.
  - Foster parents requesting help with youth due to conflict or high risk behavior placed in their care may access FRS Contracted Counseling, through the social worker of the youth.
  - When FRS contracted counseling is provided for families open to CA services, the referring social worker maintains all case management responsibilities through the conclusion of service and section 2430, concerning service agreements, shall be followed for co-assignment with CPS.

## **3300. FRS Assessment and Crisis Intervention**

At anytime a social worker receives information indicating there is reasonable cause to believe a child has suffered abuse or neglect, the social worker will notify CA Intake staff.

## **3310. Response Time**

The FRS social worker must attempt to contact the referent (youth or family) within 24 hours of receipt of the referral by intake, excluding weekends and holidays. The FRS social worker may make this initial contact by telephone.

## **3320. FRS Initial Engagement**

FRS initial engagement with the person requesting service must be completed within five business days of receipt of the referral by CA. During initial engagement the FRS social worker will use the FRS Engagement Tool to attempt to de-escalate or reduce the family crisis and determine if further FRS services are needed.

Families eligible for continued FRS services are those where the crisis continues and the family is seeking a brief intervention to address conflict or reconciliation or is requesting a Family Assessment to file a CHINS or ARY petition.

FRS is intended for youth living with custodial parents or guardians. When resources are available, FRS may be provided to youth living with non custodial parents or other caregivers.

If a request for FRS is accepted from a non custodial parent or other caregiver, the social worker must first attempt to notify and involve the custodial parent(s) or guardian. If resources are not available to serve a non custodial parent or other caregiver, the FRS supervisor or designee must notify the youth or family within 24 hours, excluding weekends and holidays.

For cases involving requests for FRS services for a youth placed in a CRC, HOPE or Overnight Youth Shelter Program, the FRS social worker where the youth is placed must see the youth per [Practice and Procedure 4534 - Crisis Residential Center \(CRC\) Program](#).

For youth missing from care that are referred by overnight shelters the social worker must:

1. Notify Law Enforcement of youth's whereabouts per [Practice and Procedures Guide 4550 Children Missing from Care](#)
2. Notify the youth's parents that a report has been received and the youth is currently safe and off the streets within 24 hours,

3. Inform parents of services designed to resolve the conflict and accomplish reunification of the family.
4. Make contact by telephone or other reasonable means.

For cases involving sexually exploited youth as defined in Appendix A, the FRS social worker must refer the youth and family to available services through the Office of Crime Victims Advocacy. The FRS social worker must explore filing a CHINS petition if applicable.

The social worker will document the information from the FRS Engagement Tool and outcome of the contact in the Service Episode Record (SER).

## **3330. Assessment and Brief Intervention**

The social worker must meet with the family to:

- Complete the Family Assessment
- Continue brief crisis de-escalation
- Develop and explore options to address identified risk factors

Family meetings must begin within 10 days and end within 40 days of initial engagement contact.

## **3340. Contracted Counseling**

Based on the results of the FRS Engagement Tool or Family Assessment, families may be referred for services or short term out of home placement. The principal service available for FRS is Crisis Family Intervention and Functional Family Therapy. Other CA services can be accessed based on the family's need and the availability.

Social workers shall prioritize families requesting services with the highest level of family conflict or instability and the greatest amount of family participation with services. At a minimum, there must be a caregiver willing to participate.

Families must make a commitment to participate in counseling services and must not be currently receiving family counseling services through other agencies or practitioners.

## **3400. Completion of FRS Services**

For all FRS cases that are expected to remain open 60 days or longer, the FRS social worker must comply with the monthly health and safety visit requirement outlined in the Practices and Procedures Chapter 4000 Section 4420.

FRS cases must be closed within 90 days of the initial date of the referral. A case may remain with the FRS for an additional 90 days, with supervisory approval when:

- Contracted services continue
- The Court has requested CA to monitor the CHINS for a non licensed placement, or
- The Court has ordered monitoring of the ARY

Document all activities and services in case notes.

## **3410. Inactive Status**

Case Closure: The social worker must designate cases where services have ended but cannot be closed until documentation is completed as "Services Inactive/Paperwork Pending (S) Program Assignment for Social Worker or Supervisor."

The purpose of this worker assignment is to be able to track the workload involved in follow-up paperwork (Operations Manual 152022 (F)(4)).

The social worker must properly complete all forms and recordings in the management information system within 30 days of a decision to terminate services and close a case. The supervisor must review both the management information system and the hard-copy file folder for accuracy and completeness and must document the review before closure or transfer to another service.

## **3550. RELEASE OF JUVENILES BY THE COURT TO THE DEPARTMENT**

A juvenile taken into custody, whether held in detention or released after the posting of a bond, can be released by the court to a responsible adult or CA under RCW 13.32A.060. See the *CA Case Services Policy Manual*, chapter 5000, section 5410.

If the court cannot locate a parent or responsible adult, or if CA does not agree to receive the youth, the court must immediately notify CA if the youth is released. CA is not obligated to accept the youth unless the youth is in the legal custody of CA.

When CA agrees to accept these youths, CA staff will conduct an assessment to determine if the youth can go home or needs to go into placement. The CA social worker will attempt to locate the parent and, if no serious CPS issues are present, return the child home. If the child is unable to return to the parent's home, CA staff will work with parents to find a relative or other adult with whom the parents will allow the child to reside.

CA does not have authority to transport nor place a child. If the parent is not available and/or does not agree to placement with another individual or the social worker needs to transport the youth, the worker must obtain **documented** legal authority - police custody, CHINS, or shelter care or dependency order - before transporting the youth or placing the youth in licensed care. If the youth runs from the CA waiting room after court staff has released the youth to CA, CA staff reports the youth as a runaway to local law enforcement or determines that court staff has submitted the runaway report.

Local CA offices have established agreements with juvenile court facilities regarding the release of a youth to CA. Staff needs to refer to these established protocols for specific regional/local procedures.

## **3600. CHILD IN NEED OF SERVICES (CHINS) PETITION AND PLACEMENT**

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 CA may file a CHINS petition. See the CA Case Services Policy Manual, sections 5500- 5530 and section 7200, for references to the statute and relevant policy considerations for the social worker. The social worker must not utilize CHINS for protection issues or to resolve custody disputes.

The assigned CA social worker must complete a family assessment in accordance with RCW 13.32A.150 before the court may accept the filing of a CHINS petition by the youth or the youth's parents. The social worker must use the FRS Family Assessment to document the assessment.

CHINS placement is temporary out-of-home care designed to provide the family and the youth the opportunity to resolve conflict in those instances where temporarily separation is in the best interests of the youth and the family. Parents and youth may self-refer to a CRC or Hope Center.

In accordance with RCW 13.32A.170, the person filing the petition must show that the person has tried to work out the conflict, that all reasonable alternatives have been explored, and that it is best for the youth to live outside the home while the family continues to work toward resolution of the conflict. If the court approves the out-of-home placement, the youth will normally live with a relative or in a licensed foster home.

Pre-Passport - If a youth is expected to remain in care beyond 30 days, the youth must be screened for needs using the standardized instruments.

## **3650. At-Risk Youth (ARY) Petition**

The ARY petition has provisions that allow the court to order the youth home or into a placement of the parent's choosing and at the parent's expense. See the CA Case Services Policy Manual, Appendix A, and section 5540, for policy considerations.

An At-Risk Youth petition allows custodial parents to ask for a juvenile court's help in keeping their adolescent at home and setting reasonable conditions that the youth must follow, such as going to school, following family rules, and/or attending counseling sessions. If the youth disobeys a court order, the parents may file a motion and the youth may be held in contempt of court and placed in a detention facility for up to seven days.

Parents requesting an ARY petition keep legal custody of the youth. Parents do not have to pay for the FRS assessment and counseling but may have to pay for other services. Parents must complete a family assessment with the local CA office prior to filing the ARY petition.

Social workers must attempt to connect persons inquiring about ARY with FRS or other appropriate service.

The assigned CA social worker must complete a family assessment in accordance with RCW 13.32A.150 before the court may accept the filing of an ARY petition by the youth or the youth's parents. The social worker must use the FRS Family Assessment to document the assessment.

## **3700. CASE RESOLUTION/CLOSURE**

1. 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.
2. Specific outcomes may include:
  1. Youth and family received FRS counseling, and the youth remains at home. Case is closed.
  2. 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.
  3. 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.
  4. Youth and family chose not to participate in further FRS service. Case is closed.
  5. 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.
  6. Family was referred to community services, and the case was closed.

## **3710. Inactive Status**



1. Case Closure: Cases where services have ended per section 3800 but cannot be closed until paperwork and other documentation is completed should be designated as “Services Inactive/Paperwork Pending (S) program assignment for social worker or supervisor”.
2. The purpose of this worker assignment is to be able to track the workload involved in follow-up paperwork (Operations Manual 152022 (F)(4)).
3. The social worker must properly complete all forms and narrative recordings within 90 days of a decision to terminate services and close a case. The supervisor must review both CAMIS and the folder for accuracy and completeness and document the review in the CAMIS SER before closure or transfer to another service.

## **4000. CHILD WELFARE SERVICES**

### **41211. Safety of Newborn Children Act**

#### **Procedure**

1. CA staff must accept an intake of a newborn transferred (abandoned) under the Safety of Newborn Children Act. [See 2200. Intake](#)
2. **CA CFWS Responsibilities:**
  1. CFWS Supervisor assigns intake to a CFWS caseworker
  2. CFWS caseworker:
    1. Has face-to-face contact with the newborn and gathers available information from hospital and other caregivers.
    2. Locates and places the newborn in emergency out-of-home, when able to be released from the hospital.
    3. Verifies CA custody through a law enforcement transfer of custody.
    4. Drafts and files a dependency petition.
    5. Completes the child information/placement referral form ([DSHS 15-300](#)) based on available information and provides information to the caregiver/foster parent.
    6. Schedules shared planning meeting to identify permanent plan and placement.
    7. Consults with supervisor as necessary.

### **4122. Transfer of Open CPS or FRS Cases**

See section 4132

### **4132. Cases Transferring from CPS and FRS**

#### **Purpose and Scope**

This section provides guidelines for CA staff for the transfer of client records between Child Protective Services (CPS) or Family Reconciliation Services (FRS) and Child Welfare Services (CWS) within an office following out-of-home placement or establishment of an in-home dependency by court action.

## **Policy and Procedure**

1. Regional Administrator shall establish procedures for the transfer of CPS and FRS cases and files to CWS consistent with the CA Operations Manual, chapter 15000, section 15202 and this section.
2. In Those offices where the Regional Administrator has determined that a single worker or unit will carry a case from intake or case assessment through case resolution (i. e., from CPS through CWS), the Regional Administrator shall ensure that the assigned worker(s) has received CA Academy training in each program “track” within a reasonable period following assignment to multiple programs.
3. For all cases being transferred from CPS, the assigned CWS social worker shall review and provide input on proposed dispositional plans, to the CPS social worker, prior to their submission to court. If the CPS and CWS social workers cannot come to agreement, supervisory review will be required.
4. Supervisors from the sending unit must ensure that cases include all relevant information regarding the child(ren) prior to case transfer. Supervisors in the receiving unit must ensure that the newly assigned CWS worker review the case to become familiar with the presenting issues for placement.

# **4201. Emergency Planning for Birth Parents and Legal Guardians**

## **Purpose**

To store current birth parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s) name, address and phone number and emergency contact information for all children in out-of-home care, in case of a disaster or emergency.

## **Policy**

1. The assigned Social Worker is responsible for ensuring birth parent(s) and/or legal guardians of children placed in out-of-home care have the following information documented in the information management system:
  1. Emergency Contact Name; Recommend One In-State and One Out-of-State Contact
  2. Current Address for Birth Parent/Legal Guardian and Emergency Contact Person(s)
  3. Current Phone Number(s) for Birth Parent/Legal Guardian and Emergency Contact Person(s) (As applicable)

2. The social worker is responsible for reviewing and updating this information as change occurs and at a minimum annually.

## 4211. Notification to Foreign Consulates

### Purpose

Ensure children or parents who are citizens of another country are connected to the appropriate consulate. Provide staff practice guidance about how and when to contact a foreign consul for a dependent child placed in out of home care.

### Laws

[Vienna Convention on Consular Notification - Article 37](#)

### Policy

1. The citizenship or immigration status must be assessed for each parent and child when the child is placed in out-of-home care.
2. When CA obtains legal custody of a child who is a foreign national, federal treaty obligations require that the foreign consulate be given notice.
3. Limited English Proficient (LEP) clients must have access to interpreters and culturally relevant services from certified or authorized contracted translators as listed in the provisions of *Access to Services for Clients who are Limited English Proficient (LEP)* Administrative Policy No. 7.21

### Procedures

1. Determine and document each parent and child's citizenship at the time a child is placed in care by asking:
  1. Are you a US citizen? Are you a citizen of another country? If, yes what country?
  2. The child or parent: if the if child is a US citizen? Is the child a citizen of another country? If, yes what country?
2. Notify the foreign consulate by faxing the [Notice to Foreign Consulate of Child Protection Proceedings DSHS 15-402](#) of the child's or parent(s) home country as soon as citizenship is known when CA obtains legal custody of a child. Notification must be made as soon as possible but no later than 30 days. (*Notifications to consulates are preferably made by fax but may also be made by telephone or email*).

**Note:** The address of the nearest consular office for a foreign country can be found in a publication entitled [Foreign Consular Offices in the United States](#).

3. Coordinate if the consulate contacts CA to:

1. Obtain a signed release from the parent(s) to share information with the consulate; and
2. Provider identified services with the family.
4. Document in FamLink any:
  1. Foreign citizenship on the person Management page.
  2. Notification to a consulate by uploading the [Notice to Foreign Consulate of Child Protection Proceedings DSHS 15-402](#) form into FamLink.

## Cultural Considerations

### Family Centered Approach:

The way CA staff engages the family (or fails to engage the family) can directly affect the willingness of the family to work with other members of the department. The level of trust and integrity established between the agency and the family often has a direct relationship on the child being able to remain/reunify with his/her family. Everyone who meets the family needs to build positive relationships.

For example:

**The definition of family varies from group to group.** While the dominant culture has focused on the nuclear family, African Americans define family as a wide network of extended family, non-blood kin and community. Native American Indian families traditionally include at least three generations and multiple parental functions delegated among aunts and uncles, as well as grandparents and cousins. Different cultural groups also vary in their traditional practices and views of adoption.

Determine if there are **cultural considerations** that need to be addressed as part of the planning process, for example, obtaining information about protocols, such as, how to approach a family, use of a cultural elder, matriarch or patriarch or the need for a culturally appropriate support person.

## Forms and Tools

[Consent to release Information DSHS 14-012](#)

[Notice to Foreign Consulate of Child Protection Proceedings DSHS 15-402](#)

[Foreign Consular Offices in the United States](#)

TIPS on Mexican Consulate Services

## Resources

[Foreign Consular Offices in the United States](#)

Suggested Practice Tips When a child is a citizen of a foreign country, the best practice is to give the consul notice. In addition to satisfying the legal requirement, contact with the consul may

facilitate locating family members or other resources in a foreign country

## **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

### **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 that 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 FVS social worker's initial assessment includes:

1. For youth missing from care that are referred by overnight shelters the social worker must:
  1. Notify Law Enforcement of youth's whereabouts per [Practice and Procedures Guide 4550 Children Missing from Care](#)
  2. Notify the youth's parents that a report has been received and the youth is currently safe and off the streets within 24 hours,
  3. Inform parents of services designed to resolve the conflict and accomplish reunification of the family.
  4. Make contact by telephone or other reasonable means.

2. For cases involving sexually exploited youth as defined in Appendix A, the FRS social worker must refer the youth and family to available services through the Office of Crime Victims Advocacy. The FRS social worker must explore filing a CHINS petition if applicable.
3. Identification of family needs and strengths.
4. Determining who is or may be legally responsible for the child, including presumed and alleged fathers.
5. Clarifying the presenting problems and resolutions expected.
6. Obtaining the family and child's own description of the situation and family's recommendations for how to solve the problem.
7. 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 (TANF, public housing, Supplemental Security Income [SSI], Social Security, Veterans Administration benefits), and family mobility.
8. When the social worker or CHET Screening Specialist identifies a child birth to three years old with a concern about the child's developmental delays, a referral will be made to a Lead Family Resources Coordinator with the Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT).
  1. Referrals are made by contacting the local ESIT Lead Family Resource Coordinator or through the ESIT web site.
  2. The referral must also be discussed with the child's parents/caregivers. The parents/caregivers should also be informed that services from ESIT are free. This service is required for children in out-of-home placement.
  3. The referral must be made no more than two working days after a concern(s) has been identified. The family may request that the referral timeline be extended beyond two days. This request must be documented.
  4. At the time of the pre passport staffing, or earlier if appropriate, the assigned social worker should be notified that a referral was made on behalf of the child. Document this in the pre passport Action Plan under the Developmental Domain for the child.
9. Reviewing available case records, previous service/placement history, and response to previous services.
10. Making collateral contacts necessary to complete assessment.
11. Consultation with supervisor as needed.
12. Determine Indian child status.
13. The social worker shall determine ethnic status of family members, complete the Indian Identity Request Form, DSHS 09-761, 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.

## **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**

## **4252. Assessing for Reasonable Efforts**

The social worker shall assess if safety threats exist and then complete the Safety Plan Analysis to determine if and in-home or out-of home safety plan will manage and control all identified safety threats. The social worker shall not place any child unless the Safety Plan Analysis indicates the identified safety threats cannot be managed and controlled with an in home safety plan.

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

1. 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.
  1. DCFS is required to make a referral to the Division of Child Support (DCS) whenever a child is placed in out of home care for more than 72 hours.
  2. CA's electronic case management system will automatically send a referral to DCS once the child is placed for 72 hours or more. The sent referral initiates the process for establishment and collection of support from the child's parents to reimburse DCFS for foster care expenditures.
  3. In certain cases there may be Good Cause for not pursuing collection and for those situations DCS will not collect support to reimburse the FC expenditures.
  4. Basis for a good cause determination as defined in CA's WAC 388-25. For a more complete description see 91400 in the CA Operations Manual.
2. 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.
3. DCFS social workers shall not place children in the types of situations outlined below, as they relate to CFWS. 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. Youth 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.
  3. Youth 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. Youth for whom the primary placement issue is community protection, including sexual predators not covered by the Sexually Aggressive Youth (SAY) statute.
  5. Youth 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. Youth who are mentally ill and a danger to themselves or others as defined by a mental health professional.
4. Admission of Children to Nursing Facilities
1. Upon receiving a referral of a child for admission to a nursing facility, the Home and Community Services (HCS) division, Aging and Adult Services Administration (AASA), will confirm the involvement of the child with DCFS. If the child is not currently involved with DCFS, HCS will refer the child to DCFS or DDD if that is appropriate.
  2. DCFS will decline acceptance of the referral of the child if the child does not meet the service definitions of DCFS' programs.
  3. If the child is or becomes a client of DCFS and the DCFS social worker, in consultation with the worker's supervisor, determines that nursing facility admission is the most appropriate service for the child, the social worker will request that HCS staff:
    1. Attend any multi-disciplinary team staffings held; and
    2. Complete, or assist with the completion of, the HCS Comprehensive Assessment and, if appropriate, authorize nursing facility care.
  4. If the child to be placed is a DCFS client, DCFS will be expected to cover the cost of care through its programs in most instances. The DCFS social worker should consult with HCS and DDD staff, as appropriate, to identify other



- suitable resources to cover the cost of care. In addition, the social worker must establish the child's eligibility for and authorize Title XIX Medicaid.
5. DCFS will not place the child in any facility without a court order or a voluntary placement agreement per [4307 Voluntary Placement Agreement \(VPA\) policy](#).
  6. If the child is a DCFS client, the assigned DCFS social worker retains case management responsibility, including locating the appropriate nursing facility, discharge planning, and other activities. The DCFS social worker may request assistance of HCS staff in locating an appropriate nursing facility for the child.
5. 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.
    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.
    6. The reasonable efforts to place siblings in the same foster home, relative caregiver, other suitable person or adoptive home.
    7. Reasons why siblings are unable to be placed together including if placement is contrary to the safety and well-being of any of the siblings.
    8. Compliance with RCW 13.34.260 regarding parental preferences for placement of their children. RCW 74.13.065

## 4254. Parent, Child, and Sibling Visits

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:** July 26, 2008

**Revised Date:** July 1, 2016

**Sunset Review:** June 30, 2020

### **Purpose**

Visits are vital in maintaining family connections and can improve the safety, permanency, and well-being of children in out-of-home care. Visits should be consistent and frequent with the proper level of supervision to ensure child safety. The visitation plan should be developed timely and include visits in the least restrictive setting based on risk factors, existing danger, safety threats and protective factors.

## Scope

This policy applies to Division of Children and Family Services caseworkers.

## Laws

- [RCW 9.94A.030](#) Definitions
- [RCW 13.34.025](#) Child dependency cases, Coordination of services and Remedial services
- [RCW 13.38.040](#) Definitions
- [RCW 13.34.065](#) Shelter Care Hearing
- [RCW 13.34.130](#) Order of Disposition for a Dependent Child, Alternatives
- [RCW 13.34.136](#) Permanency Plan of Care
- [RCW 13.34.200](#) Order Terminating Parent and Child Relationship

## Policy

### 1. Parent/Child Visits

1. Visits between the parent and child must be face-to-face in-person unless there are extenuating circumstances related to child safety, weather, illness, distance, etc. This requirement includes visits between incarcerated parents and their children.
2. Other forms of approved contact when extenuating circumstances exist or to supplement face-to-face visits include:
  1. Telephone contact.
  2. Electronic contact through video chat, Skype, FaceTime, or email.
3. Efforts must be made to hold an initial visit within 72 hours of the child's initial out-of-home placement and no later than five days from initial out-of-home placement or signing of a Voluntary Placement Agreement (VPA), unless there are documented safety concerns prohibiting the visit.
4. Visits between the parent and child are in the least restrictive setting and unsupervised unless the presence of threats and danger to the child requires the constant presence of an adult to ensure the safety of the child. Decisions about whether visits are unsupervised, monitored or supervised are based on:
  1. Risk factors
  2. Present danger
  3. Safety threats
  4. Protective factors demonstrated by the parent
5. Visits **must be supervised** when the following conditions exist and the physical, psychological or emotional safety of the child requires the constant presence of an adult who can safely supervise the visit:
  1. The allegations of abuse or neglect of the child resulted in injuries requiring medical treatment, evaluation, or assessment. This includes physical abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect.
  2. The abuse appears to be deliberate or premeditated.
  3. The allegations of abuse included multiple victims.

4. The parent can provide no plausible explanation for his or her child's injury.
  5. The child is allegedly sexually abused.
  6. The child expresses or demonstrates extreme fear of his or her parent.
  7. The parent's view of his or her child is bizarre or unusual to the degree that what he or she says, about or to the child, causes emotional or psychological harm. Examples include the parent's belief that the child is possessed or is a threat to the parent.
  8. There is an active law enforcement investigation of the abuse or neglect.
  9. The parent is unable to provide the basic care required for a child based on the child's development, special need or disability.
  10. The parent may flee with the child.
6. Visit Plans will be developed in consultation with the parent, youth (if age 14 and older) and out-of-home caregiver, CASA or GAL and child's attorney (if appointed), Tribal worker (as applicable) and other supports identified by the parent.
1. Visit Plans must be in writing and provided to the parent and dependency court and if supervised or monitored, clearly state the reason for the level of supervision.
    1. An initial visit plan must be developed at the first Family Team Decision Making meeting (FTDM), when placement is being considered or a child is in a court-ordered placement (licensed or unlicensed). The visit plan will be effective for up to 60 days from the child's initial placement.
    2. The initial visit plan will be reviewed at the shared planning meeting held after shelter care and no later than 30 days prior to the scheduled fact finding hearing per [1710.Shared Planning policy](#).
    3. Visit plans must be developed at the time a VPA is signed when the child is placed pursuant to a VPA.
  2. On-going reassessment of risk and safety and review of visit plans will occur until the child returns home or permanency is achieved.
    1. Visit plans will be reviewed at all shared planning meetings and monthly supervisory case reviews.
    2. If the court orders a psychosexual evaluation for a parent and the visit plan is reassessed because of the evaluation, the court must approve the visit plan as it relates to duration, level of supervision and location of visits.
    3. Concerted efforts must be made to consult with law enforcement before recommending changes to parent/child or sibling visits when a parent or sibling has been identified as a suspect in an active criminal investigation for a violent crime that may impact child safety in relation to visits.
    4. Consult with the Assistant Attorney General (AAG) before disseminating any information received from law enforcement about the parent or sibling suspect or investigation.

5. The caseworker will observe at least one visit per quarter. The visit observation meets that month's health and safety visit with the child and parent if other requirements of a health and safety visit are met. Private conversations with the child may occur before or after the visit.
  6. All participants in the visit must be notified when a visit must be rescheduled.
  7. Visits can only be limited or terminated to protect the child's safety, health or well-being. Visits **cannot** be:
    1. Limited as a sanction for the parent's lack of compliance with dependency court orders.
    2. Denied based on the parent's incarceration.
  8. Visits will be discontinued if parental rights are terminated or relinquished.
2. **Sibling visits**
1. Children placed apart from their siblings will have two or more monthly face-to-face visits or contacts, unless there is an approved exception.
  2. Additional approved forms of sibling contact are encouraged to support and maintain sibling relationships. Approved forms of contact include:
    1. Telephone contact.
    2. Electronic contact through video chat (Skype), FaceTime, or email.
  3. On-going visitation is encouraged to promote and maintain the continuity of sibling relationships that existed prior to placement. This includes siblings who:
    1. Remained in the home at the time of removal;
    2. Aged out of foster care;
    3. Returned home;
    4. Placed with a non-custodial parent; and
    5. Lived part-time in the home at the time of the sibling's removal.
  4. Sibling contact during a parent/child visit meets the requirement for a sibling visit.
  5. Shared planning meetings or court events do not meet the requirement for a sibling visit.
  6. The first sibling visit must occur as soon as possible after placement.
  7. Sibling visits will continue after a parent's rights have been terminated or relinquished unless an approved exception applies.
  8. Sibling visits **cannot** be limited or used as a sanction for a child's behavior or as an incentive to change a child's behavior.
  9. Visit plans will be developed within 14 calendar days and in consultation with the out-of-home caregiver and child (when developmentally appropriate), unless an approved exception applies.

## **Procedures**

### **1. Parent/Child Visit Plan**

#### **The assigned caseworker will:**

1. Determine whether visits will be unsupervised, monitored, or supervised.
  1. Types of visits include:

1. **Unsupervised** visits require the parent to be the primary caregiver and able to demonstrate the willingness and ability to safely care for the child for the duration of the visit and protect the child from any safety threats.
  2. **Monitored** visits require the parent to be the primary caregiver during the visit, while an approved adult is available to periodically observe and intervene if needed. The parent must demonstrate the willingness and ability to manage any safety threats and safely care for the child during the visit.
  3. **Supervised** visits require an approved adult to maintain line of sight and sound supervision and intervene if needed.
  4. For monitored or supervised visits, the parent's natural supports can act as monitors or supervisors before considering paid providers or caseworkers.
2. Develop a written visit plan that includes the level of supervision, location, frequency, duration, transportation, and any other necessary details.
    1. Location of visits must be:
      1. In the least restrictive setting with consideration given to the family's culture.
      2. In the child's community whenever possible.
      3. In an age appropriate setting that supports safety of the child.
      4. At the CA office when needed to protect the child's safety or when support before, during and/or after visits is needed.
  3. Determine who may participate or supervise visits by completing the following:
    1. A Background Check Central Unit (BCCU) background check request and FamLink check for any adult visit participants who will have unsupervised access to children, including family supports who are available to monitor, supervise or transport the child for visits, per the Operations Manual [5513. BCCU Background Check](#) and [5515. FamLink Records Check for Allegations of Abuse or Neglect](#) policies.
    2. CA supervisor must provide approval before allowing contact between the child and a parent who is a perpetrator in serious physical and/or sexual abuse cases.
  4. Verify all non-contracted persons supervising or monitoring visits, and/or transporting children meet the following criteria:
    1. Approved BCCU background check and FamLink check per Operations Manual [5513. BCCU Background Check](#) and [5515. FamLink Records Check for Allegations of Abuse or Neglect](#) policies.
    2. Valid driver's license if transporting. The transportation vehicle must be registered, insured and equipped with approved child restraints (car seat, lap and shoulder belts).
    3. Willing and able to intervene to keep the child safe.
    4. Able to prioritize the safety and well-being of the child.
    5. Willing and able to enforce visit rules, court orders, limitations and activities.
    6. Maintain confidentiality.

7. Report observations during visits and transports to the caseworker (e.g. behaviors, interactions, and concerns).
5. Review visit plans at all shared planning meetings and monthly supervisory case reviews and assess the following:
  1. Changes needed in the level of supervision based on risk factors or safety threats and safety planning.
  2. Changes in permanency plan or legal status.
  3. Changes in the well-being of the child.
  4. Progress and compliance with services and any impacts on risk factors or safety threats.
  5. Changes to the visit plan to increase the number of visits and move to unsupervised (if not already occurring) within 90 days of a proposed trial return home.
  6. Recommendations to limit or terminate visits when one or more of the following conditions occur:
    1. Therapist recommends decreasing or suspending visits due to harm to the child.
    2. The child is at risk of physical or emotional harm due to the visits.
    3. The child's educational progress is negatively impacted by the duration and frequency of visits during school hours.
    4. The supervisor/monitor of the visits is threatened.
    5. The parent appears to be under the influence of substances. The visit may be stopped immediately but may resume after review of the visit plan.
6. Prior to changing a visit plan:
  1. Review recommended changes with the parent, youth (if age 14 and older), caregiver and supervisor.
  2. Inform the AAG of recommended changes.
  3. Inform the court of any changes in the visit plan in dependency cases.
    1. A court hearing is required prior to changing the visit plan unless the child's safety is jeopardized or the court order allows changes in visits without a hearing.
    2. If a court has ordered visits to occur and the visit will not occur as ordered, contact the AAG immediately to determine if an emergency hearing is needed.
7. Create a visit referral for all supervised and monitored visits (paid or unpaid) in FamLink.
8. Review the visit referral every six months. If supervised or monitored visits are continuing, update the referral in FamLink and resubmit the reauthorization for supervisor approval.
  1. The referral for supervised or monitored visits must include an explanation of:
    1. Why visits cannot be unsupervised.
    2. Why visits are not being supervised by a non-contracted provider, if using a paid provider.

3. Any continued risk factors or safety threats to the child.
  2. All initial requests must be approved in FamLink by the supervisor.
  3. All reauthorizations must be reviewed by the supervisor and forwarded to the Area Administrator (AA) for approval every six months.
  4. The AA must review and approve in FamLink requests for reauthorizations of supervised or monitored visits every six months.
9. Document in FamLink:
1. Efforts made to consult with law enforcement regarding changes to parent/child or sibling visits when a parent or sibling has been identified as a suspect in an active criminal investigation for a violent crime that may impact child safety in relation to visits.
  2. Consultation with the AAG prior to the dissemination of any information about the parent or sibling suspect shared by law enforcement.
  3. A visit plan for each child, including reasons for level of supervision: unsupervised, monitored or supervised.
  4. All parent-child visits in a case note and include the following:
    1. Date, time and location of visit/contact
    2. Participants in the visit/contact
    3. Form of contact (face-to-face in-person, Skype, FaceTime or email)
    4. Use the following types:
      1. Visit-Unsupervised
      2. Visit-Monitored
      3. Visit-Supervised
      4. Visit-Did not occur. No Show
      5. Visit- Cancelled-No Make Up Required
  5. When a parent-child visit includes a sibling, use both parent and sibling visit case note types to record the visit.
  6. Upload reports from contractors or approved natural supports into File Upload.

## 2. Sibling Visits

### **The assigned caseworker will:**

1. Develop a written visit plan that includes the level of supervision, location, frequency, duration, transportation, and any other necessary details.
2. Determine the level of supervision and necessity for sibling visits based on:
  1. Age of the children.
  2. Children's perspective and input for youth 14 and over.
  3. Best interests of the children, including safety, health, and well-being.
3. Review the visit plan with case participants when there is:
  1. An increase or decrease in safety threats.
  2. A change in circumstances which causes an approved exception to apply. Obtain supervisor approval when an exception applies.
  3. A change in circumstances when the reason for the exception no longer exists.
  4. A change in the well-being of the child.

4. Review the visit plan and any recommended changes:
  1. During all shared planning meetings and monthly supervisory case reviews.
  2. During monthly health and safety and caregiver visits.
5. Document in FamLink:
  1. A visit plan for each child.
  2. All sibling visits/contacts in a case note including the following:
    1. Date, time, and location of visit/contact.
    2. Participants in the visit/contact.
    3. Type of contact (in-person visit, phone call, Skype, FaceTime or email).
  3. Use the following case note type:
    1. Visit- with siblings
    2. Use both parent and sibling visit case note type when a visit includes the child's parent and sibling.
  4. Upload reports from contractors and approved natural supports into File Upload.
3. **Exceptions for Sibling Visits**
  1. When sibling visits are not occurring, the approved exception or reason must be documented and approved by the assigned caseworker's supervisor. Approved exceptions are:
    1. A court order prevents or limits visits or contacts.
    2. CA determines visits or contacts are contrary to the child's health, safety or welfare.
    3. CA determines visits or contacts will hinder reunification efforts.
    4. Child and/or sibling are developmentally able to determine his/her needs for sibling contact and request that contact occur less than two times per month, or not at all.
    5. Parent of a non-dependent sibling objects to or wishes to limit visits or contacts with the dependent sibling.
    6. The facility where the child or sibling resides prohibits/limits visits or contacts with siblings (i.e., during an intake period at an in-patient facilities).
    7. Child is on the run from his/her placement for a majority of the calendar month.
    8. Child is not complying with visitation arrangements.
  2. Document for all exceptions or other reasons siblings are not having visits or contacts in the Sibling/Incarcerated Parent Visit Details tab on the Visit Plan/Referral page and obtain supervisor approval in FamLink.

## **Forms**

[Visit Plan DSHS 15-209C](#)

[Visit Referral form DSHS 15-363](#)



[Provider Notification of Visit/Transport Schedule Initial Intake Screening Report DSHS 15-363B](#)

[Visit Report: Parent-Child Visit DSHS 15-448](#)

[Missed and No Show Report: Parent-Child Visit DSHS 15-451](#)

[Sibling Visit Report DSHS 15-452](#)

[Parent-Child Visit \(PCV\) Incident Report DSHS 15-454](#)

[Monitoring Review Report – On-Site Visit DSHS 15-462](#)

[Child Specific Caregiver Notification DSHS 15-450](#)

## **Resources**

Social Worker Guide to Parent-Child-Sibling Visits (available on CA intranet)

Child Safety Framework (available of the CA intranet)

Present Danger Guide (available of the CA intranet)

Protective Action Guide (available of the CA intranet)

Safety Threats Guide (available of the CA intranet)

Safety Threshold Guide (available of the CA intranet)

Safety Plan Analysis Guide (available of the CA intranet)

# **4260. Considerations For Placement Choice**

## **4261. Out-of-Home Placement Priorities**

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:** October 31, 2010

**Revised Date:** October 31, 2016

**Policy Review:** October 31, 2020

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## Purpose

To provide a safe, stable and least restrictive placement in close proximity to the family home for children in out-of-home care.

## Scope

This policy applies to Division of Children and Family Services staff.

## Laws

[RCW 13.34.030](#) Definitions

[RCW 13.38.040](#) Definitions

[RCW 13.34.130](#) Order of disposition for a dependent child and placement with relatives, foster family home, group care facility or other suitable person, placement of and Indian child in out-of-home care, and contact with siblings

[RCW 13.38.180](#) Placement preferences

[RCW 13.34.200](#) Order terminating parent and child relationship

[RCW 13.34.260](#) Foster home placement, parental preferences and foster parent contact with birth parents encouraged

[RCW 74.14A.020](#) Services for emotionally disturbed and mentally ill children, potentially dependent children and families in conflict

[RCW 74.15.020](#) Definitions

[PL 113-183](#) Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act

[42 USC 671a](#) State plan for foster care and adoption assistance

## Policy

1. Placement in out-of-home care:
  1. The following placement priority order will be used:
    1. Parent's placement preference, unless good cause is indicated to not use that placement.
    2. Child's [relative](#) or tribe according to the [4527 Relative Placement](#) policy, [RCW 74.15.020](#) and [RCW 13.38.180](#). Relatives include

individuals who are related by blood, marriage (i.e. step-family members), and adoption.

3. Suitable person. A suitable person is appropriate under [RCW 13.34.130\(1\)\(b\)\(ii\)\(B\)](#) if the child or family has a pre-existing relationship with the suitable person and that person has completed all required criminal history background checks and appears suitable and competent to care for the child.
  4. Previous caregiver if a child **returns** to out-of-home care and:
    1. The caregiver is available, willing and able to meet the child's needs.
    2. Placement with that caregiver is in the best interest of the child.
  5. Licensed out-of-home setting, which includes:
    1. Family foster home
    2. Group care facilities
2. The placement will be:
1. In the least restrictive setting available;
  2. In close proximity to the family home and school the child was attending prior out-of-home removal; and
  3. Consistent with the child's best interest, including [special needs](#), safety, permanency and well-being.
2. All siblings must be placed together whenever possible, unless an exception applies. Siblings are defined in [RCW 13.34.030](#).
  3. If the child is Native American, the caseworker must follow the placement preference outlined in [RCW 13.38.180](#). The child's tribe(s) if known, must be contacted as soon as possible to request placement preference.
  4. Placements with unlicensed relatives and suitable persons must meet the requirements in the [45274 Placement with Unlicensed or Suitable Persons policy](#).
  5. A [Family Team Decision Making meeting](#) will be conducted in accordance with [1710 Shared Planning](#) policy when placement is being considered, after a child has been placed in out-of-home care or a change in placement occurs to discuss placement resources and options.

## Procedures

1. Every effort will be made to place siblings together. Any decision to separate siblings initially, during, or after placement requires approval by the caseworker's supervisor and area administrator. Siblings may be placed separately under the following exceptions which must be approved and documented in FamLink:
  1. As a result of an admission of a sibling into detention, a psychiatric hospital or a residential treatment setting to meet the unique and individual needs of one of the siblings;
  2. A sibling becomes a significant safety threat to the safety of another sibling or cannot be controlled if the siblings are placed together;
  3. A sibling becomes a significant threat to the safety of another person in the placement, and a risk to that person's safety cannot be controlled if the sibling remains in the placement. If movement of the entire sibling group is determined

not to be in their overall best interest, the sibling presenting the threat will be moved;

4. A sibling with a physical, emotional or mental condition requires specialized services in order to accomplish specific therapeutic goals. The sibling may be placed apart from other siblings for the length of time necessary to meet the need requiring separate placement;
  5. An abusive relationship between siblings exists where therapy, with a safety plan in place, is not effective or not the appropriate intervention;
  6. To permit placement with relatives who live near the home of a sibling;
  7. A court order prohibits the Department from placing siblings together; or
  8. Other extraordinary circumstances that are documented and approved by the assigned supervisor and Area Administrator under these procedures.
2. Documentation for Sibling Placement Exceptions
    1. The caseworker will:
      1. Document exceptions or other reasons siblings are being placed apart as it applies to each child on the Siblings/Incarcerated Parent tab in the FamLink Visit Page.
      2. Obtain supervisor and area administrator approval in FamLink.

## Forms

[Visit Plan DSHS 15-209C](#)

## 4262. Routine and Special Needs

1. The social worker considers and documents the child's routine and special needs, including cultural, educational, medical, religious, psychological, and safety factors. The placement provider need not be of the same ethnic background as the child in order to meet the ethnic or cultural needs of the child. Unless a compelling reason is identified, the social worker will not match children on the basis of race to foster or adoptive families, except as provided in the Indian Child Welfare Act.
2. 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 social worker always considers the child's need for stability in relationships when choosing a placement.

## 4264. Native American Children

Children's Administration (CA) caseworkers must follow Indian Child Welfare (ICW) policies and procedures when placing an Indian child.

1. Upon initial acceptance of a case for service, the caseworker must seek to discover and document whether the involved child is of Indian ancestry. The caseworker must do this in every case.

2. Each time the case is transferred from one worker or program to another, the caseworker receiving the case must confirm that verification of Indian ancestry has previously been completed.

## **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.

## **4266. Out-of-State Placements**

### **Purpose and Scope**

1. This section establishes guidelines for CA staff to follow when considering placement, usually in a treatment setting, of a child in an out-of-home care setting in another state. Such placements include, but are not necessarily limited to, Behavior Rehabilitation Services/Group Care, Treatment Foster Care, Child in Needs of Services (CHINS) placements, and mental health treatment. They typically do not include relative placements.
2. While providing directions regarding such placements, CA reaffirms its commitment to meeting needs of children through resources that are geographically close to their families and that are the least restrictive, most home-like setting, consistent with the individual needs of the child.
3. This procedure applies to placements from this state to another state as well as to placements of children into specialized out-of-state facilities from out-of-state foster care or relative placements when the department no longer considers the home from which the child has been removed to be the child's permanent placement.

### **Procedure**

1. Placements in out-of-state programs with which CA has current contracts in the states of Idaho and Oregon require only approval of the Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Region which utilizes the contract with the particular program and the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) program manager. See paragraph c. vi. below. Current programs meeting this criterion are Northwest Children's Home, Lewiston, Idaho; Morrison Center, Portland, Oregon; and Janus, Portland, Oregon.
2. CA does not pay educational costs of children, including those placed out-of-state. The school district in which child resides has the responsibility for these educational costs. If the social worker finds the school district reluctant to cover the educational costs, the social worker needs to consult with the worker's supervisor and area manager, as

appropriate, as well as the regional group care coordinator, to develop a plan for obtaining school district support.

1. If the proposed placement is due, in part, to the inability of the educational district of the child's current residence to meet the educational needs of the child, the school district should be involved in the planning for the placement and should agree to pay for the educational costs for the child in another district, including a district in another state.
2. If the child's educational needs are being met in the child's residence school district, the school district is under no obligation to pay for the education of the child in another district. However, as the district may be expending large amounts to meet the child's educational needs, the district may be willing to help support the educational needs of the child in another district. It is the school district's decision to make.
3. The procedure, for any out-of-state placement being considered, is:
  1. The social worker, at the earliest opportunity, must contact the school district in which the child is enrolled and ask for an Individual Education Plan (IEP) conference to discuss the benefits of the possible placement. If the child is not in special education and the placement is not imminent, the social worker must ask that the child be made a "focus of concern," a federal term related to accessing federal special education dollars.
  2. The social worker must invite the school district to participate in the placement planning process.
  3. In situations where there is an additional charge for educational services within the out-of-state facility, school districts have the ability to write a contract directly with the facility for these services. The district can then apply for federal funding by making the child a "focus of concern."
3. For children to be placed in non-currently contracted out-of-state programs, CA staff must meet the following requirements.
  1. The social worker must consult with the regional group care coordinator to discuss the child's needs and options to meet those needs.
  2. The child's social worker must explore all reasonably available and appropriate placement options within this state that may be reasonably expected to meet the child's special needs. CA discourages out-of-state placement of children unless the child's needs can clearly be met only in the out-of-state placement. The social worker must consult with and advise the Juvenile Court and the child's guardian ad litem on the need for out-of-state placement, the proposed placement, and the plan for the child. In addition, the social worker must complete and document in the child's case file the following steps:
    1. Use of a team process to identify child and family needs, including names of participants and dates of meetings or consultations;
    2. Development of a plan to meet identified family and child needs;
    3. Exploration of non-traditional, alternative ways of meeting the child's needs; identification of barriers to these options;
    4. Assessment of relationship of the proposed placement to the child's permanency plan;

5. Preparation of a description of the behavioral goals to be achieved through this placement;
  6. Determination of anticipated length of stay in out-of-state placement; and
  7. Development of a preliminary discharge plan which includes a description of how supports will be developed so that the child can be returned to the community quickly and which relates to barriers previously identified.
3. The regional group care coordinator must consult with the CA Residential Care Program Manager to explore all options that may be available within the state before proceeding to place the child out-of-state.
    1. This consultation must occur prior to submission of the written request described in subparagraph d below to the Regional Administrator for the out-of-state placement.
    2. The program manager can provide technical assistance or facilitation of meetings as requested and explore with the group care coordinator goals of the out-of-state placement and discharge planning.
  4. The child's social worker must document, in writing using an Exception to Policy (ETP) form, the need for out-of-state placement, efforts to locate a suitable in-state placement, how the placement will further the permanent plan, a description of the specific facilities considered, the reasons for their rejection, the planned length of out-of-state placement, and the plan for return of the child to this state.
  5. The Regional Administrator or designee must sign the ETP form to approve the placement, and the social worker files the signed form in the child's record.
  6. For all out-of-state placements, CA staff must comply with the requirements of the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) and the CA Practices and Procedures Guide, chapter 4000, section 4533, Rehabilitative Treatment Services. For those placements in Oregon and Idaho facilities with which CA has contracts, the social worker needs only to complete the CAMIS/ICPC page or an Interstate Compact Placement Request, DSHS 15-092, and fax it to the headquarters ICPC program manager at (360) 902-7903 for ICPC approval.
  7. The Regional Administrator or designee may authorize an out-of-state placement only in a facility within 100 miles of the home from which the child is being placed, with the exception of a currently contracted program. The CA Assistant Secretary, or designee, must approve any out-of-state placement where the placement treatment facility is located more than 100 miles from the child's home and is not a currently contracted facility or program.
  8. The Regional Administrator, or designee, as applicable, may approve out-of-state placement of a child only when:
    1. The placement is consistent with the child's permanent plan;
    2. Necessary services to meet the child's special needs are unavailable within this state;
    3. Appropriate services are offered in closest proximity to the family resource;

4. There is a plan to return the child to this state within a limited period of time, unless the plan is to achieve proximity to the child's permanent planning family.
  5. Placement is in a facility licensed in accordance with the rules of the state in which the facility operates; and
  6. The child placed under a dependency or CHINS order is not placed in an out-of-state locked facility.
9. The assigned CA social worker does not require Regional Administrator approval for placements of children into specialized out-of-state facilities from out-of-state foster care or relative placements when the department continues to consider the home from which the child has been removed to be the child's permanent placement.
10. When the state of Washington pays for services, the regional contracts coordinator or other regional staff assigned by the Regional Administrator must negotiate a written child-specific purchase of service agreement between the department and the facility. This agreement must conform to form, content, and approval required by the CA Division of Management Services.

## **4267. Removal Of Children From Licensed Care**

### **Purpose**

The purpose is to provide guidelines for Children's Administration (CA) Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and Division of Licensed Resources (DLR) staff involved in the placement and removal of children from licensed or certified care. Such care may be provided by DLR licensed facilities, private child care agencies, and tribal social service agencies. However, CA does not remove children in the custody of tribes or private agency.

### **Policy**

1. DLR has the responsibility to investigate all allegations of child abuse and neglect (CA/N) in DSHS licensed, certified, and state operated care facilities for children. DLR also must ensure the immediate safety of alleged child victims and other children in the home or facility in the course of any investigation. DLR has the responsibility to make licensing decisions.
2. RCW 26.44.056 and RCW 13.34.050 provide that a child may be removed from a biological parent, adoptive parent, or legal guardian when CPS or law enforcement determines that the child would be at risk of imminent harm or danger if left with the parent. Only law enforcement may remove a child from a biological or adoptive parent or legal guardian or custodian without a court order.
3. The standard that must be met before a foster child can be removed from foster care is lower than that for removal from the child's parent or guardian. RCW 74.13.300 states the standard for removal from foster care by providing that removal may occur if the



foster child's safety is in jeopardy. The term "child's safety is in jeopardy" is a lower standard than the imminent harm standard. RCW 74.15.010, the intent section for the licensing statute, clarifies this standard.

4. For children placed through a tribal child placing agency, CA must consult with the tribe's social service program when undertaking the steps for removal of children under this policy. Such actions must be consistent with the requirements of the federal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), 25 U. S. C. 1901, et. seq., and CA Indian Child Welfare policies and procedures. CA may not remove a child in the custody of the tribe.
5. RCW 13.34.236 requires that a dependency guardian meet the minimum requirements to care for children as provided in RCW 74.15.030.

## **Procedures**

1. If the investigating social worker determines that a child is at imminent risk or the child's safety is in jeopardy, CA staff will follow the steps below:
  1. The DLR/CPS supervisor will make a recommendation to the appropriate DCFS supervisor so that DCFS staff can act to protect the children at risk.
  2. When children in CA's care and custody are determine to be unsafe in licensed or unlicensed care, children are removed from that placement.
  3. The two divisions must make every effort to resolve any differences of opinion regarding the assessment of risk.
  4. If DLR and DCFS staff are unable to resolve differences of opinion and DLR/CPS still believes that the child or children are at risk and need to be removed, the DLR/CPS Section Manager makes the final decision regarding initial assessment of risk.
2. DLR/CPS staff must inform the licensed or certified person or agency of the investigation findings. DCFS staff, who are responsible for the child in the placement, must inform the care provider of the need to remove the child, unless DLR staff has agreed, on an individual basis, to inform the provider.
3. DLR and DCFS staff will coordinate and cooperate regarding the removal of the children to ensure that the removal is in accordance with CA policy and procedures. DLR/CPS staff may assist in the transport of children if this is the agreed upon plan with DCFS.
4. If, in the course of a CPS or licensing investigation, OFCL staff determine that DLR will revoke the license and DCFS, child placing agency, or tribal-supervised children in the custody of CA (foster care, guardianship, pre-adopt) are present in the home, DLR and DCFS staff will take the following steps:
  1. The DLR Regional Manager will notify the DCFS Regional Administrator (or designee) and the private agency or tribal social service agency, when applicable. The DLR Regional Manager will convene a staffing to include ALL parties. The focus will be to review the issues and concerns AND to discuss the dual mandates of safety and permanency.
  2. If DCFS, the private agency, or the tribe requests DLR to continue the license of a foster/group care provider after a finding of child abuse/neglect, the continuation must be within the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) guidelines.

1. This provision covers only homes and facilities licensed or certified by CA; it does not include homes or facilities licensed by sovereign tribes.
2. DLR Regional Managers need to consult ASFA guidelines for corrective action plans and continuation of foster care licenses.
3. The DCFS Regional Administrator or the applicable private agency or tribe must initiate a request for a continuation of the foster care license, under a corrective action plan, and the DLR/OFCL Regional Manager must make a decision on the request before DLR takes any adverse licensing action.
4. If DCFS, or the private agency or tribe and DLR still cannot reach agreement, the DCFS Regional Administrator or the designated representative of the private agency or tribe and the Director of DLR must meet to discuss and resolve the situation, taking into consideration both safety and permanency.
5. All removals of children from foster care placements must comply with RCW 74.13.300. The foster parent has the right to request a review of the decision to move the child pursuant to RCW 74.13.045, the department's complaint resolution process.
6. The DCFS Regional Administrator and the Director of DLR must review the situation with the Assistant Secretary before DCFS staff process adoption consents and/or guardianship agreements if a child remains in a facility with founded CA/N or where OFCL believes revocation is indicated.

## **4270. Department of Corrections Confinement Alternatives**

### **Purpose**

CA families applying or participating in the Family and Offender Supervision Alternative Programs (FOSA) and the Community Parenting Alternative (CPA) are supported through case coordination and collaboration with Department of Corrections (DOC).

### **Laws**

[RCW 9.94A - Sentencing Reform Act of 1981](#)

### **Policy**

1. CA will provide DOC with requested case information to support DOC's assessment of parent's eligibility for the FOSA and CPA programs.
2. CA will collaborate with DOC and other programs in case planning on all open shared cases.

### **Procedures**

1. Respond to DOC request within 5 calendar days for CA related information for an offender when:
  - The court is considering FOSA or
  - DOC is considering CPA
2. Provide ongoing case coordination and collaboration with DOC to prevent service duplication for all parents accepted in the FOSA or CPA programs and have an open CA case including:
  - Invite DOC worker to all shared planning meetings.
  - Participate in a minimum of one monthly face to face contact with DOC worker.
  - Participate in safety staffing for DOC Parenting Program with DOC worker and offender to determine services and case coordination.
  - Until the child is placed ensure parent child visiting occurs per 4254 Parent-Child-Sibling Visiting Policy.
3. Consider if an incarcerated parent with an open CA case should be referred to DOC for eligibility determination in FOSA or CPA. Make any referrals through email or phone to CA Headquarters CFWS Program Manager.

## Forms and Tools

- Request for Information - Initial Request Form
- Request for Information - Open Case Request Form

## See Also

- [Practice and Procedure Guide - Chapter 4000 - Section 4301 Shared Planning](#)
- [Practice and Procedure Guide - Chapter 4000 - Section 4254 Parent-Child-Sibling Visiting](#)

## Resources

- DOC Information Request Process Document
- CA-DOC Confinement Alternatives Matrix
- Regional DOC Leads

# 4300. CASE PLANNING

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, chapter 11000.

# 43022. Outside Communication for Children in Out-of-Home Care

## Purpose

Evaluate child safety and support to caregivers when determining outside communication with parents, relatives and other important people to the child in out of home care.

## Laws

[RCW 13.34.136](#)

## Policy

1. Children in out-of-home care must have reasonable access to uncensored communication with parents, relatives, and other people important to the child.
2. Communication restrictions must be based on a pending investigation or an identified child safety issue and be addressed in a court order or service plan.
3. Child safety issues must be addressed prior to allowing the child to participate in any communications with parents, relatives or people important to the child.

## Procedures

1. Notify and collaborate with the child (if age appropriate), child's out-of-home caregiver, parent(s), relative(s) and important people to the child to develop the child's communication plan. Communication may include:
  1. Private telephone calls;
  2. Mail and gifts;
  3. Electronic communication (*E-mail and other electronic social networking avenues such as Facebook, My Space and Twitter*). Access to electronic communication is based on reasonable caregiver or social worker discretion and on electronic device availability.
2. Note: Visitation occurs per [4254. Parent-Child-Sibling Visiting Policy](#)
3. Discuss with caregivers any court orders or service plans that restrict the child's contact with family, relative or important people to the child. Limited or censored communication could include:
  1. Opening and reviewing mail for appropriate child related content.
  2. Opening gifts to determine age appropriateness.
  3. Monitoring of email or phone calls for appropriate child related content.
  4. Determining age appropriate use of social networking sites, including limitations. Note: Allowing children access to electronic communication as described above is based on reasonable caregiver discretion and on electronic device availability.

4. Inform caregivers on social networking websites regarding children in out-of-home care must not include:
  1. Child's name
  2. Identify the child as being a foster child.
  3. Discussion about case specific information about the child or the child's family
5. Inform caregivers if there are safety reasons why unidentified photos may not be posted on the caregiver's social networking site(s).
6. Discuss communication planning with the child and caregiver during monthly visits.
7. Conduct when needed, a Shared Planning Meeting if communication needs to be limited or censored due to safety concerns.
8. Document the child's communication plan and any decisions to limit a child's communication in the electronic case file.

**See Also**

[2440 Service Agreements Policy](#)

[4301 Shared Planning Policy](#)

## **4302A. Educational Services and Planning: Early Childhood Development, K-12 and Post-Secondary**

### **Purpose**

Ongoing educational progress is vital to support early childhood development and school success for all children in the care or custody of Children's Administration (CA).

### **Laws**

[RCW 74.13.550 Child Placement](#)

[RCW 28A.150.510 Transmittal of Education Records to DSHS](#)

[RCW 28A.225.010 - Attendance mandatory - Age - Exceptions](#)

Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008

[PL 112-34](#) The Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/resource/pi1109>

## McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

### Policy

1. Children and youth who enter out-of-home placement have the right to remain at the school they were attending when they entered care, whenever it is practical and in the best interest of the child. (RCW 74.13.550).
2. The ongoing educational needs of children in out-of-home care must be addressed with the child and caregiver(s) at the time of **each** placement change.
3. Each child in out-of-home placement must have a long range educational plan that is updated at least every six months and attached to the Court Report. The request and receipt of academic records must be documented in the Court Report.
4. CA must facilitate planning for post-secondary education of children in out-of-home care.
5. All children birth to three who may exhibit a disability or developmental delay must be referred to the appropriate early intervention agency.
6. All children 3 to 18 years of age with a developmental concern must be referred to the Child Find program or to the local school district for an assessment.
7. Identify an Educational Liaison for children and youth grades 6-12 at shelter care and subsequent dependency review hearings that meet any one of the following requirements:
  1. Parental Rights have been terminated
  2. Parents are unavailable because of incarceration or other limitations
  3. The court has restricted contact between the youth and parents
  4. The youth is placed in a behavioral rehabilitative setting and the court has limited the educational rights of the parents.

### Procedures

1. File long range educational plans with the court at least every six months. The education plan must address any physical, emotional, or behavioral issues that impair the child's learning abilities. The plan should be reviewed with **each** placement change.
2. Coordinate with child's school district:
  1. For child to remain enrolled at the school they were attending when they entered care whenever it is practical and in the best interest of the child.
  2. To confirm child is enrolled and attending school within three days of out of home placement.
  3. To request any missing academic (or medical) records required for school enrollment within 10 business days.
  4. To notify the child's existing and new school of any out-of-home placement changes
  5. To advocate with the school system for appropriate services to meet the child/youth's academic and social-emotional needs.
  6. To request updated records and education information as needed when there is a change in schools, change in out-of-home placement and at the end of each school year.

7. To pay any unpaid fees or fines due by the youth to the school or school district.
  8. To notify all legal parties when a school disruption occurs; and
  9. To document factors that contributed to any school disruptions.
3. Refer children:
1. Birth to three with identified disabilities to an Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT) Lead Family Resource Coordinator. The referral must also be discussed with the child's parents/caregivers.
  2. Age 3 to 18 years with developmental concerns to a Child Find Program or the local school district for an assessment.
  3. With an identified education concern to an Education Advocacy Program.
  4. To appropriate programs within two working days after a concern has been identified.
4. Collaborate with ESIT and the child's caregiver to enroll the child in appropriate services and develop the Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP).
  5. Provide the child's out of home caregiver with copies of necessary school records including IFSP, Individual Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plans.
  6. Provide copies of all education records to foster youth age 15-18 years as defined in 43103 Services for Youth 15-18.
  7. Monitor and document academic progress and test scores to make sure the child/youth is prepared to progress to the next grade level and/or obtain credits to graduate.
  8. Involve youth in post-high school planning including options for post-secondary education and career/vocational training.
  9. Assist youth transitioning from foster care in obtaining documents and information they will need regarding their personal history, identity, education, physical and mental health, as defined in [43103 Services for Youth 15-21](#).
  10. Document education information on the Child Information and Placement Referral Form ([DSHS form 15-300](#)) and in the FamLink Education Pages.

## Forms and Tools

- [Child Information and Placement Form \(DSHS 15-300\)](#)
- [School Notification Form \(DSHS 27-093\)](#)
- [Social Worker's Practice Guide to Education: for Children and Youth in Foster Care DSHS 22-1185 \(02/07\)](#)
- [Education Advocacy Guide \(DSHS22-1192\)](#)
- [Helping Foster Children Achieve Educational Stability and Success Guide \(DSHS 22-1210\)](#)
- [Students in Foster Care - What Schools Need to Know \(DSHS 22-002\)](#)
- [Washington State's Adolescent Website for Foster Youth](#)
- [Educational Liaisons Tip Sheet](#)
- [Educational Liaison Report to the Court \(DSHS 15-432\)](#)

## See Also

- [Making a Difference in a Child's Life: A Manual for Helping Children and Youth Get What They Need in School](#)
- [Family Dictionary of Education Terms](#)
- [Discipline in Public Schools](#)
- [How to be an Education Advocate](#)
- [Basic Education Rights and Opportunities in Public Schools](#)

## Resources

### Birth to Three

- Disability and developmental delay resources are Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies hotline at (1-800-322-2588) or through the ESIT web site

### General Advocacy

- [Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction](#)
- [Treehouse Education Advocate Program](#)
- [Team Child](#)
- [Office of the Education Ombudsman](#)
- [Washington Partnership for Action Voices for Empowerment](#)
- National Center for Homeless Education
- [National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth](#)

### Post-Secondary Education

- College Success Foundation <http://www.collegesuccessfoundation.org>
- Casey Family Programs <http://www.casey.org>
- Washington Student Achievement Council <http://www.wsac.wa.gov>

## Suggested Practice Tips

1. Children's early development research shows that windows for learning begin from birth to three and three to five. The clear link between early brain activity and brain development provides the building blocks for life-long learning and function - including entering school ready to learn and families learning of local resources for current and future needs. When there is a diagnosis of a disability or developmental concern at birth, or soon thereafter, early intervention results in greater developmental gains for a child.
2. Placing children in their community of origin and not changing schools is always the first priority. Always consider the child's best interest before relocating the child to another school.
3. Give the school the assigned social worker's contact information on the enrollment form (list as a second parent) in addition to the caregiver's so that the school report cards and other information will be sent directly to the assigned social worker for review and for documentation in the case file.



## Effective Date

**Initial:**    **Revised:** 7/28/2013 **Approved by:** Jennifer Strus, Asst. Secretary

# 4303. Case Plans

1. See [Child Safety Section policy](#) for Family Assessment and Case Plan information.

# 4304. Reasonable Efforts

Created on:  
Aug 21 2015

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Asst. Secretary

**Original Date:** November 19, 1997

**Revised Date:** June 12, 2014

**Sunset Review:** June 12, 2018

## Purpose

The Adoption and Safe Families Act requires that reasonable efforts must be made to prevent placement of a child in out-of-home care and achieve timely permanency for a child who is placed in out-of-home care. For children protected under either the state or federal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), active efforts must be made.

## Laws

- [Adoption and Safe Families Act P.L. 105-89](#)
- [Federal Indian Child Welfare Act](#)
- [Washington State Indian Child Welfare Act](#)
- [Chapter 13.34 RCW - Juvenile Court - Dependency](#)

## Policy

1. Reasonable efforts must be made by the assigned CA worker to:
  1. Prevent placement of a child in out-of-home care, unless the child is determined to be unsafe.
  2. Return a child home.
  3. Achieve timely permanency when a child is placed in out-of-home care.
2. Active efforts must be made by the CA worker for children protected under the state or federal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA).

3. The CA worker must identify appropriate reasonably available services for the family to remedy identified parenting deficiencies that made the child unsafe.
4. When a child is in out-of-home care, the CA worker must offer reunification services to the family in an attempt to eliminate the need for out-of-home placement, unless a court has found that aggravated circumstances exist.
5. Reasonable efforts must be made to achieve timely permanency including efforts to locate a permanent placement other than return home.

## Procedures

1. Placement Prevention - Unless the child is determined to be unsafe (See [1100 Child Safety](#)) and an in-home [Safety Plan](#) cannot be used to keep the child safe, the CA worker must make the following **reasonable efforts** to prevent placement:
  1. Complete the [Comprehensive Family Evaluation](#) with the family to determine what reasonably available remedial services and activities would remedy identified safety threats.
  2. Develop a written [Case Plan](#).
  3. Services must:
    1. Focus on the identified safety threats.
    2. Be culturally appropriate
    3. Be geographically accessible.
    4. Consider whether a parent is developmentally delayed and eligible for developmental disability services. If so, services and their delivery must be tailored to the parent's needs and coordinated with Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA).
  4. The assigned worker must review case plans regularly for the following:
    1. Parental progress.
    2. Changes needed in the plan.
    3. Parental resistance to the case plan.
    4. Alternative approaches such as court action that may be needed.
2. Returning a Child Home - If a child is removed from the home due to [present or impending danger](#), the CA worker must make **reasonable efforts** to:
  1. Offer remedial services to the family, unless [aggravated circumstances](#) exist.
  2. Services must:
    1. Focus on the identified safety threats and help families eliminate the need for placement.
    2. Be culturally appropriate
    3. Be geographically accessible.
    4. Consider whether a parent is eligible for developmental disability services. If so, services and their delivery must be tailored to the parent's needs and coordinated with DDA.
3. Achieving Timely Permanency
  1. Make reasonable efforts to locate a permanent placement. Identify appropriate relatives, kin or other persons who may be a permanent resource for the child.
  2. Follow [Concurrent Planning](#) Policy.

3. Continue reasonable efforts until permanency is achieved. The following are appropriate permanency options and are listed in order of priority:
  1. Return home
  2. Adoption
  3. [Guardianship](#)
  4. Third Party Custody

## Forms and Tools

Court reports. Permanency Planning Guide

## See Also

[1710 Shared Planning](#)

[4305 Permanency and Concurrent Planning](#)

## Resources

[ICW Chapter 7](#)

## Suggested Practice Tips

If ICWA applies ensure coordination with the child's Tribe and coordinate with the Tribal social worker. Also review and follow protocols outlined in the [CA Tribal Memorandum of Understanding](#) established with the child's specific tribe.

# 4305. Permanent and Concurrent Planning

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:** 2000

**Revised Date:** July 24, 2015

**Policy Review:** June 30, 2018

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## Purpose

Permanency planning starts at first contact with the family and continues until a permanency goal is achieved.

Concurrent planning provides for timely reunification services while anticipating and preparing for an alternate permanent plan.

## Scope

This policy applies to all Division of Children and Family Services staff.

## Laws

- [RCW 74.15.020\(2a\)](#)
- [RCW 13.34](#)
- [RCW 13.36](#)
- [RCW 26.10](#)
- [RCW 26.33](#)
- [RCW 13.34.132](#)
- [Adoption and Safe Families \(ASFA\) Act 1997](#)

## Policy

1. A permanency planning goal must be identified for all children in out-of-home care no later than 60 days from the Original Placement Date (OPD).
2. CA's written report to the court must identify concurrent plans. A permanent plan includes how the department is working towards securing a safe, stable and permanent home for the child. The court report must address the following:
  1. Primary and alternate permanent plans being pursued concurrently. Permanent and alternate permanent plan options **only** include:
    1. Return of home to the child's parent, guardian or legal custodian
    2. Adoption
    3. Guardianship
    4. Third party/non-parental custody
  2. Reasonable efforts to return the child to his/her birth/adoptive parents.
  3. How the permanency plan is in the best interest of the child.
  4. How the agency has worked toward securing a safe, stable and permanent home for the child as early as possible.
3. Long-term foster or relative care is not a permanent plan. It is only considered when other permanent plans are determined not to be in the best interest of a child age 16 and older as the results of a shared planning decision making process. Continued efforts must be made to achieve legal permanency, unless determined to not be in the child's best interest.
4. CA must consider a permanent plan that allows the parent to maintain a relationship with the child when a parent:
  1. Is sentenced to long-term incarceration;
  2. Has maintained a meaningful role in the child's life;
  3. There is no court order limiting or prohibiting contact; and
  4. It is in the child's best interest.

5. Citizenship and immigration status of the child should be determined early in the case and should be re-confirmed prior to establishing a permanent plan per [4211 Foreign Consulate policy](#).

## Procedures

1. Plan:
  1. Utilize the shared planning process when making permanency planning decisions for children in out-of-home care according to the timelines in the [1710 Shared Planning](#) policy. Any changes in a permanent plan require a new shared planning meeting. Staff permanent plans with your supervisor. Refer to Indian Child Welfare policies and procedures [ICW Chapter 10](#) for all **Indian** children.
  2. Determine the best interest of the child by consider the following:
    1. The child's wishes and long-term goals
    2. Medical issues
    3. Age of the child
    4. The child's connections to his or her identity, affiliations to his or her community, tribe, church, school, religious/spiritual beliefs, relatives and friends
    5. The long-term needs of the child
    6. The emotional ties and development needs and how these can be met through the identified permanent plan
2. Document:
  1. The primary and alternate permanent plan on both the shared planning page and the Permanency Planning page in FamLink.
  2. The reasons the identified permanent plan is in the best interest of the child in the case plan.
  3. When siblings are not placed together:
    1. Document exception(s) or other reasons siblings are being placed apart as it applies to each child on the Sibling Visit Details tab in the FamLink Visit Plan Page.
    2. Print a copy of the Sibling Visit Details tab in the FamLink Visit Page; obtain approval signatures from supervisor and Area Administrator.
    3. Upload approved Sibling Visit Details document into FamLink.
3. Permanent Plans:
  1. Identify a primary and alternate plan from the following options:
    1. Always consider **Return Home** as the primary permanent plan for a child when **all** the following conditions are met:
      1. Aggravated circumstances do not exist.
      2. It is likely the child will return home per 43051 Reasonable Efforts to Return a Child Home policy.
      3. The plan of returning home is in the best interests of the child.
      4. The child (as age and developmentally appropriate) has been consulted regarding the potential benefits and risks of the return home.

5. Safety threats are eliminated or can be managed in the family home.
2. Consider **Adoption**, per [4540 Adoption Services](#) policy, when a child is unable to return home and when **all** the following conditions are met:
  1. The child was removed from parents and is dependent.
  2. Parental rights will likely be terminated by the court or relinquishment has been or will be accepted by both CA and the court.
  3. Reasonable efforts were provided to the parent(s) to safely reunify the child to his or her care. The parent(s) have not made sufficient and timely progress in addressing the parental deficiencies that brought the child into care and this is documented in the case file.
  4. The plan is in the best interests of the child.
  5. Aggravated circumstances may exist. Refer to [6120 Permanency Plan Review](#) policy.
  6. The child (as age and developmentally appropriate) has been provided education about the impacts of adoption. Children over the age of 14 must sign consent for the adoption.
  7. The child and sibling are in the same placement, the permanent plan is adoption for that sibling and also in the best interest of this child.
  8. The prospective adoptive parent has an approved adoptive home study per 5330 Family Home Study policy.
3. Consider Title 13 **Guardianship** per [4340 Guardianship](#) policy when the following conditions are met:
  1. The child was removed from the parents through a Voluntary Placement Agreement (VPA) or the child is a dependent of CA or tribe.
  2. A determination is made through the shared planning process that it is not in the best interests of the child to pursue reunification or adoption.
  3. The plan of guardianship is in the best interest of the child.
  4. The proposed caregiver has the ability to meet the child's special needs without CA case management and social worker support and the caregiver:
    1. Can make a commitment to parent the child until adulthood.
    2. Has a significant relationship with the child.
    3. Has an approved family home study per 5330 Family Home Study policy or [45274 Unlicensed Placements - Home Study Requirements](#) policy.
  5. The Permanency Planning Benefits and Limitation Matrix has been reviewed with the proposed caregiver.

6. The child and a sibling are in the same placement, the permanent plan is Title 13 Guardianship for that sibling and guardianship is also in the best interests of this child.
  7. If the child is considered an Indian as defined in the Federal Indian Child Welfare Act and the Tribe(s) is involved and requesting a guardianship. If a guardianship subsidy is being requested the child and the prospective guardian must meet R-GAP eligibility requirements.
  8. The child (as age and developmentally appropriate) has been consulted regarding the potential benefits and risks of the permanency plan and the child has stated preference for the identified plan.
4. Consider **Third Party Custody** when the following conditions are met:
    1. The child was removed from the parent(s) through a VPA or the child is a dependent of CA or tribe.
    2. A determination is made through the shared planning process that it is not in the best interests of the child to pursue reunification, adoption or Title 13 Guardianship.
    3. The plan is in the best interest of the child.
    4. The proposed caregiver has the ability to meet the child's special needs without CA case management and social worker support and:
      1. Can make a commitment to parent the child until adulthood.
      2. Has a significant relationship with the child.
    5. If placement has been made with the proposed caregiver, the caregiver must have an approved family home study per 5330 Family Home Study or [45274 Unlicensed Placements policy](#).
    6. The [Permanency Planning Supports and Resources Matrix](#) has been reviewed with the proposed caregiver.
    7. The child and sibling are in the same placement, the permanent plan is third party custody for that sibling and third party custody is also in the best interests of this child.
    8. If the child is considered an Indian as defined in the Federal Indian Child Welfare Act and the tribe(s) is involved and requesting third party custody.
  5. Third Party Custody/Non-Parental Custody actions may be initiated by the proposed caregiver in Family Court and for the matter to be heard by Family Court the Juvenile Court must waive its exclusive jurisdiction.
4. **Long-Term Foster or Relative Care Agreements must only be considered** when children are age 16 and over and **all** the following conditions are met:
    1. The child was removed from the parents and is dependent.
    2. A determination is made through the shared planning process that it is not in the best interest of the child to pursue legal permanency options: reunification, adoption, guardianship or third party custody.

3. The plan is in the best interest of the child and the child needs the stability offered by this living arrangement.
4. Compelling reasons per [43061 Compelling Reasons](#) policy must be reviewed at every court hearing and the court must find that the compelling reasons still exist and are documented in FamLink.
5. The child has made a significant connection to the caregiver and has resided with the caregiver for over six months.
6. The Permanency Planning Supports and Resources Matrix has been reviewed with the proposed caregiver.
7. The youth (age 16 and over) has been consulted regarding the potential benefits and risks of the permanency plan and the youth has indicated a preference for the identified plan and is willing to sign the agreement.
8. The youth over the age of 16 and capable of giving consent has agreed to sign consent for the long-term foster care agreement and is aware of the potential benefits/risks of other permanency plans.
9. The caregiver:
  1. Makes a commitment to care for the child until the age of 18 or 21 if applicable.
  2. Shows an ability to meet child's special needs.
  3. Demonstrates an understanding that the child remains in the custody of CA and under CA's control and further demonstrates an ability to cooperate with CA in shared planning for the child.
  4. Agrees to enter into a long-term foster care or relative care agreement approved by the court.
  5. Signs a Long-Term Care Agreement for Foster Parent or Relative Caregivers DSHS 15-322.
  6. The Regional Administrator signs the Checklist for Approval Long-Term Agreement for Foster Parents or Relative Caregivers DSHS 15-323.
  7. Demonstrates an understanding of permanency as a long-term, life-long connection and has agreed to support the youth in his or her transition to adulthood.

## Forms and Tools

- [Long-Term care Agreement for Foster Parent or Relative Caregivers \(DSHS 15-322\)](#)
- [Checklist for Approval Long-Term Agreement for Foster Parents or Relative Caregivers \(DSHS 15-323\)](#)
- [Voluntary Placement Agreement \(DSHS 15-281\)](#)

## Resources

- [Permanency Planning Supports and Resources Matrix \(DSHS 16-231\)](#)

# 43051A. Trial Return Home



## Purpose

Support parent(s) and child(ren) to achieve a safe and successful transition home and permanent reunification.

## Laws

[RCW 13.34.136](#)

[RCW 13.34.130 2.\(c\)](#)

## Policy

1. Follow requirements outlined in the *Reasonable Efforts to Return a Child Home* policy (43051) prior to requesting a trial return home or when the Court orders the child's immediate return home.
2. Prior to a dependent child returning to the home of a parent a background check must be completed on all adults living in the home.
3. A trial return home must not exceed 6 months in duration, unless ordered by the court.
4. Identify and assess all caregivers of the child for services related to the safety of the child, and:
  1. Recommend the caregiver participate in the identified services.
  2. Notify the court of any service recommendations made to the caregiver during a regular review hearing.
  3. Promptly notify the court if a caregiver fails to engage in or follow through with the recommended services.

## Procedures

1. Provide ongoing assessment of potential child safety threats during the monthly health and safety visits. Update the Safety Plan with the family if safety threats are identified. *Health and safety visits requirements are outlined in the ([4420](#) policy).*
2. Update the Comprehensive Family Evaluation based on the family's progress and information gathered during the monthly health and safety visit.
3. Provide the following once the child is placed in the parent's home under a trial return home:
  1. Ongoing safety and risk assessment
  2. Plan for monitoring the child's well-being (may include services and supports identified through CHET screening, Foster Care Assessment Program, or Family Team Decision Making)
  3. Other services identified in a Shared Planning meeting
  4. Revised trial return home plan or complete documentation for case closure.
4. Consult with the local AAG office (prior to court hearing) and document when it is in the child's best interest to request an extension of the trial return home beyond 6 months.

5. Recommend dismissal of the dependency when the parent(s) have completed the case plan requirements and demonstrated the ability to safely resume parenting and custody of the child(ren).
6. Document all trial return home activities and any completed services as required in the electronic case file.

## **43055. Permanency Planning Hearings-Timelines**

Permanency planning hearings must occur:

1. By the 12th month of placement for all children in out-of-home care even if reunification with parents is the primary plan and the parents are making significant progress.
2. Within one year of each previous permanency planning hearing as long as the child remains in out-of-home care without a permanency plan being achieved. A child in a long-term care agreement is not considered to have permanency achieved, therefore, permanency planning hearings continue.
3. If, following 90 days of service delivery after disposition, the parents have failed to make progress or engage in services in resolving the issues that brought the child into care. This may coincide with the initial review hearing which is to be scheduled for in-court review six months from OPD or 90 days from the entry of the dispositional order, whichever comes first.
4. Within 30 days after the court has determined that reunification services for the family are no longer required in a case with a finding of aggravated circumstances. In those cases, the social worker must identify a primary or alternate permanency planning goal other than reunification with the legal parent(s).

## **4306. Filing a Petition to Terminate Parental Rights**

1. Under Washington law, termination of parental rights is necessary for an adoption of a child. A petition to terminate parental rights is a step toward the implementation of a permanent plan of adoption. Adoption is the preferred permanent plan if a child can not be returned home.
2. If the parents, after filing of the termination petition, begin to make progress toward a permanency plan of returning the child home, the termination 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.

# 43061. Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) - Compelling Reasons

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:** 1979

**Revised Date:** June 30, 2015

**Policy Review:** June 30, 2018

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## **Purpose**

Initiate a relinquishment or termination of parental rights (TPR) when it is in the best interest of the child and to support timely permanence.

## **Scope**

This policy applies to all Division of Children and Family Services staff.

## **Laws**

[RCW 13.34.126](#)

[RCW 13.34.132](#)

[RCW 13.34.136](#)

[RCW 13.34.145](#)

[RCW 13.34.180](#)

[RCW 26.33](#)

[Adoption and Safe Families \(ASFA\) Act 1997](#)

## **Policy**

1. A petition to TPR must be submitted to the Attorney General's office by the child's 12th of the last nineteen (19) months in out-of-home care or sooner, when it is in the child's best interest and meets at least one of the following:
  1. The child is determined by the court to be an abandoned child.

2. The child is in out-of-home care for a period of at least six months since dependency finding.
3. Aggravated circumstances have been found by the court. The TPR petition must be made within 60 days of this court finding.
2. A TPR may be considered earlier in the dependency process when aggravated circumstances exist or the parents have failed to engage in services and the child has been in care for 90 days after the disposition.
3. A petition for TPR is not required when compelling reasons/good cause exist. Compelling reasons/good cause may include, but is not limited to:
  1. Birth parents are making significant progress and reunification (trial return home) will occur within three (3) months.
  2. Birth parent(s) has been accepted and is demonstrating compliance in a dependency treatment court program, long-term substance abuse or dual diagnosis program.
  3. The department has not provided to the child's family such services as the court and the department have deemed necessary for the child's safe return home.
  4. Adoption is not an appropriate permanent plan because:
    1. The child is over the age of 14 and after a discussion about adoption and other permanency options with the child, the child opposes adoption as a permanent plan.
    2. The child is placed with a relative and after a discussion about adoption and other permanency options with the relatives; another permanency option with the relative is in the best interest of the child.
  5. The court or CA has determined that:
    1. A birth parent is considering relinquishment within a reasonable time to free the child for adoption.
    2. A non-offending parent is pursuing an alternate permanent plan.
    3. A professional assessment of the child has determined the child is unable to remain within a family setting.
  6. The parent is incarcerated and:
    1. The incarceration is the only reason for filing the TPR; and
    2. The court has determined the parent maintains a meaningful role in the child's life.
  7. The child's Tribe is opposed to adoption and has identified another acceptable permanency plan for the child.
4. Relinquishment of parental rights may be accepted when adoption is in the child's best interest per [1710 Shared Planning](#) policy. The relinquishment of parental rights of an Indian child must occur before a court judge per [ICW Chapter 6](#).

## Procedures

1. Utilize shared planning meetings when making permanency planning decisions for children in out-of-home care according to timelines in the [1710 Shared Planning](#) policy.
2. Determine if relinquishment or TPR is in the best interest of the child by discussing the following with the birth parents:

1. The option of a Voluntary Adoption Plan in accordance with [4540 Voluntary Adoption Plan](#) policy.
2. The Open Communication Agreement options between the parent and the prospective adoptive family prior to accepting a relinquishment per [4330 Open Communication Agreement](#) policy.
3. Discuss aggravated circumstances as listed per [RCW 13.34.132](#) with assigned Assistant Attorney General.
4. Convene a Permanency Planning meeting within 30 days after the court determines aggravated circumstances exist. Identify a permanent planning goal per [4305 Permanency Planning policy](#).
5. Determine if compelling reasons/good cause exists to not file a petition for TPR.
6. Document compelling reasons/good cause in the:
  1. Report to the court. The court must approve the compelling reason/good cause exception at each permanency planning hearing and review at all subsequent hearings pertaining to the child.
  2. TPR Compelling Reasons group box in the FamLink Legal Record page.
7. File a TPR when compelling reasons/good cause no longer exists.
8. Document the filing of a TPR referral in FamLink Legal Record.

## Forms and Tools

- [Shared Planning Form \(DSHS 14-474\)](#)

## Resources

- Permanency Planning Practice Guide (available on CA Intranet)
- [Shared Planning Form \(DSHS 14-474\)](#)

# 43065. Voluntary Termination of Parental Rights

1. The juvenile courts are authorized to terminate parental rights voluntarily (relinquishment) under chapter 26.33 RCW. Social workers must 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.
2. 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. See section 43068 below for requirements regarding Indian children.

3. 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 must take care to inform the parent that any relinquishment is voluntary throughout this process.
  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.
4. Under a voluntary adoption plan, the department must follow the wishes of the alleged father, birth parent, or parent in identifying an adoptive placement. See the Case Services Policy Manual, chapter 5000, section 5762, and this chapter, section 45404.

## 43066. Pregnant and Parenting Youth

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Effective Date:** October 31, 2014

**Sunset Review:** October 31, 2018

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### **Purpose**

Supports dependent youth who are pregnant and/or parenting so that their unique needs are met and their efforts to transition to adulthood are successful.

### **Laws**

[Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act 2008](#)

[Federal and State Indian Child Welfare Laws](#)

[RCW 26.44.030 Reports](#)

[RCW 74.13.280 Client Information](#)

[RCW 9.02.100 Reproductive privacy - Public policy](#)

[WAC 388-147](#)

HIV Law

## Policy

1. The unique needs of dependent youth who are pregnant and/or parenting must be identified and the youth referred to services when necessary.
2. All dependent pregnant and parenting youth must be provided with information about their rights and CA's duties and responsibilities.
3. A dependency action on a dependent youth's child is only sought if a safety threat exists that cannot be controlled.
4. When a dependent youth and his/her child live in the same placement and there is no need to file a dependency on that child, CA considers the child's home to be that of the dependent youth.

## Procedures

### 1. Dependent Pregnant Youth

The assigned worker must:

1. Conduct a [Shared Planning Meeting](#) within 10 days of the youth's disclosure of the pregnancy. The purpose of the meeting is to:
  1. Identify needed services, i.e., prenatal care, nutrition, education, etc.
  2. Create a plan for how support will be provided to the expectant mother/father to help in decision making.
  3. Discuss and provide tribal enrollment information, if he/she wants to explore tribal enrollment eligibility for his/her child.
2. Discuss, during Health and Safety Visits, the following in addition to other [4420 Health and Safety Visits](#) expectations:
  1. Needed pregnancy services.
  2. Referral to community resources as needed, e.g. First Steps, Safe Babies Safe Moms, Parent Child Assistance Program, Public Health Department, Women, Infant and Children (WIC), etc.
  3. The needs of the unborn child after the 28th week of pregnancy, e.g. child care, list of emergency contacts, services noted above, etc.
  4. Placement options if the youth is unable to remain in the current placement after delivery.
  5. The [4302A Youth's Education](#) and Independent Living Skills Services.

### 2. Dependent Parenting Youth

The assigned worker must:

1. Discuss the following during Health and Safety Visits in addition to other [4420 Health and Safety Visits](#) expectations:
  1. Needed medical services.
  2. Youth's role as a parent including successes and challenges, and what support is needed.

3. Referral to community resources as needed for the dependent parenting youth.
  4. [4302A Youth's Education](#)
  5. Importance of ongoing engagement of the parent not providing primary care of the child.
2. Discuss tribal enrollment information with the youth for his/her child, if he/she wants to explore eligibility for his/her child, if not already discussed.
  3. Follow the [Infant Safety policy](#) when the dependent youth's child is birth to one year.
  4. Seek a court hearing to have a GAL appointed for the dependent youth if one is not already appointed and the youth wishes to voluntarily relinquish his/her parental rights.
3. **Dependent Parent's Child**

The assigned worker must:

1. Complete a Plan of Safe Care when the dependent parent's child is born.
  2. Take immediate protective action(s) if [present danger](#) exists. A decision to remove a child that is not dependent requires legal authorization (See 45302. Eligibility).
  3. Report any allegations of CA/N to intake.
4. **Information about Rights and Responsibilities**

The assigned worker must:

Distribute Tools to Support Pregnant and Parenting Youth in Care Guidebook (DSHS #22-1536) to the dependent pregnant or parenting youth at the first opportunity, i.e., Health and Safety Visit or during the Shared Planning meeting.

5. **Documentation**

The assigned worker must:

1. Document in FamLink all medical examinations, and hospitalizations or if a pregnant or parenting youth refuses pre-natal care and other medical services.
2. Document in the FamLink Person Management page, under Additional Tab/Child Information section, the youth is a teen parent and whether his/her child resides with him/her.
3. Close the current foster care placement and re-open placement from "basic foster care" to "basic foster care with a non-dependent child" when the child is born, determined to be safe in the parent's care and the parent is in licensed foster care.

**Forms and Tools**

[Caregiver Tip Sheet for Pregnant & Parenting Youth - DSHS 22-1537](#)



[Guidebook for Pregnant & Parenting Teens in Foster Care - DSHS 22-1538](#)

[CA Worker Tip Sheet for Pregnant and Parenting Youth - DSHS 22-1539](#)

[Teen Fathers Tip Sheet for Youth in Foster Care - DSHS 22-1540](#)

[Teen Mothers Tip Sheet for Youth in Foster Care - DSHS 22-1541](#)

Independent Living Services Referral - DSHS 13-353

[Your Rights, Your Life: A Resource for Youth in Foster Care](#)

[ICW Family Ancestry Chart](#)

Indian Identity Request Form - DSHS 07-761

## **See Also**

[4400 TANF Benefits](#)

## **Resources**

[DSHS: Division of Child Support](#)

[OSPI GRADS Program for Pregnant teens or Young Parents](#)

[Washington State Teen Help](#)

[Women Infant and Children](#)

[First Steps](#)

[Department of Health Child Profiles - development and health information as your child grows](#)

# **43067. Opposing a Voluntary Petition**

1. 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.
2. 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.

## 43068. Indian Children

1. Permanency Planning Case Staffing-If the child is identified as an "Indian child" per Appendix A, and is required to have a LICWAC staffing the child must have a Local Indian Child Welfare Advisory Committee (LICWAC) staffing to establish a permanency goal no later than 60 days from the original placement date. (Follow Indian Child Welfare Chapter 10: LICWAC policies and procedures)
2. Active Efforts-If the federal and state Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) protects the child, the caseworker must continue active efforts toward reunification with the child's parents or Indian custodian, if any, until the court terminates parental rights. See Appendix A for the definition of "Indian Child."
3. Compelling Reasons-The fact that the Tribal/State agreement defines the child as Indian and the child's involved tribe does not concur with the filing of the petition or with adoption as the permanency plan for this child may be a compelling reason not to file a termination of parental rights petition. Compelling reasons not to file a termination petition must be made on a case by case basis considering the individual circumstances of the child and family
4. Termination of Parental Rights of an Indian child
  1. Special procedures apply when handling the voluntary or involuntary termination of an Indian child. The caseworker must refer to Indian Child Welfare policies and procedures.
  2. Petitions for voluntary termination of parental rights may not be initiated for an unborn Indian child. The hearing on the petitions for relinquishment or termination cannot occur until at least 10 days after the birth of the child or the parent's signing the consent to adoption.

## 4307. Voluntary Placement Agreement

### Purpose

A Voluntary Placement Agreement (VPA) safely supports a time-limited plan for a short-term removal and placement in out of home care for a child who cannot remain safely in the parents' or legal guardian's home.

### Laws

[WAC 388-15-037](#)

[WAC 388-25-0050](#)

[RCW 74.13.031](#)

[RCW 71.15.020\(2\)](#)

## Policy

1. A Voluntary Placement Agreement (VPA) is used in specific time limited circumstances as part of a short-term placement plan for children who cannot safely remain at home. A VPA will not exceed ninety (90) days.
2. A Voluntary Placement Agreement (VPA) is valid when:
  1. Approved by the supervisor.
  2. Signed by both parents/ legal guardians of the child unless unable to locate the other parent/legal guardian.
  3. Signed by the CA representative per [WAC 388-25-0050](#).
  4. Signed in front of a judicial officer of the Tribal Court or Juvenile Court when the child is an Indian child as per [ICW Chapter 6](#).
  5. Placement is with a licensed caregiver or relative as defined in [RCW 71.15.020 \(2\)](#) and within the State of Washington.
3. VPA's may not be used to place a child or youth:
  1. With an "[other suitable person](#)" Per [RCW 13.34.130](#)
  2. On hospital/medical/physician hold
  3. Outside of Washington
  4. In care when the youth is 18 or older
4. An FTDM must be conducted before the placement occurs.
5. Before a child is returned home and upon written or verbal request for termination of the VPA, the social worker must reassess child safety and determine if the child can safely return home. If so the child must be returned to the parent/legal guardian with legal custody as soon as possible.
6. If a child cannot safely return home, Children's Administration must take immediate steps to request the child be taken into protective custody by law enforcement or file a dependency petition per policy [5700. Juvenile Dependency and Rights of Children and Families](#).

## Procedures

1. VPA's are approved by the CA supervisor in the following circumstances:
  1. When a safety assessment is complete and it is determined in-home services cannot control identified safety threats and services can be completed within the VPA timeframe.
  2. After business hours, when a safety threat exists and the child is not placed in protective custody by law enforcement.
  3. When the parent/legal guardian needs temporary care for the child while undergoing medical care/treatment and there are no alternative resources.
  4. When the child's other parent/legal guardian is not immediately available to provide care.
2. Complete the VPA form (DSHS 9-004B) with all required signatures and upload the form into the FamLink file cabinet. **Note:** Unless legal custody resides with one parent, which must be verified, a good faith effort must be made to have both parents sign the VPA and the effort documented in FamLink.
3. Document the following in FamLink:

1. The child's legal information on the Legal Records page.
2. Details of child's placement on the Out of Home Placement page.
3. A request from a parent or legal guardian to end the VPA and return the child home (when applicable) in a case note.
4. The date, time and location of the child's return to the parent (when applicable) in a case note.
5. Supervisor approval.

## Forms and Tools

- DSHS 9-004B

## Resources

- [ICW Chapter 6 - Casework Activities for Court Proceedings](#)
- Practice and Procedure Guide Chapter 4000 - 43071 Voluntary Plan for Continued Placement and Services for Youth (ages 18 to 21)
- [Practice and Procedure Chapter 3000 - 3600 Child in Need of Services \(CHINS\) Petition and Placement](#)
- [Case Services Manual Chapter 5000 - 5700. Juvenile Dependency and Rights of Children and Families](#)
- [Practice and Procedure Manual Chapter 4000 - 4261 Placement Priorities](#)

# 4308. Legal Activity

## 43081. Dependency Petition Process - RCW 13.34.030 through 13.34.

1. The caseworker files a dependency petition when it is clear that child safety cannot be managed or controlled in the home and if the parents refuse or are unwilling to immediately make changes adequate to protect the child, or after reasonable efforts have not increased the parent's protective capacities.
2. 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.
3. 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 must 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

4. The caseworker is required to testify at the first shelter care hearing as to notice given to the parents.
5. The caseworker must refer to Indian Child Welfare (ICW) policies and procedures when working with Indian children who are a member or may be eligible for membership within a federally recognized tribe.

## **43082. 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.

## **43083. Compliance with Court Orders and Liability Protection**

1. CA staff must make good faith efforts to comply with all court orders.
2. In cases where it is not possible to comply, with a court order, despite staff's best efforts, the social worker must promptly consult with the worker's supervisor and legal counsel to explore alternatives. If compliance is not possible, the worker must 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 must 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.
3. Employees are eligible for liability protection and may seek legal representation through the Office of the Attorney General, consistent with the provisions of DSHS Administrative Policy 18.63.

## **43091. Court Report**

1. When a child is in out-of-home care, the caseworker must complete or update the report to the court in the following timeframes.
  1. The first report to the court 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 report to the court is due by the 180th day of placement, and periodically thereafter at six month intervals.
  2. If the report to the court is completed earlier than required, the next report to the court is due no later than six months from the date of the last one completed.
  3. The report to the court shall include screening results and case plans to address the child/youth's multiple needs.
2. The report to the court must be submitted in the following situations:
  1. For all court disposition, permanency planning, and review hearings.

2. To obtain approval to place a child in Behavior Rehabilitation Services, formerly called group care.
3. For Shared Planning and administrative reviews.
4. For citizen reviews.
5. For tribal or Local Indian Child Welfare Advisory Committee (LICWAC) staffing, as appropriate and as defined in Indian Child Welfare (ICW) policies and procedures.
3. The report to the court must be developed after consulting, in person if possible, with the parents of the child, and, if developmentally appropriate, with the child. Following completion of the case plan, the caseworker's supervisor must approve and sign each report to the court. The caseworker must provide a copy of the report to the court to the parent(s) if the parent(s) whereabouts are known.
4. The child's report to the court contains information that is important for the child's caregiver to know so that the caregiver can provide appropriate care to the child. The child's report to the court must be shared with the child's foster parent, relative caregiver, or pre-adoptive parent(s).
5. Document in the Court Report for an incarcerated parent the following:
  1. How the parent participated in case planning
  2. What treatment services and resources are available in the facility that meet the parent's individual needs
  3. Visitation schedule or reasons why visitation is not appropriate with the incarcerated parent
6. The child's caregiver must preserve the confidentiality of information contained in the child's court report. A caseworker who becomes aware of a breach of confidentiality must discuss this with the caregiver, the caseworker's supervisor, and the licenser. The caseworker and supervisor may decide to use another strategy to provide the caregiver with all information pertinent to providing appropriate care for the child. The caseworker must document the alternate strategy for sharing information in the child's electronic record.

**Effective Date**   **Initial:**   **Revised:** 10/20/2013 **Approved by:** Jennifer Strus, Asst. Secretary

## **43092. Child Health and Education Tracking (CHET)**

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:** January 8, 2007

**Revised Date:** January 1, 2016

**Policy Review:** January 30, 2020

### **Purpose**

The Child Health and Education Tracking (CHET) program is responsible for identifying each child's long-term needs at initial out-of-home placement by evaluating his or her well-being. The

results of the evaluation are used to develop an appropriate case plan and assist in placement decisions.

## Scope

This policy applies to Children's Administration (CA) CHET screeners.

## Laws

PL 110-351 Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008

[RCW 74.14A.050](#) Identification of Children in a State-assisted Support System

## Policy

CHET screeners must:

1. Evaluate all children in the care and custody of CA and who are expected to remain in care 30 days or more, **within 30 days of the child's original placement date**. This evaluation includes:
  1. Meeting with each child in-person to complete the CHET screen, unless the child is unavailable for an in-person meeting and the supervisor approves an exception to the in-person meeting. The reason for the exception must be documented in a case note.
  2. Assessing each child in the developmentally appropriate domain(s) in accordance with the CHET Practice Guide.
  3. Obtaining information from sources such as parents, caregivers and teachers, when available.
  4. Documenting the long-term well-being needs of the child in the [CHET Screening Report DSHS 14-444](#).
2. Follow the caseworker notification process in the CHET Practice Guide when a concern is identified during the screening process.
3. Make the following referrals:
  1. Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT) for children birth until his or her third birthday within two working days after a concern about the child's developmental delay is identified during the screening process. Referrals will be made in accordance with each region's ESIT protocol.
  2. Fostering Well-Being Care Coordination Unit (FWBCCU) for all children with complex physical health needs.
4. Provide and discuss the [CHET Screening Report DSHS 14-444](#) to caregivers and the assigned caseworker within five days of completion.
5. Document screening results and information gathered during the CHET screening process in the electronic documentation systems.
6. Upload the [CHET Screening Report DSHS 14-444](#) and all supporting documents into file upload in FamLink.
7. Participate in shared planning meetings, when invited.

## Forms

[CHET Screening Report form DSHS 14-444](#)

## Resources

CHET Practice Guide

CHET Screening Report Guidelines

# 4310. Services to Adolescents

## 43101. Assessment and Learning Plan

### Purpose

Youth receive the resources, tools and services to develop the life skills required to become self-sufficient adults.

### Laws

[RCW 74.13.031 \(14\)](#) - Provide Independent Living Services to Youth

[RCW 74.13.540](#) - Independent Living Services

[WAC 388-147-0190](#) What Independent Living Skills May be Offered?

[PL 106-169](#) John H. Chafee Foster Care Independent Living Act

### Policy

1. All youth 15 and older who are in out-of-home care for more than 30 days must receive the Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment (ACLSA) and Learning Plan (LP) annually.
2. All Independent Living (IL) services provided to youth must be documented in FamLink on the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) tab on the IL page. **Note:** Permanency planning continues for youth regardless of age, including efforts towards adoption.

### Procedures



1. Inform youth and their caregivers of the ILS services available beginning at age 15.
2. Assist youth with completing the Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment (ACLSA) and developing a culturally appropriate Learning Plan (LP). You will find this tool at <http://caseylifeskills.force.com/>.
3. Coordinate the development of the LP with the local school district for any youth age 16 and older receiving special education services.
4. Assist youth to update their ACLSA and LP, at least annually.
5. Document the ACLSA, LP, services provided and youth's progress in the youth's electronic case file under the IL page. Create the document titled: "Independent Living Youth Learning Plan and Progress Report" to attach to the youth's report to the court.
6. Provide life skill development training on parenting to pregnant or parenting teens.
7. Discuss with youth at age 17 the importance of the Youth Survey and provide youth the website link to take the survey.
8. Document all services and *Youth Survey* discussions provided to the youth in FamLink under the NYTD section of the IL page.

## Forms and Tools

- DSHS 15-353 - Independent Living Services Referral
- DSHS 15-386 - Independent Living Youth Learning Plan and Progress Report
- Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment (ACLSA) and Learning Plan (LP) can be located at <http://caseylifeskills.force.com/>

## Resources

- Q & A for National Youth in Transition Database
- Youth prior to their eighteenth birthday may be eligible for up to \$500.00 to help attain their IL goals.
- **Contracted IL services** may be available to assist youth in the completion of the Assessment and LP. Contact your local office IL Coordinator to see if this service is available to your youth.
- Youth may receive services (including the ACLSA and LP) from contracted IL Services. If youth is participating in contracted IL services, make sure you receive documentation from IL provider that youth completed the ACLSA and developed a Learning Plan.

# 43102. CA Responsibilities to Dependent Youth 12 and Older

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:** June 10, 2010

**Revised Date:** September 29, 2015

**Policy Review:** September 1, 2019

## **Purpose**

To help dependent youth age 12 and older understand Children's Administration's (CA) duties and responsibilities while the youth is in out-of-home care, including the youth's right to request counsel.

## **Scope**

This policy applies to DCFS staff working with dependent youth.

## **Laws**

[RCW 74.13.031 \(16\)](#)

[RCW 13.34.100 \(6\)](#)

[PL 112-34](#)

[PL 113-183](#)

## **Policy**

The caseworker will:

1. Provide and discuss all required information to the youth within 30 days of becoming age 12 and then at least annually thereafter about their rights, in an age appropriate way, while in out-of-home care.
2. Assist youth, 14 and older, in obtaining and reviewing a copy of their consumer credit report annually.
3. Assist youth in correcting any inaccurate credit information.
4. Document these discussions in FamLink and in the court report.

## **Procedures**

The caseworker will:

1. Provide and discuss the following information within 30 days of the youth becoming age 12 and then at least annually thereafter:
  1. His or her right to request counsel, asking the youth if he or she would like counsel. If youth declines, continue to ask the youth whenever a motion or petition is filed that affects the youth's placement, services, or familial relationships.

2. The Rights of Children and Youth in Foster Care Declaration form. Obtain the youth's signature, provide a signed copy to the youth and upload the signed document into FamLink
3. [Your Rights, Your Life: A Resource for Youth in Foster Care](#) booklet.
2. Inform youth age 14 and older how to obtain their consumer credit report and assist them in requesting a copy annually through [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com).
3. Review the credit report with the youth and identify any discrepancies. If discrepancies are identified, assist the youth in contacting the nationwide consumer credit reporting company that provided the credit report. Follow dispute instructions at each of the following websites:
  1. Equifax - [www.investigate.equifax.com](http://www.investigate.equifax.com)
  2. Experian - [www.experian.com](http://www.experian.com)
  3. TransUnion - [www.transunion.com](http://www.transunion.com)
4. Document:
  1. The information above in procedures (1.-3.) was provided and explained to the youth in FamLink case notes and the court report, including the youth's decision to request counsel or not.
  2. The youth received "consumer awareness" on the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) tab of the Independent Living (IL) page under element "Budget & Financial Management."

## Forms and Tools

[Rights of Children and Youth in Foster Care Declaration form](#)  
[Your Rights, Your Life: A Resource for Youth in Foster Care](#)

## Resources

<http://www.independence.wa.gov>

<http://www.annualcreditreport.com>

[Washington State Annual Credit Check Policy Q&A](#)

Contracted IL services may be available to assist youth in requesting their annual credit report and assist with resolving any discrepancies.

# 43103. Washington State Identocard, Instruction Permit and Personal Driver License for Foster Youth

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:** June 12, 2008

**Revised Date:** July 1, 2106

**Sunset Review:** June 30, 2020

## **Purpose**

Assist the youth in obtaining a state issued photo identification card prior to his or her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. Photo identification helps the youth participate in normal childhood activities and prepare for adulthood such as opening a bank account, applying for a job seeking, housing, driving instruction permit, or personal driver license.

## **Scope**

This policy applies to Division of Children and Family Services staff.

## **Laws**

[RCW Chapter 13.34 Dependency and Termination of Parent-Child Relationship](#)

[RCW 74.13.283 Washington state Identicards – Foster Youth](#)

[RCW 74.13.710 Out-of-home care—Childhood Activities—Prudent Parent Standard](#)

## **Policy**

1. All youth must have a state issued photo identification card prior to his or her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.
2. To request a WA state Identicard, instruction permit or personal driver license:
  1. All requests for a Washington state Identicard must be submitted to Department of Licensing (DOL) on the Request for Washington State Identicard form DSHS 11-077. This is a standardized form approved by DOL and cannot be altered.
  2. The youth must be accompanied to the DOL office by the one of following persons to obtain his or her Identicard:
    1. Caseworker;
    2. Caregiver;
    3. Contracted Independent Living (IL) case manager; or
    4. Other adult designated by the caregiver
  3. All youth must have a Washington State Identicard Request form DSHS 11-077 in DOL's system before DOL will process a request for an instruction permit or personal driver license.
  4. All requests for an instruction permit or personal driver license must be submitted on the Request for Washington State Instruction Permit or Personal Driver License form DSHS 02-636. This is a standardized form approved by DOL. It must be fully completed and cannot be altered.
  5. Youth and caregivers must follow [DOL](#) instructions when obtaining an Identicard, instruction permit or personal driver license.

## Procedures

1. When requesting a **WA state Identicard**, the caseworker must:
  1. Complete the WA state Identicard form DSHS 11-077 and attach a **2.5 in. by 3 in. color** photograph of the youth based on DOL's photo standards:
    1. A full face view of the youth directly facing the camera.
    2. The youth's head from the top of the head to the tip of the chin and side. Ears are not required to show.
    3. No hair (including bangs) across the eyes.
    4. No hats, glasses, hoodies or other items that obscure the face.
  2. Submit the original completed WA state Identicard form DSHS 11-077 to DOL in one of the following ways:
    1. First class mail to:  
PO BOX 9030 Olympia WA 98507  
Attn: Driver Examining Foster Care Kids
    2. Scan and email to: [DOLSDSHSLETTER@DOL.WA.GOV](mailto:DOLSDSHSLETTER@DOL.WA.GOV)
      1. Send the form as an attached word document or adobe only.
      2. Include in the subject line of the email the last name, first name, middle initial and date of birth of the youth.
      3. Do not leave any spaces between each section. For example John L. Doe born 01/01/1988 would be DoeJohnL010188.
    3. In-person when accompanying the youth to the local DOL office. Caseworkers will be required to show CA identification.
  3. Provide the youth with a copy of the completed WA state Identicard form DSHS 11-077 and place a copy in the youth's file.
2. The caseworker must assist the youth in obtaining the Identicard when the form is mailed or electronically submitted. This includes:
  1. Coordinating with the caregiver or contracted IL case manager to determine who is taking the youth to the local DOL office if the caseworker is not accompanying the youth.
  2. Explaining the steps for obtaining an Identicard at the local DOL office to the youth. This includes the informing the youth to bring a copy of the completed Identicard request form.
  3. Informing the youth when he or she can obtain his or her Identicard based on the timeframes listed below:
    1. After three business days if the form was electronically submitted.
    2. After seven business days if the form was mailed.
    3. The youth will have up to 60 calendar days to go to the local DOL office to request the Identicard.
    4. After 60 days the caseworker will need to submit a new request.
  4. The caseworker must discuss the procedures in section 2.ii and 2.iii with the caregiver and contracted IL case manager, when applicable, when the caseworker is not accompanying the youth.
3. When requesting an **Instruction Permit or Personal Driver License**, the caseworker must:

1. Verify the youth has a WA state Identocard. If the youth does not have an Identocard.
  1. Complete the WA state Identocard form DSHS 11-07 process outlined in procedure section 1.a.
  2. Submit the completed identocard form **with** the Instruction Permit or Personal Driver License form DSHS 02-636.
2. Submit the original completed Request for Washington State Instruction Permit or Personal Driver License form DSHS **02-636** to DOL in one of the following ways:
  1. First class mail to:  
PO BOX 9030 Olympia WA 98507  
Attn: Driver Examining Foster Care Kids
  2. Scanned and emailed to:  
[DOLSDSHSLETTER@DOL.WA.GOV](mailto:DOLSDSHSLETTER@DOL.WA.GOV)
    1. Send the form as an attached word or adobe document only.
    2. Include in the subject line the last name, first name, middle initial and date of birth of the youth.
    3. Do not leave any spaces between each section. For example John L. Doe born 01/01/1988 would be DoeJohnL010188.
  3. If the Identocard request is being submitted electronically at the same time as the instruction permit or personal driver license request, **send one attachment** to DOL.
3. Inform the youth when he or she can go to the DOL office to obtain the instruction permit or personal driver license based on the timeframes listed below:
  1. After three business days if the form was electronically submitted.
  2. After seven business days if the form was mailed.
  3. The youth will have up to 60 calendar days to go to the local DOL office to request the instruction permit or personal driver license.
  4. After 60 days the caseworker will need to submit a new request
4. Provide the youth and or caregiver with a copy of the completed Request for Washington State Instruction Permit or Personal Driver License form DSHS 02-636.
5. Retain a signed copy in the case file.

## Forms

Request for "Identocard" form DSHS 16-029 reduced fee (Available on the ASD forms drive)  
Request for Washington State Identocard form DSHS 11-077 (Available on the CA Intranet)  
Request for Washington State Instruction Permit or Personal Driver License form DSHS 02-636 (Available on the CA Intranet)

## Resources

[Caregiver Guidelines for Foster Childhood Activities](#)

Washington State Identocard Q&A (Available on the CA Intranet)

# 43104. Transition Plan (for Dependent Youth 17 through 20 Years)

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:** October 4, 2010

**Revised Date:** July 1, 2016

**Sunset Review:** June 30, 2020

## Purpose

The development of a transition plan is crucial to helping dependent youth in out-of-home care prepare for self-sufficiency and supports a smooth and successful transition into adulthood.

## Scope

This policy applies to all Division of Children and Family Services staff.

## Laws

[RCW 74.13.031 \(14\)](#) Provide Independent Living Services to Youth

[RCW 74.13.341](#) Transition plan - Qualification for developmental disability services

[RCW 74.13.540](#) Independent Living Skills

[42 U.S.C. 677](#) John H. Chafee Foster Care Independent Living Act

[PL 113-183](#) Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act

## Policy

1. Dependent youth in out-of-home care 30 days or more must:
  1. Have a [shared planning meeting](#) between ages 17 and 17.5 to discuss and develop a personalized, youth-directed transition plan. This includes inviting all required participants.
  2. Have a completed [Transition Plan form DSHS 15-417](#) (currently named Transition Plan for Youth Exiting Care) 90-days before turning age 18 or for youth electing to participate in the [Extended Foster Care \(EFC\) Program](#) 90 days before exiting the program. The transition plan must:

1. Include all of the following state and federally required information:
  1. Education
  2. Employment
  3. Housing
  4. Health Insurance
  5. Local opportunities for mentors and continuing support
  6. Work force supports and employment services
2. Be attached to the court report:
  1. When submitting a request to dismiss the youth's dependency at age 18;
  2. At each youth's review hearing if participating in the EFC; and
  3. When submitting a request to dismiss the youth's dependency from the [Extended Foster Care Program](#).
3. Be provided with the following items and information prior to the youth's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. This information may be provided throughout the life of the case as needed:
  1. Certified or original birth certificate
  2. Social security card
  3. State issued photo identification
  4. Copies of all medical and education records
  5. Health insurance card
4. Receive assistance to apply for developmental disability services when he or she may be eligible for developmental disability services beyond age 18.

## Procedures

The caseworker must:

1. Assist the youth to identify important persons the youth wants invited to the [shared planning meeting](#).
2. The following required persons must be invited to the [shared planning meeting](#):
  1. All persons identified by the youth.
  2. Representatives from the:
    1. Behavioral Health Administration
    2. Developmental Disabilities Administration
    3. Economic Services Administration
    4. Rehabilitation Administration
    5. Independent Living contractor
3. Invite the following persons to the shared planning meeting, when applicable:
  1. Tribal caseworker
  2. Caregiver
  3. Biological or extended family
  4. Counselor
  5. Child Placing Agency case manager
  6. Probation officer
  7. Representatives from any community agency working with the youth



8. CASA, GAL, or attorney appointed for the youth
4. Conduct a [shared planning meeting](#) between age 17 and 17.5 to develop a transition plan that will assist the youth in a safe and successful transition into adulthood. During the meeting:
  1. Complete the [Transition Plan form DSHS 15-417](#) (currently named Transition Plan for Youth Exiting Care).
  2. Provide written information about the [Extended Foster Care Program](#).
  3. Discuss the importance of obtaining a [Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care](#).
  4. Explain how to access his or her case record after exiting care.
  5. Obtain the youth's signature on the completed [Transition Plan form DSHS 15-417](#) (currently named Transition Plan for Youth Exiting Care).
  6. Provide a copy of the signed transition plan to the youth and retain a copy for the case file.
  7. The meeting must occur even when a youth is on the run. The transition plan should be shared with the youth upon his or her return to care and updated with the youth's input.
5. Review and update the transition plan with the youth during the monthly [health and safety visits](#) and follow-up on any uncompleted tasks identified in the transition plan. This process will continue until the youth leaves foster care at age 18 or the EFC Program if he or she elects to participate.
6. Complete the [Ward of the Court Verification form DSHS 27-056](#) for youth prior to exiting care.
7. Document in FamLink:
  1. The [Shared Planning form DSHS 14-474](#) for all [shared planning meetings](#) within the required documentation timeframes.
  2. The [Transition Plan form DSHS 15-417](#) (currently named Transition Plan for Youth Exiting Care) in the Independent Living page, including all information and documents provided to the youth.
  3. A case note for all monthly [health and safety visits](#).

## **Forms**

[Transition Plan DSHS 15-417](#) (currently named Transition Plan for Youth Exiting Care)

[Ward of the Court Verification DSHS 27-056](#)

[Request for Children's Administration Records DSHS 17-041](#)

[Request for DDA Eligibility Determination DSHS 14-151](#)

## **Resources**

Social Worker Guide to Transition Planning for Youth [DSHS 22-1313](#)

Monthly Health & Safety Visits Child Checklist (available on CA intranet)

17.5 Transition Staffing Q&A (available on CA intranet)

[Independent Living Quick Help Guide](#)

Shared Planning Guide

Pocket Guide [DSHS 22-080](#)

<http://www.uslivingwillregistry.com>

Gameboard

## 43105. Extended Foster Care Program

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Asst. Secretary

**Original Date:** June 22, 2011

**Revised Date:** July 1, 2016

**Sunset Review:** June 30, 2020

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### **Purpose**

The Extended Foster Care (EFC) Program is a voluntary program established to support eligible youth between the ages of 18 and 21 in a successful transition to adulthood through continued foster care placement and services.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to all Division of Children and Family Services staff.

### **Laws**

[RCW 13.34.267](#) Extended Foster Care Services, Maintenance of Dependency Proceedings, Placement Care of Youth, Appointment of Counsel, Case Plan

[RCW 13.34.268](#) Extended Foster Care Services, Voluntary Placement Agreement, Decline, Petition for Dependency

[RCW 74.13.020](#) Definitions

[RCW 74.13.031](#) Dependency Established, Social Worker's Duty to Provide Document Containing Information

[RCW 74.15.020](#) Definitions

[WAC 388-25-0110](#) What is the Effective Date for Termination of Foster Care Payments?

[WAC 388-25-0500 through 388-25-0548](#) Extended Foster Care WACs

[PL 110-351 Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act 2008](#)

## Policy

### 1. Eligibility

1. EFC services must be provided to eligible dependent youth. To be eligible for the EFC program, a youth on his or her 18th birthday must be legally dependent, in foster care and:
  1. Enrolled in high school or a high school equivalency program;
  2. Enrolled, applied for, or can show intent to timely enroll in a post-secondary academic or post-secondary vocational certification program;
  3. Participating in a program or activity designed to promote or remove barriers to employment, including part-time employment;
  4. Employed 80 hours or more a month; or
  5. Unable to engage in any of the above activities due to a documented medical condition
2. CA must verify the youth meets the eligibility criteria prior to enrollment and for every subsequent court review.
3. A tribal dependent youth may be eligible for the EFC program if the tribe's code defines "child" up to the age of 21 and he or she meets the above qualifications.
4. Any youth
  1. In a dependency guardianship established prior to his or her 16th birthday; or
  2. Committed to a Juvenile Rehabilitation institution on his or her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday is not eligible for the EFC Program.
5. EFC youth are eligible for courtesy supervision per the [courtesy supervision policy](#).

### 2. EFC Enrollment on 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday

1. Eligible youth must elect to participate in the EFC program:
  1. Starting on his or her 18th birthday; or
  2. Prior to his or her 19th birthday.
2. The dependency action will be dismissed for dependent youth in foster care who do not elect to participate in the program on his or her 18th birthday. These youth have until their 19th birthday to request participation in the EFC program.
3. Youth can transition between eligibility categories.

4. Youth participating in the EFC program can exit the program at any time.
3. **EFC Enrollment prior to 19<sup>th</sup> Birthday**
  1. Any youth requesting to *re-enter* foster care through the EFC program after his or her case was dismissed must:
    1. Have been legally dependent and in foster care on his or her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday to be eligible for EFC
    2. Meet the eligibility criteria in policy section 1.a.i.-v.
    3. Sign a [Voluntary Placement Agreement \(VPA\) for Extended Foster Care Services DSHS 15-431](#)
  2. For these youth:
    1. Only one VPA can be signed between a youth's 18th and 19th birthday.
    2. Youth's placement in care on a VPA cannot exceed 179 days.
4. **Case Planning and Service Provision**
  1. Provide written information about the EFC program to youth between the age of 17 and 17.5 at the 17.5 Transition Staffing.
  2. All youth in EFC must receive the following:
    1. [Monthly health and safety visits](#).
    2. Regular court reviews.
    3. [Case planning activities](#), including [shared planning meetings](#).
    4. Services tailored to meet their transition needs while participating in the program.
  3. EFC youth may be placed in licensed foster care, with relatives, other suitable adults or in a Supervised Independent Living (SIL) setting. SIL settings must be approved by CA or the court and include, but are not limited to:
    1. Apartments;
    2. Room and board arrangements;
    3. College or university dormitories; and
    4. Shared roommate settings.
  4. EFC youth may leave a placement setting to participate in normal childhood activities for up to 72 hours. Youth may be gone for longer than 72 hours with assigned caseworker approval.
  5. For Interstate Compact Placement of Children (ICPC) cases when:
    1. Washington (WA) is the sending state:
      - The assigned CA caseworker must contact the ICPC Unit to determine if the receiving state will provide courtesy supervision to EFC youth.
      - If receiving state does not provide courtesy supervision, the assigned CA caseworker is responsible for ensuring monthly visits and that case management services are provided.
    2. Washington is the receiving state:
      - Provide EFC services to ICPC youth who were placed in WA state prior to his or her 18th birthday. The sending state must also have an EFC program and request WA to continue to provide this service.
      - EFC is not provided to incoming youth who were not residing in WA prior to their 18th birthday.

## Procedures

### 1. Eligibility

The caseworker must:

1. Verify and document the youth meets eligibility requirements on the EFC Eligibility page in FamLink.
2. If the youth has a documented medical condition that prevents him or her from participating in any of the EFC program eligibility criteria listed in policy section 1. i.-iv., document the medical condition in the following pages in FamLink:
  1. Health/Mental Health
  2. Court Report
  3. EFC Eligibility
  4. Upload any supporting documentation from a licensed medical provider.
3. If the youth has a temporary medical condition, verify continued EFC eligibility during the monthly health and safety visit. This includes reviewing the documentation from the licensed health care provider to determine if updated documentation is needed

### 2. EFC Enrollment on 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday

The caseworker must:

1. Coordinate with the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA), the youth, the youth's assigned CASA/GAL, attorney and court to assist the youth with the decision to enroll in the EFC Program when youth is disabled.
2. Document the youth's decision to participate on the EFC Eligibility page in FamLink.
3. Complete the [Extended Foster Care Participation Agreement form DSHS 10-432](#) with a youth who elects to participate on his or her 18th birthday.
  1. Obtain the youth's signature.
  2. Provide the completed form to all parties involved, including the court.
  3. Upload the signed form into FamLink.
4. If the youth does not elect to participate in the EFC program, request the court to dismiss the dependency. Once the case has been dismissed, end the placement episode in FamLink.

### 3. EFC Enrollment prior to 19<sup>th</sup> Birthday

1. When a youth requests to re-enter foster care to participate in the EFC program prior to his or her 19<sup>th</sup> birthday, the caseworker must:
  1. Connect the youth to an intake worker or ensure the intake is created on the youth's behalf. An intake must be created and assigned to the office where the youth is currently residing.
  2. Determine and document program eligibility on the EFC Eligibility page in FamLink.
  3. If a youth is eligible for EFC:
    1. Obtain the youth's signature on the [Voluntary Placement Agreement \(VPA\) for Extended Foster Care Services DSHS 15-](#)

- [431](#) before youth re-enters care and before the youth's 19<sup>th</sup> birthday. This includes uploading the signed VPA in FamLink.
2. Notify the assistant attorney general within 90 days of youth returning to care once the VPA is signed.
  3. File and establish a non-minor dependency action within 179 days from date the VPA was signed.
  4. Ensure the youth has a completed [Initial Health Screen](#) within the required timeframe.
  5. Create or update the existing [transition plan](#) with the youth prior to the first court review hearing.
4. If a youth is denied:
1. Staff the case with the EFC regional lead prior to sending the EFC denial letter. A youth is only denied access to the EFC program when he or she:
    1. Was not legally dependent and in foster care on his or her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday;
    2. Does not meet any of the eligibility criteria in policy section 1. i.-v. at the time of his or her request;
    3. Had a previous EFC VPA; or
    4. Is 19 years old or older when making the request.
  2. Send the youth an EFC Denial Letter [DSHS 06-165](#) within 10 calendar days of the agency's decision of denial.

#### 4. Case Planning and Service Provision

The caseworker must:

1. Document in a case note in FamLink and court report that the youth has been provided information about the EFC Program prior to his or her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.
2. Complete a new Foster Care Rate Assessment when a youth enters the EFC program and every six months as long as youth remains in a licensed placement.
3. Assess SIL placement settings and coordinate with the EFC regional lead to determine appropriate payment for the caseworker or approved placement setting.
4. Make efforts to find a contracted provider who can provide the required services in the receiving state for ICPC cases when WA is the sending state and the receiving state is not accepting an ICPC request for an EFC youth.
5. Update and attach the [transition plan](#) to the [court report](#).
6. Request court dismissal of the dependency when the youth:
  1. Is not eligible on his or her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.
  2. Is eligible but chooses not to participate in the program on his or her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.
  3. No longer meets eligibility requirements.
  4. Turns 21 years old or leaves the program.
  5. Is not participating with the dependency court order, case plan, or placement rules.
  6. Has left his or her approved placement for more than 72 hours without approval.

7. Has been adjudicated or convicted of a crime and is:
  1. Residing in a Juvenile Rehabilitation institution; or
  2. Incarcerated in a county jail or department of corrections facility.
7. Document in FamLink that the placement has ended once the court dismisses the dependency.

## Forms

[Extended Foster Care Agreement DSHS 10-432](#)

[Voluntary Placement Agreement for Extended Foster Care Services DSHS 15-431](#)

[EFC Denial Letter DSHS 06-165](#)

[Transition Plan DSHS 15-417](#) (currently named Transition Plan for Youth Exiting Care)

[Consent DSHS 14-012](#)

## Resources

[Court Report Policy](#)

[Case Resolution/Closure](#)

Extended Foster Care Supervised Independent Living Fact Sheet (available on the CA intranet)

# 4311. Social Worker Role

1. Social workers have primary responsibility to coordinate the case planning efforts (per [Child Safety Section policy](#)) 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.
2. Information Sharing-Either prior to or soon after placement, the social worker must have a candid discussion with the 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.
  5. The child's right to have reasonable access to uncensored communication (i.e. private telephone calls, uncensored mail) with parents, relatives, and others. Exceptions to the rights result if court orders or case plans restrict the child's contact with certain people for their safety or the safety of others, or for the child's well-being.

3. The social worker must 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.
4. 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.
5. See the Case Services Policy Manual, chapter 4000, section 4120, paragraph A, for requirements to disclose information regarding HIV infection and sexually transmitted diseases to the residential care provider for the child who is less than 14 years of age.

## 4312. Outside Communication for Children in Out-of-Home Care

### Purpose

Evaluate child safety and support to caregivers when determining outside communication with parents, relatives and other important people to the child in out of home care.

### Laws

[RCW 13.34.136](#)

### Policy

1. Children in out-of-home care must have reasonable access to uncensored communication with parents, relatives, and other people important to the child.
2. Communication restrictions must be based on a pending investigation or an identified child safety issue and be addressed in a court order or service plan.
3. Child safety issues must be addressed prior to allowing the child to participate in any communications with parents, relatives or people important to the child.

### Procedures

1. Notify and collaborate with the child (if age appropriate), child's out-of-home caregiver, parent(s), relative(s) and important people to the child to develop the child's communication plan. Communication may include:
  1. Private telephone calls;
  2. Mail and gifts;
  3. Electronic communication (*E-mail and other electronic social networking avenues such as Facebook, My Space and Twitter*). Access to electronic communication is based on reasonable caregiver or social worker discretion and on electronic device availability.
2. Note: Visitation occurs per [4254. Parent-Child-Sibling Visiting Policy](#)



3. Discuss with caregivers any court orders or service plans that restrict the child's contact with family, relative or important people to the child. Limited or censored communication could include:
  1. Opening and reviewing mail for appropriate child related content.
  2. Opening gifts to determine age appropriateness.
  3. Monitoring of email or phone calls for appropriate child related content.
  4. Determining age appropriate use of social networking sites, including limitations. Note: Allowing children access to electronic communication as described above is based on reasonable caregiver discretion and on electronic device availability.
4. Inform caregivers on social networking websites regarding children in out-of-home care must not include:
  1. Child's name
  2. Identify the child as being a foster child.
  3. Discussion about case specific information about the child or the child's family
5. Inform caregivers if there are safety reasons why unidentified photos may not be posted on the caregiver's social networking site(s).
6. Discuss communication planning with the child and caregiver during monthly visits.
7. Conduct when needed, a Shared Planning Meeting if communication needs to be limited or censored due to safety concerns.
8. Document the child's communication plan and any decisions to limit a child's communication in the electronic case file.

## See Also

[2440 Service Agreements Policy](#)

[4301 Shared Planning Policy](#)

# 4313. Notification of Court Hearings to Out-of-Home Caregivers

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:** July 31, 2010

**Revised Date:** October 31, 2016

**Policy Review:** October 31, 2020

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## **Purpose**

Out-of-home caregivers are important and respected team members who have a vital role in meeting the individual needs of children placed in their care. Caregivers must be provided timely notification of court hearings.

## **Scope**

This policy applies to Division of Children and Families staff.

## **Laws**

[RCW 13.34.096](#) Right to be heard notice

[RCW 13.34.260](#) Foster Home Placement - Parental Preferences

[RCW 13.34.820](#) Permanency for Dependent Children Annual Report

## **Policy**

Out-of-home caregivers must be:

1. Notified of all court hearings in a timely manner. Caregivers will be:
  1. Informed of all court hearings via telephone, writing or in-person and their right to be heard at those court hearings.
  2. Notified at the same time parties to the case are required to be notified; even though caregivers are not parties to the dependency action.
  3. Notified at the time of placement or as soon as possible if the child changes placement.
2. Provided the [Caregivers Report to the Court form DSHS 15-313](#). Caregivers will be:
  1. Encouraged to complete and submit the [Caregivers Report to the Court form DSHS 15-313](#) to the guardian ad litem or caseworker before each court hearing.
  2. Informed that the report only includes information about the child and that the report cannot include any information about the child's parent that is not directly related to the child's well-being.

## **Procedures**

Caseworkers will:

1. Document the date the caregiver was notified in the Caregiver Notification page in FamLink.
2. Provide the court with the dates and method by which the caregiver was informed of the court hearing.

## **Forms**

## Resources

A Relatives Guide to Child Welfare Services

# 4330. Open Adoption Agreements

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:** July 1, 1991

**Revised Date:** March 1, 2017

**Policy Review:** March 31, 2020

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## Purpose

Open Adoption Agreements provide communication with or contact between child adoptees, adoptive parents, siblings of child adoptees and a birth parent or parents when it is appropriate and in the child adoptee's best interests.

## Scope

This policy applies to Division of Children and Family Services staff.

## Laws

[RCW 26.33.295](#) Open adoption agreements—Agreed orders - Enforcement.

## Policy

1. Before an Open Adoption Agreement (OAA) can be considered for a dependent child, the caseworker must conduct a [Shared Planning Meeting](#) prior to the termination of parental rights hearing. Attendance must include:
  1. Child's caseworker and supervisor
  2. Adoption caseworker or supervisor
  3. Adopting family and attorney if family desires
  4. Birth parent if applicable and attorney if birth parent desires
  5. Sibling if applicable and developmentally appropriate
  6. Sibling's parent if applicable
  7. Each child's GAL/CASA as applicable
  8. Youth aged 12 or older or as developmentally appropriate

9. Youth's two identified participants other than the caseworker or caregiver
10. Child's attorney if one is appointed
11. Service providers for child as appropriate
2. An OAA can be considered with birth parents and/or siblings when CA and the GAL/CASA determine that post-adoption contact and/or communication is in the child's best interest now and in the future. Best interest of the child includes, but is not limited to, the following:
  1. Continued contact/communication supports the child's:
    1. Sense of well-being and security
    2. Need to maintain connections with biological family members
    3. Stability in the adoptive placement
    4. Desire to maintain contact
  2. Continued contact/communication does not interfere with the physical safety and welfare of the child and the adopting parents.
3. Prior to the court establishing an OAA, the caseworker will discuss with youth age 14 and over (younger if developmentally appropriate) the youth's interests in maintaining contact with birth parents and/or known siblings. The discussion should include:
  1. Type and amount of contact the youth feels would be beneficial.
  2. The youth's understanding of an OAA.
4. A birth parent must have the developmental capacity to understand the terms of an OAA.
5. An OAA with a sibling must have the sibling's parent or guardian consent.
6. An OAA is not legally enforceable unless the terms of the agreement are set forth in a court order.
7. The court will not approve an OAA unless signed by the parties, including the adopting parent(s) and birth parent, but only if parental rights have not been terminated. The agreement must be approved by the child's attorney if applicable, CA and the GAL as being in the child's best interest. Note: CA is not a party to the agreement and is not required to sign the OAA.
8. The caseworker will advise the birth parent and adopting parent to consult their attorney's prior to signing an OAA. Note: The caseworker must not advise the birth parent and adoptive parent on legal matters.
9. The costs and services related to negotiating an OAA may be considered a non-recurring expense under the adoption support program.

## Procedures

The caseworker will:

1. Conduct a [Shared Planning Meeting](#) at least 30 days prior to a termination of parental rights hearing to determine and document in FamLink the following on the [Shared Planning Meeting form, DSHS 14-474](#):
  1. The child is in an adoptive placement and an OAA with the birth parent and/or sibling is in the best interest of the child. Document in a case note:
    1. The benefits to the child's well-being of maintaining contact and/or communication between a birth parent and/or child's sibling and the

- adopting parent and child. If the OAA is with a sibling, that the sibling is placed separately and has an established relationship with the child;
2. That youth age 14 or older (younger if developmentally appropriate) was consulted about the OAA and the youth is in agreement; and
  3. The OAA must specify:
    1. The type of on-going contact and/or communication that is most appropriate for the child now and in the future.
      1. The contact and/or communication must include at a minimum a letter and photo one time per year and may include:
        1. Letters
        2. Limited visitation
        3. Phone contact
        4. Electronic correspondence
        5. Additional Pictures
      2. A physical, mailing, or email address for each legal party if correspondence is a part of the agreement;
      3. That the OAA is effective from the date the adoption is finalized and that any contact in the intervening period shall be at the discretion of the CA; and
      4. That should there be a change in adoptive parents the OAA is not legally binding on future adoptive parents.
2. If a Shared Planning Meeting decision does not support an OAA with:
    1. A birth parent, the caseworker will proceed with the termination of parental rights petition.
    2. A known sibling, the caseworker will document the decision in the child's case record and the sibling's case record if applicable using an Exception to Policy form.
  3. A Letter of Intent can be agreed upon in a shared planning meeting with a birth parent for a child that is not placed in an adoptive home prior to termination of parental rights. The Letter of Intent:
    1. Is not a legally binding contract with CA;
    2. Allows the birth parent to express his/her wishes in terms of contact/communication he/she feels is in the child's best interests;
    3. Must document agreement by CA and the GAL/CASA that the OAA is in the child's best interest;
    4. Will include a statement that CA will make reasonable efforts to locate an adoptive family that will agree to the Letter of Intent conditions;
    5. Will not delay permanency for the child; and
    6. Will identify the type of ongoing communication with the birth parent, parents or siblings that is most appropriate for the child which may include:
      1. Letters
      2. Limited visitation
      3. Phone contact
      4. Electronic correspondence

5. Pictures
2. Notify the AAG regarding CA's position on the OAA or Letter of Intent and the outcome of the Shared Planning Meeting.
3. Prior to filing in court, the OAA must be signed by:
  1. Adoptive family
  2. Birth parent if applicable
  3. Sibling's attorney or GAL if applicable
  4. GAL/CASA
  5. Child's attorney if applicable
4. The signed OAA may be submitted to both the Juvenile Court at the termination hearing and the Superior Court at the adoption hearing.
5. Maintain a copy of the OAA in the child's adoption file (legally free).

## Forms

[Shared Planning Meeting DSHS 14-474](#)

# 4340. Guardianship

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:** February 2004

**Revised Date:** October 31, 2016

**Policy Review:** October 31, 2020

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## Purpose

Guardianships as defined in [RCW 13.36 Guardianship](#) are a permanent plan that allows for and supports a continuing relationship between the parent and child, while providing permanency, safety, and well-being for the child with a legal guardian until he or she reaches the age of 18.

## Scope

This policy applies to Division of Children and Family Services staff.

## Laws

[RCW 13.36](#) Guardianship

[RCW 13.34.030](#) Definitions

[RCW 13.34.145](#) Permanency Planning Hearing and Guardianship Petition

[RCW 13.34.232](#) Guardianship for Dependent Child

[RCW 13.34.234](#) Guardianship for Dependent Child and Dependency Guardianship Subsidies

[RCW 13.36.070](#) Guardianship Termination Petition

[RCW 74.13.031](#) Duties of the Department

[RCW 74.15.020](#) Definition of Relative

## **Policy**

1. Before a permanent plan of guardianship can be considered for a dependent child, a [shared planning meeting](#) must be conducted.
2. During the [shared planning meeting](#), a guardianship can be considered as the child's permanent plan when:
  1. Reunification is not likely in the foreseeable future;
  2. Guardianship rather than adoption is in the child's best interest;
  3. Continuing the parent-child relationship is beneficial to the child and would not disrupt the stability of the guardianship;
  4. The proposed guardian is available to make a commitment to the child until adulthood with the intention of a lifelong commitment;
  5. The proposed guardian has a completed home study with a recommendation for placement;
  6. The child will have been placed in the proposed guardian's home at least six months prior to the guardianship being established; and
  7. The child (as developmentally age appropriate) has been consulted regarding the guardianship and a discussion of the potential benefits and risks of other permanency plans has occurred.
  8. If the child has a sibling in the same placement and the permanent plan for the sibling has been considered in selecting a permanency plan of guardianship.
  9. If a parent is incarcerated.
3. Guardianships can be subsidized, based upon eligibility requirements.
4. CA case management and funded services provided to the child and caregiver prior to the establishment of the guardianship will be terminated when it is finalized.
5. All guardianships must be approved by the regional administrator or designee prior to the worker filing a guardianship petition.
6. Any dependency guardianship established prior to June 10, 2010:
  1. May be converted to a guardianship under the when the guardian and the department have both agreed to convert the existing dependency to a guardianship.
  2. Will remain open for subsidy or services payments but must be closed when the child reaches 18 years old.
  3. Will not receive any additional services on converted guardianship cases.

7. A guardianship will not be vacated or a Voluntary Placement Agreement (VPA) accepted in order to make a child eligible for foster care or extended foster care services.
8. When the guardianship is established by the court, the child's dependency will be dismissed.

## Procedures

The caseworker will:

1. Conduct a [shared planning meeting](#) prior to making permanency planning recommendations to the court. During the shared planning meeting:
  1. Discuss and consider the following permanent planning options:
    1. Return home
    2. Adoption
    3. Guardianship
    4. Non-Parental Custody
  2. Determine if guardianship as the permanent plan is in the child's best interest. This determination includes documenting the:
    1. Reasons why a guardianship is in the best interest of this child.
    2. Proposed guardian's:
      1. Commitment to be a permanent home for the child.
      2. Understanding of the requirements to receive guardianship subsidy per the [43401 Relative Guardianship Assistance Program \(R-GAP\) policy](#).
      3. Ability to meet the child's existing connections to family, friends and community.
      4. Agreement with the plan of guardianship with the specific child.
2. Confirm that the proposed guardian has a completed home study that recommends placement.
3. Verify and document the caregiver has been provided with an explanation of both adoption and guardianship.
  1. Provide and discuss the [Permanency Planning Matrix DSHS 16-231](#) with caregiver, youth as appropriate and the parents. Document these discussions in a case note.
  2. Discuss and document in a case note or [Shared Planning Meeting DSHS 14-474](#) form that the following elements were explained to the proposed guardian:
    1. The following services are not available under a guardianship, including but not limited to:
      1. Mileage reimbursement
      2. Travel reimbursement
      3. Respite care
      4. Clothing vouchers
      5. Child care
      6. Case aid services
      7. Tutoring



8. Case management services
9. Educational support
10. Parent-child visitation support
2. When a guardianship is established, the child is not in foster care and all CA funded services including case management are no longer available.
3. He or she may request additional services through community resources or Family Voluntary Services, Family Reconciliation Services or referrals to other services through CA. Available services are dependent upon program eligibility criteria.
4. The difference between subsidized and unsubsidized guardianships:
  1. Subsidized guardianships may be established if the proposed guardian is a foster licensed relative and the child is Title IVE eligible, per [43401 R-GAP](#) policy. If the guardianship is subsidized, the caseworker must:
    1. Notify the R-GAP gatekeeper.
    2. Verify that the R-GAP agreement is signed prior to establishing the guardianship.
  2. Unsubsidized guardianships can be established. The caseworker must provide the proposed guardian with information on the benefits available to him or her and how to request benefits through the Community Services Office in the Economic Services Administration.
4. When a determination has been made to establish a guardianship, prior to submitting a guardianship petition to the court, the caseworker will:
  1. Collaborate with the proposed guardian and the child's parents to establish a visitation plan.
  2. Complete the [Guardianship Approval Checklist DSHS 15-324](#) and attach the following required documents to the checklist:
    1. A copy of the completed shared planning meeting form.
    2. A copy of the proposed visitation plan between the child and parents.
    3. The signed Declaration of Proposed Guardian form.
  3. If the proposed guardian is a relative, provide him or her with the R-GAP paperwork to complete and submit to the R-GAP gatekeeper. The R-GAP agreement must be signed prior to entry of a guardianship order per the [43401 R-GAP](#) policy.
  4. Provide disclosure to the proposed guardian, as required on [Guardianship Approval Checklist DSHS 15-324](#).
  5. Obtain approval of the [Guardianship Approval Checklist DSHS 15-324](#) from his or her supervisor, area administrator and regional administrator or designee.
  6. Submit a request to the assistant attorney general (AAG) to file a guardianship petition. Provide the AAG with the signed Declaration of Proposed Guardian court document and proposed visitation plan. This can only occur after the checklist has been approved by all parties.
5. When a guardianship is established, the caseworker will:
  1. Contact the AAG to request that the court dismiss the dependency.
  2. Terminate all services and placement when the guardianship is finalized.

3. Terminate case management and the borrowed bed fees, if applicable when the guardianship is finalized on families that are licensed by a private agency.
4. Transfer guardianship cases eligible for subsidy to the R-GAP gatekeeper.
5. Close the case, if the guardianship is unsubsidized.

## Forms

[Shared Planning Meeting DSHS 14-474](#)

[Permanency Planning Matrix DSHS 16-231](#)

Declaration of Proposed Guardian Court Form Title 13 Guardianship

[Guardianship Approval Checklist DSHS 15-324](#)

## Resources

Q&A Caregivers

Q&A Social Workers

# 43401. Relative Guardianship Assistance Program (R-GAP)

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Effective Date:** June 10, 2010

**Revised Date:** March 31, 2017

**Sunset Review:** March 31, 2021

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## Purpose

The Relative Guardianship Assistance Program (R-GAP) provides a subsidy for children placed with a qualified licensed relative when it is determined during a [shared planning meeting](#) that a [guardianship](#) is in the child's best interests.

## Scope

This policy applies to all Children Administration staff.

## Laws

- [RCW 13.34](#) Juvenile Court Act, Dependency and Termination of Parent-Child Relationship Chapter
- [RCW 13.36](#) Guardianship Chapter
- [RCW 74.13.031](#) Duties of the Department, Child Welfare Services, Children's Services Advisory Committee
- Public Law 113-183 Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act
- Social Security Act Sections 471(a)(20)(C), 473(d)(1) and 473 (d)(3)(C)
- [RCW 74.15.020](#) Definitions
- [RCW 13.38.040](#) Definitions

## Policy

1. R-GAP includes a monthly subsidy and Medicaid benefits for the child and is available to support a child's care with a licensed relative caregiver.
2. A child is eligible for R-GAP if he or she meets the following eligibility requirements:
  1. Placed for at least six consecutive months with a relative caregiver who has been licensed for six months.
  2. Is title IVE eligible as determined by a title IVE specialist prior to establishing the guardianship.
  3. Placed with a relative who meets the definition of relative per [RCW 74.15.020\(2\)\(a\) Relative Definitions](#); or
  4. Is an Indian child and the caregiver meets the definition of relative by tribal code and custom.
3. A child also qualifies for R-GAP when his or her sibling is placed with the same licensed relative and the sibling qualified for R-GAP subsidy.
4. Relative caregivers must be provided with an explanation of R-GAP when [guardianship](#) is being considered as a potential permanent plan for the child.
5. The R-GAP subsidy will continue for youth on their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday up to age 21 when one of the following applies:
  1. Youth achieved permanency through guardianship at the age of 16 or older and the youth is:
    1. Enrolled in high school or in a high school equivalency program;
    2. Enrolled, applied for, or can show intent to timely enroll in a post-secondary academic or post-secondary vocational certification program;
    3. Participating in a program or activity designed to promote or remove barriers to employment; or
    4. Employed 80 hours or more a month.
    5. Unable to engage in any of the above activities due to a documented medical condition.
  2. Youth achieved permanency through a guardianship and has a mental or physical handicap which warrants the continuation of assistance.
6. The Relative Guardianship Assistance Agreement (R-GAP Agreement):
  1. Is a contract between the relative guardian and CA.
  2. Must be signed prior to establishing a guardianship court ruling or order.

3. Remains in effect regardless of the guardian's state of residence unless the agreement is terminated.
7. In the event of the death or incapacity of the legal guardian, the R-GAP subsidy and Medicaid for the child will transfer to a successor legal guardian if named in the original R-GAP Agreement or R-GAP Amendment prior to the death or incapacity of the legal guardian.
  1. The R-GAP Agreement must be amended prior to the establishment of the guardianship with the successor guardian. Prior to the R-GAP payment:
    1. The successor guardian must become the child's legal guardian.
    2. The R-GAP Gatekeeper will complete:
      1. Fingerprint-based background check of the successor guardian; and
      2. Child abuse and neglect registry checks in-state (FamLink) and out-of-state on the guardians and other adults 18 and older living in the guardian's home.
    3. The successor guardian must pass a background check.
  2. The successor guardian does not need to be a relative and does not need to be licensed as a foster parent to receive the R-GAP subsidy.
  3. CA will pay nonrecurring expenses associated with obtaining the new legal guardianship of the child up to a maximum amount of \$2000.00.
8. A fair hearing may be requested by any relative caregiver whose R-GAP application has been denied. A request for a fair hearing must be made within 30 days of the denial letter being mailed to the caregiver.

## Procedures

1. If a [guardianship](#) is being considered as the child's permanent plan, the assigned worker must determine whether the child meets the following R-GAP requirements:
  1. Has resided in the home of the licensed relative for six consecutive months and the relative caregiver has been licensed for at least six months at the time of R-GAP application;
  2. Found by the court to be a dependent child of Washington state; and
  3. Consents to the guardianship as his or her permanent plan if he or she is 14 years old and older.
2. When a licensed caregiver is interested in receiving R-GAP subsidy for an eligible child:
  1. The assigned worker will:
    1. Complete the Guardianship Approval Checklist DSHS 15-324;
    2. Complete Sections I and V of the Title IVE R-GAP Eligibility form DSHS 14-319A;
    3. Provide proposed relative guardian with the R-GAP Application and Worksheet (DSHS 15-392 and 15-390); and
    4. Provide the Regional R-GAP Gatekeeper with a completed R-GAP subsidy packet, which includes:
      1. Title IVE R-GAP Eligibility form DSHS 14-319A;
      2. R-GAP Application DSHS 15-392;

3. R-GAP Worksheet DSHS 15-390;
  4. Guardianship Approval Checklist DSHS 15-324 signed by regional administrator or designee, with attachments.
  5. A copy of the proposed guardian's foster license, if license is not in FamLink.
  6. If the child is Indian, a letter from the child's tribe determining that the proposed guardian is considered the child's relative based on tribal code or custom.
2. The Regional R-GAP Gatekeeper will:
    1. Review the completed R-GAP application packet.
    2. Initiate the R-GAP IVE Eligibility tab in FamLink and complete Section 1 using R-GAP IVE Eligibility form DSHS 14-319A.
    3. Notify IV-E specialists to complete IV-E Federal Funding Eligibility Determination for R-GAP in FamLink.
    4. Document the information from the R-GAP Worksheet into the FamLink R-GAP agreement.
    5. Negotiate the monthly subsidy amount with the proposed guardian and approve any non-recurring expenses for the finalization of the guardianship. The R-GAP monthly subsidy amount cannot exceed 80% of the amount the child would receive if the child were in a licensed foster family home.
    6. Launch the R-GAP Agreement in FamLink and send to the proposed relative caregiver for signature.
    7. Submit the signed R-GAP Agreement to the appointing authority for signature.
    8. Notify the assigned caseworker that the R-GAP Agreement has been signed and that the guardianship hearing can take place.
    9. Provide a signed copy of the R-GAP Agreement to the proposed guardian.
  3. When the guardianship is established, the assigned worker will:
    1. Notify the Regional R-GAP Gatekeeper on the date the guardianship is established.
    2. Close all services and payments in FamLink the day prior to the date the guardianship was established.
    3. Update and close legal and placement in FamLink.
  4. When the Regional R-GAP Gatekeeper is notified of the guardianship, he or she will:
    1. Review the case in FamLink to ensure that placement, legal, services and payments are closed.
    2. Authorize appropriate R-GAP services in FamLink for the agreed upon monthly subsidy and agreed upon non-recurring expenses.
    3. Update provider information by adding the child to the FamLink "Non-CA Children in Placement" group box on the Placement tab in Provider Maintenance.
    4. Create amendments to the R-GAP Agreement upon the request of the relative guardian and agreement of the department.

5. Create an amendment to the R-GAP Agreement transferring the subsidy to the named successor legal guardian in the event of the death or incapacity of the legal guardian.
6. End the R-GAP service payment and open the R-GAP over 18 service code for eligible youth.
7. Terminate the R-GAP Agreement according to the terms of the agreement or if one of the following occurs:
  1. The child reaches 18 years of age unless eligible to continue to age 21.
  2. The guardian is no longer providing financial support for the child.
  3. The guardian no longer has legal responsibility for the child, unless a successor guardian has been named and the guardian is deceased or incapacitated.
  4. The guardian or child dies.

## Forms and Tools

- R-GAP Agreement (Launched in FamLink)
- R-GAP Application and Worksheet (DSHS 15-392 and 15-390) (available on the CA intranet)
- IV-E Eligibility Determination ([DSHS 14-319](#))
- Declaration of Proposed Guardian (available on the CA intranet)
- Guardianship Approval Checklist (DSHS 15-324)

## Resources

- Permanency Planning Benefits and Limitations (available on CA intranet)
- Q&A Social Workers (available on the CA intranet)
- [Medicaid to 26 Q&A](#)
- [ICW Manual](#)

# 4350. Status of Relatives of Specified Degree with Legally Free Children

1. 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 the department. RCW 13.34.180, 13.34.210, 26.33.295, and 74.15.020
2. 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.

3. CA staff must treat relatives of specified degree as the staff treats all relatives of specified degree under the rules of the foster care and foster family home licensing programs.
4. CA staff must treat these affected relatives of specified degree the same as all relatives of specified degree under the Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children (ICPC) program.
5. 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.
6. 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. Ability to meet the cultural needs of the child. A placement resource need not be of the same ethnic background as the child in order to meet the ethnic or cultural needs of the child. Unless a compelling reason is identified, CA staff will not match children to a placement family on the basis of race.
7. The rights of relatives of legally free Indian children, as defined in the CA Indian Child Welfare (ICW) policies and procedures, the Tribal-Washington State Indian Child Welfare Agreement of 1987, and the federal Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978 must be preserved in accordance with those requirements.

## **4400. Concurrent TANF Benefits**

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Effective Date:**

**Revised Date:** July 31, 2015

**Sunset Review:** July 31, 2018

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**Purpose**

Family(s) receiving TANF benefits prior to child(ren) entering out-of-home care may be eligible for 180 days of ongoing benefits to support the goal of reunification. TANF benefits support families by maintaining housing and access to services or community supports.

## Scope

This policy applies to all Children's Administration caseworkers and supervisors.

## Laws

[WAC 388-454-0015](#)

## Policy

1. CA will notify Economic Services Administration (ESA) when a child is removed from a parent receiving TANF benefits.
2. CA will coordinate efforts with ESA to continue the parent's eligibility for 180 days of ongoing TANF benefits when the primary permanency plan is reunification within 180 days of Original Placement Date (OPD).

## Procedures

The assigned caseworker will:

1. Notify ESA by completing and emailing the [Concurrent TANF Benefits/Family Reunification Notice of Removal from TANF Home DSHS 15-362](#) within 7 business days of the child's removal from the parent's home.
2. Provide ESA with demographic information and permanency planning information to determine the parent's ongoing eligibility for TANF benefits while their child(ren) are in out-of-home care.
3. Update [DSHS 15-362](#) and email ESA a request for an extension of benefits beyond 180 days if the child(ren) continues in out-of-home care beyond 180 days and the primary plan remains reunification.
4. Provide ESA with case updates and family progress, including the information outlined below:
  1. On open TANF Cases:
    1. Case and service plan updates:
      1. Prior to the 6 month dependency review hearing.
      2. Prior to the first permanency review hearing if an exception to rule (ETR) has been granted.
    2. Notification:
      1. When reunification of the child(ren) is imminent.
      2. When the permanent plan changes.
      3. When the assigned caseworker changes.
  2. On Closed TANF Cases:



1. Refer parent(s) for new TANF application 30 days prior to the child(ren) returning home if they were previously receiving TANF benefits.
2. Notify ESA that the parent has been referred.
5. Document communication with ESA and decisions in FamLink.

## Forms and Tools

[Concurrent TANF Benefits/Family Reunification Notice of Removal from TANF Home DSHS 15-362](#)

## Resources

Interagency Concurrent Benefits On-Line Training in LMS

# 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. CA authorizes and provides all services within the context of a time-limited, goal-oriented case plan.

# 4413. Information Sharing with Out-of-home Caregivers

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:** September 27, 1995

**Revised Date:** October 31, 2016

**Policy Review:** October 31, 2020

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## Purpose

Share all known safety, permanency and well-being information about the child to the child's caregiver when a child is placed in out-of-home care.

## Scope

This policy applies to Division of Children and Family Services staff.

## Laws

[RCW 74.13.280](#) Client Information

[RCW 26.44.030](#) Reports

## Policy

1. Out-of-home placement caregivers must be provided with all information known about each child being placed in his or her care.
2. When placing a youth identified as sexually aggressive youth (SAY) or physically assaultive and aggressive youth (PAAY), the [SAY 45361](#) and [PAAY policy 45362](#) must be followed.

## Procedures

The caseworker must:

1. Share current and updated child specific documents and information with out-of-home caregivers, including but not limited to:
  1. Child specific safety concerns and safety planning.
  2. The child's case plan for permanency and well-being.
  3. Information on all youth identified as SAY, PAAY, high risk, and sexually reactive/problematic per [RCW 74.13.280](#) and [4536 SAY/PAAY](#) policy.
  4. Youth Supervision Plan DSHS 15-352.
  5. [Child Information/Placement Referral form \(CIPR\) DSHS 15-300](#).
    1. No later than 72 hours after initial placement.
    2. No later than 24 hours after an urgent change in placement. Urgent is defined as one of the following:
      1. A court order has been entered requiring an immediate change in placement.
      2. The child is unsafe.
    3. At or before a planned change in placement.
    4. Document that the completed CIPR form was provided to the caregiver by uploading into FamLink a:
      1. Signed and dated copy of the form; or
      2. Copy of the email sending the completed form to the caregiver.
  6. Health, mental health and education information from FamLink when new health, mental health or education information is obtained about the child.
  7. Child Health and Education Tracking (CHET) Screening Report DSHS 14-444 within the first 60 days of initial placement, if completed.
  8. On-going Mental Health Screening Report DSHS 13-476 if completed within the previous six months.

9. Recommendations and reports resulting from all assessments and screenings within 5 days of receipt.
  10. [Dates and times of court hearings and Caregiver's Report to the Court DSHS 15-313.](#)
  11. [Child's Court Report DSHS 27-095.](#)
  12. [Shared planning meeting](#) notices.
2. Document when and what information has been shared with the caregiver in a case note.
  3. Notify and share information with the child's Guardian Ad Litem or Court-Appointed Special Advocate, if assigned, when an intake report is received alleging abuse or neglect of a dependent child.

## **Forms**

Youth Supervision and Safety Plan Tips (available on the CA intranet)

Youth Supervision Plan DSHS 15-352 (available on the CA intranet)

[Report to the Court DSHS 15-313](#)

[Child Information Placement Referral form DSHS 15-300](#)

## **Resources**

[Permanency Planning Practice Guide](#)

[Information Sharing Quick Reference](#)

# **4420. Health and Safety Visits with Children and Monthly Visits with Caregivers and Parents**

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:** April 30, 2007

**Revised Date:** October 31, 2016

**Sunset Review:** October 31, 2020

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## **Purpose**

Face-to-face visits with children who have an open case with CA and regular visits with out-of-home caregivers and all known parents provides opportunity for ongoing assessments of the health, safety, and well-being of children. Regular visits with out-of-home caregivers increase opportunities to monitor child safety, can promote permanency, and provides the worker with information they can share with the parent. Regular visits with parents can provide the parent with reassuring information about how his/her child is doing in placement, monitors progress with services and case goals, shorten length-of-stay and achieve permanency more quickly.

## Scope

This policy applies to CA staff.

## Laws

[Social Security Act 424\(f\)](#)

[RCW 74.13.031 Duties of department](#)

[RCW 74.13.710 Prudent Parent Standards](#)

## Policy

1. **All health and safety visits and monthly visits** must be conducted by the assigned CA worker or another qualified CA staff. The number of visits conducted by another qualified CA staff is not to exceed four times per year with no two visits occurring in consecutive months.
2. Children in CA custody, or with a Child Protective Services (CPS) or Family Reconciliation Services (FRS) case open beyond 60 days or receiving family voluntary services (FVS) must receive private, individual face-to-face health and safety visits **every calendar month**. Additionally:
  1. The first health and safety visit must occur within one week (seven calendar days) of the child's initial placement or any change of placement. Placement of a child is not considered a health and safety visit.
  2. The **majority** of health and safety visits must occur in the home where the child resides. If the assigned CA worker must visit the child in another location, the CA worker must document the reason and benefit gained.
  3. When children are on an in-home dependency or trial return home all health and safety visits must occur in the home where the child resides. (This requirement does not preclude additional visits outside the home.)
  4. For in-home dependency or trial return cases with children age five or younger, two in-home health and safety visits must occur every calendar month for the first 120 calendar days from establishment of the in-home dependency or trial return home. (One of the two visits may be conducted by a qualified CA staff or contracted provider.)

5. For FVS cases, with children age five or younger and residing in the home, two in-home health and safety visits must occur every calendar month. (One of the two visits may be conducted by a qualified CA staff or contracted provider).
3. **Out-of-home caregivers** must receive face-to-face monthly visits.
  1. CA workers must conduct an unannounced monthly visit with caregivers in 10 percent of randomly selected homes. The caregivers requiring an unannounced visit are randomly selected in FamLink.
  2. Visits with children and caregivers may occur during the same monthly visit.
  3. Location of the monthly visit may vary.
4. **All known parents or legal guardians** involved in a Voluntary Placement Agreement (VPA), shelter care, dependency proceedings or voluntary services (FVS or FRS) must receive face-to-face monthly visits with the majority of visits occurring in the parent's home. Unless an exception (outlined in procedures) exists, visits must continue until one of the following apply:
  1. The case is closed
  2. The child becomes legally free.
  3. The court determines that reasonable efforts toward reunification are no longer required
5. All visits must be documented in FamLink **within three calendar days** of the visit.

## Procedures

1. The assigned CA worker or another qualified CA worker conducts visits on the following cases:
  1. Out-of-home care: including when a **dependency** petition is filed or dependency is established and the court has ordered that the child reside in out-of-home placement.
  2. [Extended Foster Care](#) cases.
  3. [In-home dependencies](#): including dependent children who return home on a trial return home or remain home under the jurisdiction of the court and until dismissal of the dependency.
  4. Voluntary placement cases: when the child is placed under a [VPA](#).
  5. [Courtesy Supervision](#) cases.
  6. [Interstate Compact on Placement of Children \(ICPC\)](#) cases. When an interstate compact agreement is made with another state to provide services, the CA worker will request, in writing, the following actions be completed by the receiving state:
    1. Conduct monthly face-to-face visits; and
    2. Submit a written report to CA quarterly on the frequency and quality of the visits. The CA worker will check in by telephone or email monthly and document the contact. Once the quarterly report is received, the assigned CA worker will enter the dates of the monthly face-to-face visits, a summary of the report and respond to any concerns.  
Note: The receiving state may contract with a private agency for monthly face-to-face visits. The reporting requirements are the same.
  7. Voluntary services cases including FVS and FRS.

8. CPS cases open beyond 60 days.
2. Requirements for **Health and Safety Visits with Children**

The following activities must be completed during the visit:

  1. Assess for present danger per [Child Safety Policy](#).
  2. Observe:
    1. How the child appears developmentally, physically and emotionally;
    2. How the parent or caregiver and the child respond to each other;
    3. The child's attachment to the parent or caregiver; and
    4. The home environment (when the visit occurs in the home where the child lives). If there are changes to a licensed foster home (such as new family members) the CA worker must notify the licensor.
  3. Discuss with the verbal child in private, separate from the parent or out-of-home caregiver, either in the home or in another location where the child is comfortable:
    1. Whether the child feels safe in his or her home or placement.
    2. The child's needs, wants and progress.
    3. How visits with siblings and parents are going.
    4. The child's connections with siblings and other relatives. For youth 16 and above, this includes discussing skills and strategies to:
      1. Safely reconnect with any identified family members.
      2. Provide guidance and services to assist the youth.
      3. Maintain community and cultural connections
    5. Participation and interest in normal childhood activities.
    6. Case activities and planning such as visits and permanent plan.
  4. Confirm that each child capable of reading, writing and using the telephone has a card with the assigned CA worker's name, office address, and phone number.
  5. Discuss specific objectives outlined in the [43066. Pregnant and Parenting Policy](#) with pregnant and parenting youth.
3. Requirements for **monthly visits with the out-of home caregiver**

The following activities must be completed during the visit:

  1. Discuss the child's well-being and permanency goals;
  2. Observe the child and caregiver relationship and home environment when a visit occurs in the caregiver's home;
  3. Assess the caregiver's ability to provide adequate care and maintain placement stability.
  4. Identify any support or training needs.
  5. Inquire about the child's visits with siblings and parents and how child is responding.
  6. Discuss any normal childhood activities in which the child is participating, or is interested in or maintains his or her community or cultural connections.
  7. Discuss any requests to significantly change the child's appearance. Significant changes include, but are not limited to, body piercings, haircuts and changes in hairstyles. Prior approval must be obtained from the parent (Tribe, if child is legally free) or court.
  8. Share the parent's interest in the child's care and requests for the child's participation in normal childhood activities.

4. The unannounced monthly visit with the out-of-home caregiver must be conducted within 30 days of receiving the automated notification from FamLink.
  1. During the visit the CA worker will complete the same activities (outlined in procedures) for scheduled monthly visits.
  2. When the unannounced visit occurs within the monthly visit timeline, this visit meets the monthly caregiver visit requirement in addition to the unannounced monthly visit requirement.
5. Requirements for **monthly visits with known parents or legal guardians**.  
Focus on the following during the visit:
  1. Case planning, service delivery and goal achievement;
  2. Progress made to eliminate or manage the identified child safety threats;
  3. Barriers to needed services, consideration of additional or different services;
  4. Discuss housing stability, i.e.) where is the parent living and how long can they remain in their current home;
  5. Permanency planning for the child;
  6. Child and parent visitation;
  7. Review of a child's interest in and participation in normal childhood activities; and
  8. Any requests to significantly change the child's appearance. Significant changes include, but are not limited to, body piercings, haircuts, and changes in hairstyles. Prior approval must be obtained from the parent (tribe if child is legally free) or court.
6. Coordination with Federally Recognized Tribes  
The assigned CA worker:
  1. Contact the child's Tribes to discuss and plan how to involve the Tribes in the monthly visits. Documents the contact and plan in the case notes.
  2. Contact non-federally recognized tribes when a parents wants the Tribe's involvement and has signed a release.
7. Documentation  
The assigned worker or another qualified CA worker who conducted the visit must document health and safety visits in case notes within three calendar days of each visit in the following manner:
  1. Use the following codes for visits and attempted visits **for all children**
    1. Health and Safety Monitoring Visit (CA Social Worker).
    2. Health and Safety Visit with Child (Attempted). \*Use to document efforts to conduct the health and safety visit. An actual visit must take place for compliance with policy.
    3. Health and Safety Monitoring Visit (Conducted by other agency) for:
      1. FVS cases where a contracted provider conducts the visit.
      2. For out-of-state ICPC cases where another agency conducts the visits.
  2. When allowed, a visit by a CPA worker does not relieve CA workers from completing their monthly visits. Both visits **must** be documented in FamLink.
  3. Use the following codes for **visits with out-of-home caregivers**:
    1. Monthly Caregiver Contact (in-person) for each child (on a case) who requires a visit.

2. Unannounced Assigned CA Worker Monthly Visit (randomly selected visit)
  1. Unannounced Health and Safety Visit; or
  2. Unannounced Health and Safety Visit Attempted.
4. Document caseworker visits with each **parent** for each child on a case who requires a visit. Select and use the following parent visitation activity codes::
  1. Visit-SW Parent (Mother).
  2. Visit-SW Parent (Father).
  3. Visit-SW Parent (Attempted).
8. Monthly Visit Exceptions
  1. CA workers will use and document only the following visit exceptions on the Extension/Exception Page in FamLink:
    1. The mother or father's whereabouts is unknown after performing ongoing diligent efforts as per Guidelines for Reasonable Efforts to Locate Children and/or Parents (DSHS 02-607) & [5750 Shelter Care Policy](#) to locate them.
    2. A parent was located and indicated no interest in being involved in the child's life or refuses to have contact with the agency.
    3. Visits between the CA worker and the father or mother is contrary to the child or CA worker safety.
    4. Parental rights for the mother or father were terminated with no plan for parental involvement.
    5. Father or mother is deceased.
  2. Supervisors must approve the visit exception within three (3) calendar days of social worker's request and discuss during [Monthly Supervisory Case Reviews](#), per policy.

## Resources

[Caregiver Guidelines for Foster Childhood Activities](#)

CA Caseworker Monthly Visits with Out-of-Home Caregivers (Available on CA Intranet)

CA Caseworker Health & Safety Visits with Child (Available on CA Intranet)

Monthly Visits with Parents Desk Aide (Available on CA Intranet)

Travel Quick Reference Guide (Available on CA Intranet)

# 44201. Social Worker Monthly Health and Safety Visits for Youth in JRA Facilities

## Purpose



Monthly contacts by a CA social worker with a dependent youth committed to Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration (JRA) addresses on-going case planning issues and treatment progress to support the youth's permanency following discharge.

## **Policy**

1. The CA social worker will talk with the JRA counselor and dependent youth each month and address treatment progress, case planning, discharge planning, and other relevant monthly visit issues.
2. The CA social worker will determine on a case-by-case basis the frequency of the face-to-face contact with the youth based on individual case needs.

## **Procedure**

1. Contact JRA counselor and dependent youth on a monthly basis. Contact may be by phone or in person.
2. Document contact in FamLink using the "Health and Safety monitoring visit conducted by other agency" code.
3. Consider the following factors when determining if a face to face visit should occur:
  1. Current needs of the youth based on consultation with the JRA counselor and youth.
  2. Legal status of the youth.
  3. Involvement of the youth's family.
  4. Contact with other significant adults outside the facility.
  5. Permanent plan and necessary steps to achieve it.
  6. Length of time until discharge, with particular consideration given to attendance at the Pre-Release Transition Planning meeting.
4. Coordinate schedules with the JRA counselor and youth at a time most appropriate to the youth's treatment program and school schedule.

Note: Do not request courtesy supervision for monthly visits with dependent youth in JRA, as it does not meet the purpose of the policy.

# **4421. Smoking Near Children**

## **Purpose**

This policy ensures compliance with RCW 74.13 that sets child safety as a paramount goal in caring for children who are in the department's custody. The legislature has recognized "the increasing evidence that tobacco in closely confined places may create a danger to the health of some citizens of this state". The State Department of Health and the American Lung Association have both issued reports concluding that second hand smoke is particularly harmful to children. Additionally RCW chapter 70.160 prohibits smoking in any public place except for designated smoking areas.

## **Policy**

The policy prohibits smoking by CA staff when acting in any official capacity with client children and foster youth 18-21 years of age. Smoking is prohibited while transporting client children under age 18 and foster youth 18-21 years of age when using either state vehicles or private vehicles. It further prohibits smoking when there is direct contact with client children under age 18 and foster youth 18-21 years of age such as talking with a child outside of a building, going to a cafe for refreshments, or any public venue where smoking may be permitted.

## **Definitions**

1. A "public place" is defined as "that portion of any building or vehicle used by and open to the public, regardless of whether the vehicle is owned in whole or in part by private persons or entities, the state of Washington, or other public entity, and regardless of whether a fee is charged for admission".
2. "CA staff" refers to all employees of the Children's Administration of the Department of Social and Health Services and also includes volunteers, and interns. After July 1, 2004, contractors shall be subject to the same restrictions under this policy as CA staff.
3. "Client Children" refers to any child(ren) that is receiving services from DSHS in any capacity.

## **Procedure**

1. Smoking Prohibited in Presence of Client Children and Foster Youth:
  1. Pursuant to CA Policy 02-10 (applicable to contractors after July 1, 2004), smoking in the presence of DCFS client children is prohibited under the following circumstances:
    1. When transporting client children under age 18 and foster youth 18-21 years of age;
    2. When there is direct contact with client children under age 18 and foster youth 18-21 years of age such as talking with a child or accompanying a child, even when in a public place where smoking may otherwise be permitted; and
    3. The contractors shall ensure that after July 1, 2004, the Contractor's staff, employees, volunteers, and subcontractors comply with the policy against smoking in the presence of client children and foster youth as outlined above.

# **4422. Guidelines for Client Referrals to Contractors**

1. Social Workers must provide contractors with written information regarding referred cases. The release of information to contracting agencies is permitted under RCW

13.50.100. 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 report to the court.
2. 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.

## 4430. Courtesy Supervision

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:** 2002

**Revised Date:** July 1, 2016

**Policy Review:** July 1, 2020

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### **Purpose**

Courtesy supervision is provided for children in the care and custody of Children's Administration (CA) when placement in another CA office service area is necessary. This policy establishes clear communication and service provision requirements for caseworkers sharing courtesy supervision cases in order to provide for the child's safety, well-being and permanency needs.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) caseworkers.

## Policy

1. All CA offices will provide courtesy supervision when requested by a sending CA office for a child in CA's care and custody, and placed outside the sending office's area. Reasons for the child's move from the sending office area include:
  1. A child and his or her parent or caregiver has moved.
  2. A permanent or other relative placement has been located.
  3. A specific need for specialized medical, emotional or educational services not available near the child's current placement .
  4. A specific need for placement in a specialized home or facility due to the child's behavior.
  5. A child and his or her siblings can be placed together.
  6. Compliance with state and federal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) placement preference.
2. A [shared planning](#) or [FTDM](#) staffing must occur when requested by the sending or receiving caseworker.
3. If there is a disagreement about an unmet need related to the child's safety, well-being or permanency, the sending or receiving supervisor will request a meeting to occur between the offices as soon as possible.
4. Conflicts will be resolved at the lowest level possible. If the conflict is unresolved, the regional administrators (RAs) or their designees will work toward resolution.
5. **Sending courtesy supervision requests**
  1. The caseworker must:
    1. Send a completed [Courtesy Supervision Referral DSHS 10-459](#) to the gatekeepers in the sending and receiving regions within 72 hours when a child has moved or will be moving.
    2. For a planned placement move, conduct an FTDM. For an emergent placement move, notify a supervisor in the receiving office within 24 hours of the move and, if not already completed, request household safety inspection using [DSHS 10-453](#).
    3. Update the placement in FamLink within 72 hours of a placement move.
    4. Provide and review the following information with the prospective caregiver prior to or at the time of placement:
      - A. Child Information and Placement Referral form [DSHS 15-300](#)
      - B. [Placement Agreement Form DSHS 15-281](#)
      - C. Documentation about how to access medical, educational and behavioral treatment for the child.
    5. Verify the following information is in FamLink:
      1. Current court order.
      2. [Placement Agreement DSHS 15-281, if completed](#).
      3. [Home Study Request](#) if completed. If not, complete within 30 calendar days. See [5100. Completing the Home Study](#) policy.

4. Child Information and Placement Referral form DSHS 15-300 is signed by the caregiver or verified by email receipt.
5. Information for completed background checks for all household members age 16 and older. Follow [Operations Manual 5517. Background Checks for Emergent Placement.](#)
6. [Extended Foster Care Participation Agreement DSHS 10-432](#), if applicable.
7. Voluntary Placement Agreement DSHS 09-004B (located on the CA intranet), if applicable.
8. Independent Living (ILS) Information, if applicable.
6. Maintain primary assignment to the case and responsibility for service referrals, decision making and payment authorizations.
7. Initiate service referrals when notified of an identified service need for the child.
8. Update the receiving caseworker about progress and changes in case plan, court dates and invite to all Shared Planning meetings.
9. Notify the caregiver of the court dates and invite to all Shared Planning meetings.
10. If the placement disrupts, schedule a FTDM.
11. Notify the receiving caseworker and supervisor if the child is moved.
2. The sending regional gatekeeper or designee will verify information in FamLink upon receipt of a courtesy supervision request. See section in 7(vi). If the required information is incomplete, notify the sending caseworker and supervisor.

#### 6. Receiving courtesy supervision requests

1. The receiving regional gatekeeper or designee will review the [Courtesy Supervision Referral Form DSHS 10-459](#) and assign in FamLink as soon as possible and no later than 72 hours of receiving the referral.
2. The receiving caseworker will:
  1. Prior to placement:
    0. Complete [Household Safety Inspection Form DSHS 10-453](#) for all unlicensed caregivers, if not already completed by the sending caseworker. Document the completion of this form in a case note and upload in the case file.
    1. Identify and verify all individuals living in the home and assess for safety threats.
    2. Obtain the caregiver's signature on the [Placement Agreement Form DSHS 15-281](#), if not already signed, and upload in FamLink.
  2. After placement:
    0. Conduct [monthly health and safety visits](#) with the children and caregivers. A health and safety visit must occur within seven (7) calendar days of a placement move.
    1. If the child is determined to be unsafe:
      1. Remove the child from the placement.

2. Make a report to intake when there is a new allegation of abuse or neglect on an open case.
3. Notify the sending caseworker and discuss placement alternatives.

Collaborate with the sending caseworker on case planning and decision making.

Notify the sending caseworker of requests or need for services for the child or caregiver.

Attend all shared planning and FTDM's for children, including children in group care or Behavioral Rehabilitative Services, unless otherwise negotiated with the sending caseworker.

7. If the placement is at risk of disruption, notify the sending caseworker to schedule a FTDM.

## Forms

- [Household Safety Assessment \(DSHS-10-453\)](#)
- [Courtesy supervision Referral Checklist \(DSHS 10-459\)](#)
- [4420. Social Worker Monthly Visits with Children, Out-of-Home Caregivers and Parents](#)
- [Placement Agreement DSHS 15-281](#)
- [Child Information and Placement Referral Form DSHS 15-300](#)

## Resources

- [DSHS CA R1 Courtesy Supervision](#)
- [DSHS CA R2 Courtesy Supervision](#)
- [DSHS CA R3 Courtesy Supervision](#)

# 4431. Legal Jurisdiction

1. Legal jurisdiction remains with the originating area's court, if either parent continues to reside in the original area unless the parent with whom the social worker plans reunification resides in the receiving county.
  1. If neither parent lives in the originating county, the original office may request that the court transfer jurisdiction three months after the parent has established residence of some permanence in the new county. The procedures are:
    1. Prior to requesting transfer of jurisdiction from the originating county, consult with the DCFS local office supervisor for the area in which the parent resides to request permission to transfer jurisdiction and case responsibility. The originating office supervisor does not request

transfer of jurisdiction until permission has been obtained from the receiving office supervisor. If there is a disagreement between offices, it is resolved at the lowest possible level through the chain of command in the region(s).

2. Consult with and advise the AAG/Prosecutor in the sending and receiving areas of the desire/plan to request jurisdiction transfer. An official request for the legal case to transfer shall not be made until the local office supervisor and the AAG in the receiving area have agreed to accept the case.
  3. When the court with original jurisdiction enters an order to transfer jurisdiction, the case must be transferred to the receiving office within five working days.
  4. The receiving office requests that the court schedule a hearing to determine if the receiving county will accept legal jurisdiction.
  5. If the receiving county's court refuses to accept jurisdiction, the case file is returned to the original office. The original office requests that the original court resume reviews and planning for the child.
2. If the originating office and the receiving office are within the same region, the Regional Administrator may determine that the case will not be transferred from one office to the other.

## **4500. SPECIFIC SERVICES**

### **4501. Case Management**

#### **Service Definition**

Case management includes providing continuous assessment of child safety, an assessment for eligibility for services, 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.

#### **Eligibility**

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

#### **Procedures for Access**

1. Social workers refer families for case management by following established CPS, FRS, and CWS intake procedures.
2. 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.
3. The entry point for CWS is a family's request. See chapter 4000; sections 4100 and 4200.

## **Other Sources**

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

# **4502. Intensive Family Preservation Services (IFPS), Family Preservation Services (FPS)**

## **Service Definition**

IFPS, authorized and described in RCW 74.14C.040, and FPS, authorized and described in RCW 74.14C.050, are family-focused, behavior-oriented, in-home counseling, and support programs available in most counties. The services of both programs may be utilized when youth are, for IFPS, at imminent, or for FPS at substantial, risk of placement or for children returning to the home from out-of-home care. See section 45023, below, for procedures to access IFPS and FPS.

1. For IFPS, services begin within 24 hours of referral, are available 24 hours a day, are short-term, limited to a maximum of 40 days, unless paraprofessionals are used, in which case service is limited to a maximum of 90 days. The service can be up to 80 hours in a 30-40 day intervention or up to 100 hours in a 90 day intervention. Services include both clinical assistance (counseling, case management, parent education) and concrete help (See examples in [Concrete Goods Guide](#)). IFPS services are provided by contracted vendors and are available statewide.
2. FPS begin within 48 hours of referral, are available 24 hours a day, and can be up to six months in duration. FPS is designed to be less intensive than IFPS, and interventions are focused on improving family functioning and assisting families with getting connected to local community resources. FPS are provided by contracted vendors and are available statewide.

## **Eligibility**

1. Families and children are eligible for IFPS and/or FPS 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, for IFPS, is at imminent risk of out-of-home placement



or, for FPS, at substantial likelihood of being placed out-of-home 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.
2. 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:
  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.
3. IFPS/FPS 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.
4. The family has a case open for service with CPS, FVS, FRS, or CFWS. The child must be either residing in the family home or be able to go home immediately, within 30 days, with IFPS.
5. The child, for IFPS, has been assessed by the assigned social worker as needing immediate placement or, for FPS, will need placement in the future if family dynamics do not change or is already in placement but could return home immediately with IFPS.
6. F. For 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 (per [4307 Voluntary Placement Agreement \(VPA\) policy](#)) within 72 hours.
7. For FPS, substantial likelihood of placement means the assigned social worker has determined, through assessment, that there is a strong possibility that another injury or crisis will occur in the near future, resulting in the placement of the child, or the child is already in placement but could return home sooner with FPS.
8. The Regional Administrator may limit the provision of IFPS or FPS to families where children would be receiving paid DCFS placement services.
9. The social worker has determined that there are no less intensive services available that can meet the family need.
10. An immediate opening with the contracted IFPS and/or FPS agency is available.

## **Procedures for Access**

1. Referrals for IFPS or FPS must come through DCFS. Contractors shall not accept referrals directly from families or other sources.
2. The Regional Administrator or designee:
  1. Appoints a Gatekeeper for each office served by an IFPS or FPS provider. The IFPS/FPS Gatekeeper:

1. Participates in a review or reviews all IFPS/FPS referrals to ensure conformance with eligibility requirements and the best use of the resource.
2. Makes final department determinations of family eligibility for IFPS/FPS prior to referral to and intake by the service provider, rejecting all families for whom placement is not imminent or substantially likely.
3. Facilitates the departmental review of all families entering placement for possible eligibility and referral to IFPS.
2. Develops a written protocol with IFPS and FPS contractors governing the assessment of client eligibility, procedures for service referrals, approval of service extensions, and utilization of IFPS - Assessment and Aftercare Services.
3. Distributes copies of the written protocol to IFPS/FPS Gatekeepers, Area Managers, supervisors, and all case carrying DCFS social workers.
4. Works to ensure that IFPS and FPS eligibility determination and case referral practices in local offices are consistent with statutory and protocol requirements.
5. Reports to the Assistant Secretary quarterly on the provision of IFPS and FPS in the region.
6. Monitors payments against allotment and contract dollar limits.
7. Monitors performance of contractors against standards set by the statement of work.
8. Notifies contractors when there is a rate change and amend contracts as needed.
3. 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/FPS 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:
    1. Name and case numbers of family caretaker(s).
    2. 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.
  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. For FPS, receives a monthly statement from the provider and immediately processes the statement to generate a payment for services provided that month.
6. During the delivery of contracted service, regularly consults with the IFPS or FPS contractor regarding the progress of the family.
7. Immediately notifies the contractor if CPS referrals are received on the family.
8. Participates in exit interviews with the IFPS/FPS therapist.
9. 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 or FPS contractor.

## **Other Sources**

**Created on:** Aug 25 2014

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

# **4503. Child Protective Services Child Care**

## **Program Description**

The Child Protective Services (CPS) child care subsidy program provides short-term, time-limited subsidized child care for families that are currently involved in a CPS investigation by Children's Administration (CA). CPS child care subsidy must end when the case is no longer classified as a CPS or is transferred to another program.

## **Eligibility**

1. The CA social worker may authorize child care for a family with an open CPS case when the family is:
  1. Under stress and in need of respite care; or
  2. Working to complete a service plan.
2. To be eligible for CPS child care subsidy program the family must have:
  1. An open CPS case; and
  2. An income at or below 225% of Federal Poverty Level (FPL) adjusted for family size. See the CA Operations Manual, chapter 9000, section 91300.
3. The social worker may waive income eligibility and co-payment requirements on a case-by-case basis. See the Operations Manual, chapter 9000, section 91300, for information regarding income eligibility and co-payments.
4. When the CPS social worker places a child with a relative who is employed, the social worker may authorize Employed Foster Parent Child Care subsidies for the time the relative is at work.
5. When the family needs child care, the social worker determines if other resources are available to the family before authorizing CPS child care. For example, family

members may be available to provide or pay for privately arranged child care. If the social worker determines there are no other resources available, CA may pay for care through the CPS Child Care Subsidy Program.

### **Procedures for Access**

1. The family's CPS social worker authorizes CPS child care through CAMIS and SSPS.
2. For more information regarding program requirements and eligibility standards, contact the CPS Child Care Program Manager at (360) 902-8003.

### **Other Sources**

1. The Division of Child Care Early Learning (DCCEL) 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(DCCCEL).
2. Head Start is a federally funded parent-participation pre-school program for low-income children.
3. The Early Childhood Education Assistance Program (ECEAP) is a state-funded pre-school program for low-income children.
4. Cooperative Pre-school and Crisis Nursery Services may be available in local communities to provide child care at low fee to parents.

## **4503. [A] Child Welfare Services Child Care**

### **Program Description**

Child Welfare Services (CWS) child care subsidy program provides short-term, time-limited subsidized child care for families to avoid out-of-home placement or other state intervention.

### **Eligibility**

1. If the case was formerly a CPS case, the social worker must close CPS child care and open for CWS child care, using CWS child care eligibility requirements.
2. CA may authorize CWS child care for a family that:
  1. Has been through a CPS investigation and continues to participate with voluntary services; or
  2. Is in crisis and needs care to avoid out-of-home placement of the child or other state intervention.
3. To be eligible for CWS child care subsidy program, the family must have:
  1. Documented need for the service; and
  2. An income at or below 225% of Federal Poverty Level (FPL) adjusted for family size.
4. CWS authorizing workers must use co-payment and income eligibility guidelines. See the Operations Manual, chapter 9000, section 91300, for information regarding income eligibility and co-payments.

5. When the family needs child care, the social worker determines if other resources are available to the family before authorizing CWS child care. For example, family members may be available to provide or pay for privately arranged child care. If the social worker determines there are no other resources available, CA may pay for care through the CWS Child Care Subsidy Program.

### **Procedures for Access**

1. The family's CWS social worker authorizes CWS child care through CAMIS and SSPS.
2. For more information regarding program requirements and eligibility standards, contact the CPS Child Care Program Manager at (360) 902-8046.

### **Other Sources**

1. The Division of Child Care early Learning (DCCEL) 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 DCCEL.
2. Head Start is a federally funded parent-participation pre-school program for low-income children.
3. The Early Childhood Education Assistance Program (ECEAP) is a state-funded pre-school program for low-income children.
4. Cooperative Pre-school and Crisis Nursery Services may be available in local communities to provide child care at low fee to parents.

## **4504. Therapeutic Child Development**

### **Service Definition**

1. 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. Both children and parents receive treatment to reduce the risk of child maltreatment, strengthen the family, and enhance continuity and consistency in the child's environment. Contractors provide a daily day care program during which they monitor the child's safety, complete regular assessments, and provide remediation activities. Services include home visits by TCD social workers, transportation to and from day care, and parenting education.
2. TCD provides four hours of service daily, in the child care setting, excluding transportation time.
3. TCD-enrolled children may require a full day of care due to the schedule of the parent or foster parent. The social worker may authorize payment for a ½ day of care to the same or other facility, in addition to the TCD payment, if it is appropriate for DCFS to be supporting a full day of care. The additional authorization would be at the standard

half-day rate for that area. In no circumstances should the facility be expected to keep the child for a full day without additional reimbursement.

## **Eligibility**

1. TCD is available to children who are at risk of CA/N and their families who have open cases with CPS or CWS, including children in out-of-home placement. CA uses the program to support the report to the court and Case Plan. 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.
2. The child's CPS/CWS social worker determines eligibility. The social worker consults regional procedures to determine current availability of slots and other limitations.
3. The DCFS social worker and the TCD provider must negotiate the estimated length of enrollment at the time of enrollment, based on the report to the court, the family service plan, and/or available intake or assessment information, consistent with the contract.

## **Social Worker Ongoing Responsibilities**

The CA social worker must:

1. Receive and incorporate information from the service provider's quarterly reports into case planning.
2. Attend staffings regarding the child/ family as scheduled by the service provider.
3. Include provider staff, as appropriate, in department-initiated staffings regarding the child/family.

# **4505. Employed Foster Parent Child Care**

## **Program Description**

The Employed Foster Parent Child Care Program pays for child care for the child in the out-of-home care setting to support the foster parent or non-needy relative caretaker's employment.

## **Eligibility**

1. The social worker for the child may authorize child care to the Children's Administration (CA) foster parent or relative caretaker for children placed by CA or a CA certified agency:
  1. Without regard to the foster parent's or non-needy relative's income;
  2. When the foster parent or non-needy relative needs child care to maintain the foster parent or relative caretaker's employment; and

2. The Employed Foster Parent Child Care program must not pay foster parents and non-needy relative caretakers for providing child care to their own foster children who live with them.
3. Children living with non-needy relatives not placed by CA or a CA certified agency do not qualify for Employed Foster Parent Child Care subsidies. The child may qualify for child care subsidies through the Working Connections Child Care Program (WCCC) offered through Economic Services Administration.

## **Procedures for Access**

1. The child's CA social worker authorizes the Employed Foster Parent Child Care program for foster parents and non-needy relative care takers.

## **Other Sources**

See the Operations Manual, chapter 9000, section 91300, for additional information.

# **4509. Respite For Parents**

Respite care offers time limited relief for substitute parenting or care giving of a child. For the purposes of this section, respite care is available for parents whose children are dependent and who are in the custody and control of CA.

1. Respite care to prevent out of home placement or re-entry into out of home care is:
  1. Based on the child's special needs.
  2. Available on an emergent basis to prevent placement disruption; or,
  3. A planned event as part of the child's safety plan to remain in the home or the child's safety and transition plan during a trial return home.
2. The respite provider must have experience and/or training to deal with the particular special needs of the child in care.
3. Social worker responsibilities:
  1. Explore other available resources to assist in providing respite including:
    1. Family resources
    2. Other DSHS divisions, for example, the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD)
    3. The Regional Support Networks (RSN) for 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.
  2. Complete the criminal/background check process prior to approval of the services, if not previously completed,

3. Authorize payment for respite only when utilizing a licensed out-of-home provider or approved provider in home where the child resides.

## **4510. Respite for Licensed Foster Parents, Unlicensed Relative Caregivers and Other Suitable Persons**

Respite services can play an important role in preventing placement disruption. These services are available for licensed foster parents, unlicensed relative caregivers and other suitable persons with placement of children in CA or Tribal custody. Caregivers should be encouraged to access respite care services in emergent situations and to prevent disruption of the child from their home.

### **Service Definition**

1. Respite care service pursuant to this section (4510) is the temporary, time limited relief for substitute parenting or caregiving of a child. Respite care can be arranged in advance or on an emergency basis.
2. Respite care services for licensed caregivers, are intended to meet the following needs:
  1. To offer relief from parenting and caregiving responsibilities;
  2. To allow the caregiver personal time away from home;
  3. To provide substitute care in the absence of the caregiver;
  4. To provide opportunities to attend overnight training.
  5. To allow caregivers access to substitute caregiving to meet emergent situations for the caregiver;
  6. To prevent placement disruption.
3. Respite care services for unlicensed relative caregivers or other suitable persons (See Practices and Procedures Guide Section 4261) are intended to meet the needs of children and families in emergency situations and when the placement is at risk of disruption.
4. Payment for respite services is not available to individuals who reside or live in the caregiver's residence. Respite services may be provided by a relative of the child or caregiver, only when the respite care provider resides outside the child's current placement.
5. Respite care that is provided outside the child's caregiver's home must be provided by individuals who are licensed foster parents or licensed child care providers.
6. Unlicensed respite providers can provide paid respite services only in the child's caregiver's home. Unlicensed respite providers must (1) successfully complete a FamLink background clearance and Washington State Criminal check and (2) meet the standards identified in WAC 388-148-1320. Background checks for unlicensed respite providers providing respite in licensed foster homes will be completed by Division of Licensed Resources (DLR) staff, or in the case of respite services for



unlicensed relative caregivers, background checks will be completed by the assigned CA social worker.

7. The social worker or licensor will verify that the respite provider has experience and/or training to deal with the particular special needs of the child in care such as dealing with children who are medically fragile, children who have been sexually and/or physically aggressive or assaultive.
8. Licensed child care providers may be used to provide respite care services for respite that is less than 24-hour duration. Respite payment to licensed child care providers is paid at the regional child care rates using the appropriate SSPS respite payment code. SSPS child care codes in the 2800 series are not used to authorize respite payment.
9. Licensed providers for respite service must not exceed their licensed capacity and must meet Minimum Licensing Requirements (MLRs) while providing respite.
10. Licensed caregivers using paid respite services, may not provide respite to other children (paid or exchange), during the period of paid respite.
11. Child-specific respite care plans are an element of the child's case plan. As appropriate, the need for continued respite service is reviewed at service re-authorization and/or during multidisciplinary staffings.
12. Respite care payments remain the fiscal responsibility of the originating region and office during courtesy supervision activities.

## **Respite Care Category Descriptions**

1. **Retention Respite** provides licensed CA caregivers, licensed Tribal foster parents, and licensed Private Child-Placing Agency foster parents providing care for CA-placed children, with regular "time off" from the demands of caregiving responsibilities.

Retention Respite guidelines are:

1. Retention respite is intended to provide regular, monthly breaks from the demands of foster parenting and can also be used to meet emergent needs of licensed caregivers.
2. Retention respite is awarded on a monthly basis per CA, Tribal, or Private Agency foster home caring for CA children.
3. Retention respite is earned by eligible licensed caregivers at a rate of two (2) days per month.
4. Retention respite is authorized in daily units only.
5. The licensed caregiver home may accumulate or 'bank' a maximum of fourteen (14) days of retention respite days to be used at one time. Licensed caregivers should be encouraged to use retention respite as it is earned.
6. Newly licensed caregivers will have a 30-day waiting period from the first eligible child placement before accruing retention respite.
7. A licensed caregiver must provide foster care to one or more children at least twenty (20) days in a month to earn retention respite for that month.
8. When a day of retention respite is authorized, respite is normally paid for each eligible foster child in the home, regardless of how long the child has been in placement in the home. However, a licensed caregiver can elect to use retention respite for only one child, even though more than one child is in the placement.

Whether retention respite is used to meet the needs of one or more children, the time used will be deducted from accrued retention respite days.

9. Licensed caregivers and social workers should be aware of pending respite plans in the caregiver's home when a child is placed. Efforts should be made to avoid changes in caretakers for a child shortly after placement.
  10. The respite provider must have experience and/or training to deal with the particular special needs of the child in care such as dealing with children who are medically fragile or children who have been sexually and/or physically aggressive or assaultive.
  11. Regions will develop a process to authorize and monitor retention respite eligibility and utilization for CA foster homes.
  12. Tribal and Private Agencies shall monitor retention respite eligibility and utilization for their licensed homes, and will coordinate with CA regional management to develop a process to access and report retention respite usage.
2. **Child-Specific Respite (CSR)** provides unlicensed relative caregivers, other suitable persons, licensed CA caregivers, licensed Tribal foster parents, and licensed Private Child-Placing Agency foster parents providing care for children placed by CA, with the opportunity for relief from the caregiving responsibilities that are linked to the medical, behavioral or special needs of an individual child. The CSR guidelines are:
1. CSR is authorized on a case-by-case basis consistent with the written service plan for the child.
  2. CSR is authorized in half-day or daily increments. Half-day will be authorized for respite services 0 - 5 hours and daily respite will be authorized for respite services greater than 5 hours.
  3. CSR is part of a child's unique service plan. The need for continued service is reviewed at service re-authorization and during multidisciplinary staffing.
  4. CSR for more than 1 week must have Area Administrator approval.
  5. CSR may be discontinued based on an updated assessment of the needs of the child.
  6. In calculating CSR, the worker should consider the availability of relief from caregiving responsibilities provided through retention respite, school, other relatives, visitation schedules, etc.
3. **Exchange Respite** is the relief from parenting responsibilities, which is negotiated and arranged between licensed caregivers and does not include payment of CA funds. Exchange respite guidelines are:
1. Licensed caregivers must remain within their licensing requirements (i.e. capacity, age, gender, etc.).
  2. Licensed caregivers must notify the child's social worker(s) of exchange respite services prior to the respite occurring.
  3. The social worker will verify that there are no licensing complaints pending which would preclude the respite provider from caring for the child.
  4. The social worker will inform the respite provider of any special needs of the child, supervision requirements and safety issues prior to initiating respite.

## Procedures for Access

1. Retention Respite is authorized through SSPS by the regional designee responsible for monitoring the accrual and utilization of retention respite for foster families.
2. The assigned social worker for each child in a licensed home shall be notified that retention respite is being authorized.
3. Child-Specific Respite (CSR) is authorized through SSPS by the assigned social worker for the child.
4. For unlicensed relative caregivers and other suitable persons, the assigned social worker shall explore other family support options prior to requesting respite services.

## **Respite Care Payment**

1. Child-Specific Respite (CSR) services, from 0 - 5 hours will be reimbursed at the half-day rate posted in the SSPS Manual.
2. CSR services more than 5 hours will be reimbursed at the daily rate posted in the SSPS Manual.
3. Retention respite is authorized in daily units only and reimbursed at the daily rate posted in the SSPS Manual.

## **Respite Care Rates**

1. Respite rates for licensed CA relative and foster homes, licensed Tribal foster homes, and licensed Private Child-Placing Agency foster homes providing care for CA-placed children are determined by the child's assessed foster care rate level and are listed in the SSPS manual. Exceptions to the maximum respite care rate may be authorized only with administrative approval.
2. Respite rates for unlicensed relative caregivers or other suitable persons would be authorized at the Basic Respite rate listed in the SSPS manual for children in level 1 or 2 foster care.
3. For unlicensed relative caregivers or other suitable persons, respite rates above the respite rate for a child in level 1 or 2 foster care requires the completion of an Exception request (DSHS form 05-210). The exception request should include an assessment of the supervision needs of the child, behavioral, medical, developmental and social needs of the child, and any special needs that would indicate a higher rate, The exception request will require supervisory and area administrator approval.
4. Respite for unlicensed relative caregivers or other suitable persons may be authorized for up to 7 days per month. Any respite beyond the 7 days will require area administrator approval.
5. Payment for respite provided by licensed child care facilities is paid at the Region's established child care rate, using SSPS 3220 or 3221 payment codes. SSPS chapter 2800 Child Care payment codes are not used to authorize respite payment.
6. Regional management may establish payment rates below the maximum rate listed in the SSPS Manual.

# 4512. Foster Parent (Licensed Family Foster Home) Training

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Asst. Secretary

**Effective Date:**

**Revised Date:** July 21, 2016

**Sunset Review:** July 2020

## Purpose

Children in out-of-home care have unique needs due to their childhood experiences. Children's Administration seeks to provide the caregiver skills needed to serve the specific behavioral and developmental challenges of our community's children. The training also educates and prepares foster parents to work within the child welfare and the legal system.

## Policy

1. Foster home license applicants must complete the following training prior to licensing:
  1. Orientation, completed online or in person by at least one licensee residing in the home.
  2. Caregiver Core Training (CCT), completed by at least one licensee residing in the home.
  3. First Aid/CPR, completed by all licensees residing in the home.
  4. HIV/BBP, completed by all licensees residing in the home.
2. The Caregiver Core Training is exempt for foster homes that have had a break in service but were licensed within the previous three years and have completed PRIDE or CCT.
3. Effective 4/1/2014, Licensed foster parents must complete caregiver continuing education every three years as follows:
  1. First three year licensing period: the foster parent must complete 36 hours of caregiver continuing education training that includes trainings from each of the three competency categories. After 1/1/2015, it must also include a cultural competency training.
  2. Second three year consecutive licensing period: the foster parent must complete 30 hours of caregiver continuing education training that includes trainings from each of the three competency categories. After 1/1/2015, it must also include a cultural competency training.
  3. All subsequent three year licensing periods: the foster parent must complete 24 hours of caregiver continuing education training from any competency category.

4. Foster homes taking placement of Sexually Aggressive Youth or Physically Assaultive/Aggressive Youth (SAY/PAAY) youth as defined in RCW 74.13.075 must complete either the SAY/PAAY online or in-person training prior to the child being placed or within 30 days of placement. Both caregivers in the home are required to complete this training.  
Note: The caregiver continuing education requirement may be met by one or both parties on a license, in any combination, with the exception of D above. That is, one party on a two parent license may complete all required training hours or two people on a two parent license may each complete part of the required hours as long as the total number of hours meets the requirement.
5. Training which meets the caregiver continuing education requirement includes:
  1. Conferences and trainings approved by the licenser that meet all of the following:
    1. Related to child welfare or other human services.
    2. Relevant to the foster parent's scope of duties;
    3. Meets at least one of the caregiver competencies established by the Alliance for Child Welfare Excellence.
  2. Training offered by the Alliance for Child Welfare Excellence.
  3. CA approved private agency training courses.
  4. Other training as approved by the licenser.
6. If a licensed foster home exceeds the required training hours during any licensing period, they may carry over up to twelve hours into the next licensing period.
7. Division of Licensed Resources (DLR) licensers may require specific and additional training as part of a compliance plan.

## **Procedures**

1. Prior to licensing, the DLR licenser will verify that foster home license applicants have completed the licensing training outlined in A and B in the policy above.
2. Each licensing period, the DLR licenser will develop a training plan with the licensee based on the licensee's level of skill, education, age of the child(ren), and behaviors of the child(ren) the caregiver will serve. Each training plan must meet the policy requirements in C, D, and E in the policy section above.
3. The DLR licenser will verify that the licensed foster parents complete caregiver continuing education as required every three years.
4. If a licensed family foster home reaches re-licensing without completing the required hours in the three year licensing period, the DLR licenser will create a compliance plan for up to six months with the licensee(s). If the compliance plan is not met, the Department may:
  1. Choose not to place children in the licensed foster home.
  2. Change the age, gender or capacity on the foster home license at the time of renewal or,
  3. Revoke the license.
5. CA staff will enter training into FamLink as follows:

1. The Alliance for Child Welfare Excellence training manager will enter training completion for Alliance for Child Welfare Excellence in-person classes, with the exception of CCT.
2. The DLR licensor for the home will enter the CCT and all other training.

## Resources

- [WAC 388-148-0040](#) What first-aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training is required?
- [WAC 388-148-0045](#) What HIV/AIDS and blood borne pathogens training is required?
- [WAC 388-148-0020](#) What are the training requirements for foster parents and prospective foster parents?

Online Foster Parent Training:

<http://www.dshs.wa.gov/ca/fosterparents/training.asp>

## Access to Training

DCFS licensed family foster homes, private agency licensed family foster home, and relative caregivers are eligible to participate in department sponsored training.

## Procedures for Accessing Training

The licensed family foster home consults the licensor, private agency and/or regional training manager for class announcements and procedures to access to this service. The web site also maintains a training calendar available to all foster parents, relative caregivers and agency staff.

# 4514. Family Support Networks

## 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.

## Eligibility

All DCFS clients are eligible for the service.

## Procedures for Access

1. The social worker uses "reasonable efforts" in locating and contacting extended family members, friends, and lay helpers for potential support and/or placement resources.

2. The social worker is encouraged to develop informal family support network alternatives to professionally provided services when possible.
3. The social worker provides the family support network consistent information and support, within the limits of laws on confidentiality.

## **Other Sources**

1. 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.
2. Participation in an organization that has culturally-specific ties may reduce isolation for some individuals.
3. Families may have support available to them through their church. Churches support many social service and recreational programs.
4. 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.
5. Recreational activities can be especially valuable to families needing support. Many non-profit recreational organizations provide scholarships or reduced tuition.

# **4515. Family Home Support Services**

## **Service Definition**

1. 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 service may be provided in emergent cases where all other appropriate placement options have been determined to be inappropriate.
2. 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.
  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.
3. 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.

## **Eligibility**

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

1. The family must be a current DCFS client.
2. The case plan must document the need for teaching, skill-building, or community networking.
3. 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.
  2. The one-time provision of household chores when the condition of the home may necessitate out-of-home placement.
4. Families with adolescents are eligible for this service.

## **Procedures for Access**

1. 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.
2. The FHSS supervisor/coordinator evaluates the request for service eligibility and determines priority for service within available full time equivalent (FTE) staff resources.
3. 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.



4. There is need to provide support services to foster parents or relative care providers in order to stabilize and maintain placement.
4. 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.
5. 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.

## **4516. Health Services for Mothers and Children**

### **Service Definition**

1. 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.
2. DCFS also contracts with local health departments to provide public health nursing services in-home for families who need them.

### **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.

## **4517. Health Care Services for Children In Out-Of-Home Care**

### **Purpose**

Ensure children in out-of-home placement have an Initial Health Screen (IHS) to identify and address any emergent medical concerns at the time of placement. Children in out-of-home care must also have initial as well as on-going Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) and dental examinations to ensure their continued health and well-being.

## Policy

1. Children (birth to 18 years of age) entering out-of-home care must have an **IHS** within five calendar days by a qualified medical provider as quickly as possible to identify and address any medical concerns.
2. Children (birth to 18 years of age) must receive an EPSDT examination within 30 days of entering out of home placement.
3. Children in out of home placement (birth to age 3) must receive an **EPSDT examination** according to the published schedule for their age group. Children (age 3 to age 20) must receive at least an annual EPSDT examination.
4. Children in out of home care must have an initial dental examination scheduled within the first 30 days of placement.**Note:** This does not apply to infants/toddlers without their first tooth eruption.
5. Children in out of home placement must receive at least one dental examination every 6 months.

## Procedures

### Initial Health Screens (IHS):

1. Ensure children who enter out-of-home placement receive an IHS by a qualified *medical provider* as soon as possible but no later than 5 calendar days.**Note:** Qualified medical providers include: Medical Doctor (MD), Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner (ARNP), and Physicians Assistant (PA).  
**Note:** Medicaid provider availability in the regions may fluctuate and affect timeframes. Regional efforts to identify providers who complete the IHS should continue in order to maintain and build capacity.
2. Ensure children see their last known medical provider whenever possible.**Exceptions** to requirement for IHS:
  1. Children released from a hospital (in-patient or Emergency) directly into out-of-home care.
  2. Children receiving services through a Pediatric Interim Care center (PIC).
  3. Children receiving services or scheduled to receive services through a Child Advocacy Center (CAC) or sexual assault clinic.
3. Provide all known health information about the child to the caregiver(s) prior to the IHS.
4. Share all known health information about the child with the medical provider who completes the IHS.
5. Provide all information and recommendations from the IHS to the child's current caregiver(s) as per [4413 Placement Services](#) policy.
6. Document the initial health screen information in the FamLink Health/Mental Health Pages under the "Health" tab and insert a new "Medical/Dental/Exam" within the required placement documentation timeframes as per [Initial Placement and Moves 15400](#).
7. Document the reason for an exception to a child receiving an IHS in a case note.

## **EPSDT Examinations:**

1. Ensure children in out-of-home placement receive EPSDT examinations according to the periodicity schedule below:
  1. Within 30 days of out-of-home placement
  2. Five examinations during a child's first year
  3. Three examinations for children between 1 and 2 years of age
  4. Annual examinations for children between 3 and 20 years of age
2. Children entering out-of-home placement that received an EPSDT examination within 30 days before placement, **do not** need another EPSDT **unless**:
  1. Medically indicated, or
  2. There are allegations of abuse or maltreatment that require medical attention.
3. Obtain a copy of the EPSDT results and determine if recommended treatments or follow-ups have occurred for the child.
4. Provide the child's caregiver all EPSDT results and assist them with obtaining any recommended services for the child.
5. Document child's health condition(s), the dates, and results of all EPSDT examinations including those that occur after the initial 30 day EPSDT. Document exams and health conditions in the FamLink Health/Mental Health Pages under the "Health" tab within the required placement documentation timeframes as per [Initial Placement and Moves 15400](#). **Note:** CHET screeners will document the initial EPSDT examination date and results on the Health and Mental Health Pages in the electronic case file.
6. Review and record the child's EPSDT information at Shared Planning Meetings and the report to the court.

## **Dental Examinations:**

1. Schedule the child's dental examination within 30 days of out-of-home placement.
2. Children in out-of-home placement that received an initial dental assessment within 6 months before placement **do not** need another dental examination unless medically indicated.
3. Obtain a copy of the dental exam and determine if recommended treatments and follow-ups have occurred for the child.
4. Provide the child's caregiver all dental examination results and assist them in obtaining any recommended services for the child.
5. Document the dates and results of all dental examinations in the FamLink Health/Mental Health Pages under the "Health" tab and insert a new "Medical/Dental/Exam" within the required placement documentation timeframes as per [Initial Placement and Moves 15400](#).
6. Review and record the child's dental information at Shared Planning Meetings and the report to the court.

## **Forms and Tools**

- Foster Care Initial Health Screen ([HCA form 13-843](#))

## Resources

- Access to Baby and Child Dentistry (ABCDental) website (for children up to age six) - <http://abcd-dental.org/>
- HRSA Fostering Well-Being Care Coordination Unit - 1-800-562-3022, ext. 59594 or [dhsfwbccu@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:dhsfwbccu@dshs.wa.gov)
- Well Child/Health Services Consent Card - DSHS 03-338 (5/2006)

# 45171. Medically Fragile Children

## Purpose

Children in out-of-home care who meet the definition of medically fragile will be identified. Develop plans with caregivers of medically fragile children to identify necessary supports to meet the day-to-day needs of the child (including respite and emergency situations).

## Policy

1. Children who meet the following criteria are identified as medically fragile:
  1. Child has medical conditions that require the availability of 24-hour skilled care from a health care professional or specially trained family or foster family member.
  2. These conditions may be present all the time or frequently occurring.
  3. If the technology, support, and services provided to a medically fragile child are interrupted or denied, the child may, without immediate health care intervention, experience death.
2. When there is an indication that a child is medically fragile, refer the child to the ADSA Fostering Well-Being Care Coordination Unit for consultation and determination of the child's need for services.
3. All children identified as medically fragile and in out-of-home care must have an identified Primary Health Care Provider.
4. Out-of-home caregivers must be provided a [Caregiver Support Plan](#) that addresses training and support needs related to caring for a medically fragile child.
5. All children identified as medically fragile must be documented in the FamLink Special Needs page.

## Procedures

1. Complete a referral by emailing the Fostering Well-Being Care Coordination Unit at: [dhsfwbccu@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:dhsfwbccu@dshs.wa.gov).
2. When a medically fragile child is discharged from a hospital:
  1. Participate in a discharge planning meeting with the identified caregiver
  2. Coordinate with hospital or Primary Health Care Provider about the discharge plan to:
    1. Assess appropriate placement,

2. Identify resources and training to support the care of the child,
  3. Obtain a copy of the child's treatment plan or identify the on-going plan for treatment and examinations, and
  4. Refer the medically fragile child to the Fostering Well-Being Care Coordination Unit.
3. When the assigned social worker has received confirmation from the Fostering Well-Being Care Coordination Unit that the child meets the medically fragile criteria:
    1. Ensure any recommendations made by medical providers and in the Care Coordination Summary are followed-up on to address the ongoing medical needs of the child.
    2. Document the child as "medically fragile" in the Special Needs page in FamLink.
  4. Develop a [Caregiver Support Plan](#) for initial and any subsequent placements with a caregiver. At a minimum, the plan must address:
    1. Caregiver training specific to the child's needs,
    2. Additional supports to meet the child's needs, e.g. Medicaid Personal Care,
    3. Support for the caregiver to have alternate care for the child if needed, e.g. planned and emergency respite care, and
    4. Steps to take in an emergency situation when a caregiver is unable to care for the child.
  5. NOTE: Children placed in Behavioral Rehabilitation Services group or foster homes, skilled nursing facilities, on a trial return home, or who receive case management services from a Child Placing Agency do not require Caregiver Support Plans.
  6. Determine any additional support and training needs during the initial [Social Worker Monthly Health and Safety Visit](#) within the first 7 days of placement.
  7. Review the Caregiver Support Plan with the caregiver at each [Social Worker Monthly Health and Safety Visit](#) to determine if any changes to the plan are needed.
  8. Upload the Caregiver Support Plan signed by the caregiver into FamLink. Document the following in FamLink within 10 calendar days of receiving information:
    1. Child's medically fragile status on the FamLink Special Needs page per [Medically Fragile Documentation](#), and
    2. Child's medical conditions/information in the Health/Mental Health page per [Health Care Services for Children in Out-of-Home Care policy](#)

## See Also

- [Health Care Services for Children in Out-of-Home Care](#)
- [Social Worker Monthly Health and Safety Visit](#)

## Resources

- [Medically Fragile Documentation](#)
- [Fostering Well-Being Care Coordinator Referral Form](#)

# 45172. End-of-Life Care

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:** October 31, 2016

**Revised Date:** Not applicable

**Policy Review:** October 31, 2020

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## **Purpose**

To provide guidance when a child's medical provider makes a recommendation to begin making end-of-life decisions for a dependent child in out-of-home care. This policy does not apply to a child in tribal custody or youth in Extended Foster Care.

## **Definitions**

**Do-not-resuscitate (DNR) order** is a medical order written by a doctor. It instructs health care providers not to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) if a patient's breathing stops or if the patient's heart stops beating. A DNR order is created or set up before an emergency occurs and allows an individual to choose whether or not he or she wants CPR in an emergency.

**Hospice care** is supportive care provided to people in the final stage of a terminal illness focusing on comfort, quality of life and being free of pain rather than a cure.

## **Scope**

This policy applies to Division of Children and Family Services staff.

## **Laws**

[RCW 74.13.031](#) Duties of the department, child welfare services and children's services advisory committee

## **Policy**

1. When a child's medical provider makes a recommendation to begin making end-of-life decisions for hospice or the issuance of a DNR order the caseworker will:
  1. Immediately notify his or her supervisor and the regional medical consultant (RMC).
  2. Notify the following individuals of the medical provider's recommendations:
    1. Child's parents and parent's attorney, if the child is not legally-free
    2. Assistant attorney general (AAG)
    3. Child's out-of-home caregiver
    4. Guardian Ad Litem (GAL)/Court Appointed Child Advocate (CASA)

5. Child's attorney, if assigned
  3. Document efforts made to locate the parent in FamLink if the parent of the child cannot be located.
  4. Contact the child's tribe if the child is a member of a federally recognized tribe to determine their role in making end-of-life decisions.
  5. Conduct a shared planning meeting if any party to the case disagrees with the medical provider's recommendations
  6. Assist the child's family and caregivers to identify community based services and supports that address grief and loss.
2. AAG consultation is required if organ donation is proposed.

## Procedures

1. When conducting a shared planning meeting, the discussion must include what is in the best interest of the child and whether court approval is necessary to implement the recommendations.
  1. Invitees must include the following:
    1. Child's parents and parent's attorneys, if the child is not legally-free
    2. AAG
    3. CASA/GAL
    4. RMC
    5. Child's attorney, if assigned
    6. Out-of-home caregivers; even though they are not parties to the child's case.
  2. Consult with the medical provider regarding how to involve the child and ensure the child's wishes are represented at the shared planning meeting. This includes determining whether it is in the child's best interest and if he or she is physically able to participate in the meeting.
  3. If the medical provider determines the child is developmentally appropriate and physically able to participate, work with the child's medical provider to determine if the child wants to attend the meeting.
  4. If the child chooses to attend the meeting, make arrangements to accommodate his or her needs as appropriate.
2. When court action is pursued to obtain approval of the medical provider's recommendations regarding the child's end-of-life care, the caseworker must:
  1. Consult with AAG to determine appropriate steps for seeking court approval of the recommendations.
  2. Work with the RMC to obtain the following documentation and attach to the motion:
    1. A written statement from the medical provider who is recommending hospice care or the issuance of a DNR order. The statement from the provider must include statements from two additional medical providers qualified to assess the patient's condition indicating with reasonable medical judgment that the patient is an advanced stage of a terminal and incurable illness and is suffering severe permanent mental and physical deterioration;

2. The child's medical history including the child's current condition, diagnosis and prognosis;
  3. Any supporting documentation provided by the medical provider to support his or her recommendation including that the recommendation is in compliance with the hospital's ethics protocol, if applicable;
  4. Parent's recommendation or concerns, if applicable (if child is not legally-free); and
  5. Child's opinion about his or her desire to enter into a DNR order if the child expressed an opinion. Include when, where and how the child made his or her wishes known. The child's wishes must also be documented in a case note.
3. Provide the date and time of the court hearing to the:
    1. Child's parents and parent's attorney, if the child is not legally-free.
    2. Child if developmentally appropriate and physically able to participate.
    3. Child's attorney, if assigned
    4. Out-of-home caregivers
    5. GAL/CASA
  4. If the parent of the child cannot be located, document efforts made to locate the parent in FamLink.
3. When a child's medical professional recommends end-of-life care, the supervisor will:
    1. Inform his or her area administrator of the medical provider's recommendation;
    2. Confirm that the caseworker is consulting with the RMC;
    3. Verify with the caseworker that all parties to the case have been notified; and
    4. Assure the caseworker has identified and referred the family and caregivers to any needed support services addressing grief and loss.

## Resources

Guidelines for Reasonable Efforts to Locate Children and/or Parents (on CA intranet)

[http://kidshealth.org/parent/system/ill/bfs\\_hospice\\_care.html](http://kidshealth.org/parent/system/ill/bfs_hospice_care.html)

[Your Rights Your Life A Resource for Youth in Foster Care](#)

[End of Life Care Notification and Shared Planning Meeting Table](#)

# 4518. Drug and Alcohol Testing, Assessment and Treatment

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:**

**Revised Date:** October 31, 2016



## **Purpose**

To provide direction regarding the testing, assessment, and treatment services for clients who are suspected of using drugs or alcohol that impacts his or her ability to safely parent.

## **Scope**

This policy applies to Division of Children and Family Service (DCFS) caseworkers and Division of Licensed Resource staff working with clients who are suspected of using drugs or alcohol.

## **Laws**

[26.44.170](#) Alleged child abuse or neglect - Use of alcohol or controlled substances as contributing factor

[26.44.195](#) Negligent treatment or maltreatment - Offer of services - Evidence of substance abuse

## **Policy**

The CA caseworker will:

1. Determine if the use of drugs or alcohol is a contributing factor to alleged child abuse or neglect, or is impacting child's safety or health based on the results of one or more of the following:
  1. [Structured Decision Making Risk Assessment \(SDMRA\) tool](#)
  2. [Investigative assessment](#)
  3. [Early Periodic Screening Diagnostic and Treatment \(EPSDT\)](#)
  4. [Child Health and Education Tracking \(CHET\)](#)
2. Arrange for drug or alcohol testing by a CA drug testing contracted provider to facilitate decision-making and case planning when either:
  1. The suspected use impacts child safety, and the parent or caregiver is not already in drug or alcohol treatment, or
  2. It is court ordered under a dependency action.
3. Authorize drug or alcohol testing services by:
  1. Completing all required fields on the drug testing order form per the Drug Testing Order Instructions located under the Medical tab on the CA intranet.
  2. Obtaining the required testing approvals as shown on Drug and Alcohol Resource sheet located under the Medical tab on the CA intranet.
  3. Submitting the form to the contracted provider.
4. If drug or alcohol use is identified and impacts the child's safety or health:

1. Develop a case plan in collaboration with the client.
2. Obtain the client's insurance coverage information to determine available drug or alcohol assessment and treatment resources.
3. Refer the client to a qualified chemical dependency professional for a drug or alcohol assessment and include a completed, signed [Consent Form DSHS 14-012](#). Assessment or treatment agencies may also require clients to sign their form in order to disclose information.
4. Refer adult clients without insurance or resources to the local DSHS Community Service Office (CSO) to determine their eligibility for state or federally funded assessment and treatment services.
5. If drug or alcohol treatment is recommended, coordinate with the provider in treatment planning.
6. Refer a child to a medical provider if a child's exposure to drugs or alcohol causes concern for the child's safety or health.
7. Refer a youth to [Apple Health Core Connections \(AHCC\)](#) to initiate coordination of services and interventions to address any drug or alcohol concerns for a child under age eighteen.
8. If the case or provider is assigned to DLR, and DLR has made the determination that drug and alcohol abuse is impacting the individual's ability to safely parent children, the DLR worker will complete a compliance agreement and refer the case to DCFS for services if necessary. See [Practices and Procedures 5150. Licensing Investigations](#).

## Forms

[Consent Form DSHS 14-012](#)

## Resources

- [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration website](#)
- [Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery - Substance Use Treatment Services](#)

# 4519. Concrete Goods

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Asst. Secretary

**Effective Date:** May 1, 2014

**Revised Date:** March 31, 2017

**Sunset Review:** March 31, 2020

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## Purpose

Assist children and families with concrete goods when those goods or expenditures support child safety, reduce risk of abuse or neglect, prevent out-of-home placement, support placement with an unlicensed kinship caregiver or facilitate safe reunification. The assistance is intended to remove concrete barriers for successful achievement of case plan goals.

## Policy

1. In-home and out-of-home concrete goods are provided to a child or family when:
  1. Funding is available and approved.
  2. Purchases are made using the most economical and reasonable approach.
  3. Concrete goods meet an identified need through the assessment and supports the case plan per [1140 Family Assessment](#) policy.
2. Approvals for in and out-of-home concrete good expenditures:
  1. Up to \$200 may be approved by the caseworker.
  2. \$201 to \$500 must be approved by the supervisor.
  3. \$501 to \$1200 must be approved by the area administrator.
  4. \$1201 or more must be approved by the regional administrator.
3. In-home concrete goods
  1. Are provided to a child or family to maintain child safety and reduce risk, prevent placement or sustain a trial return home when the child has been reunified with his or her parent. Concrete goods include but are not limited to: child safety items, clothing, shelter, furniture, utilities, transportation, or paraprofessional services not available for purchase through a CA service contract.
  2. Before in-home concrete goods are authorized:
    1. There is documentation of need either in the assessment or written proof of need, e.g., disconnection notice of utilities or eviction notice.
    2. The family must be willing and able to cooperate with services.
    3. The family must have a plan that will continue to maintain the support provided temporarily by the concrete good. The concrete support is not intended to be an ongoing means of support.
4. Out-of-home concrete goods:
  1. Are provided to support parent-child visits, support the unlicensed kinship care provider, or promote the plan for reunification when the child is placed in out-of-home care. Concrete goods include, but are not limited to: clothing, furniture, or paraprofessional services not available for purchase through a CA service contract.
  2. Follow policy [4537. Clothing Allowance for Children in Out-of-Home Care](#) when considering clothing voucher assistance.
  3. Follow [45273. and 45274. Relative Placement](#) and [5232. Maintenance Funding for Placement](#) when considering concrete goods for a child placed in kinship care.
5. Concrete goods can be used for the following:
  1. Housing payment and utilities

1. Provide first and last months' rent when the family is moving.
2. Authorize only non-refundable cleaning or security deposits.
3. Rent (not intended to be long-term), back payments for utilities.
2. Gift cards
  1. Use small denomination gift cards to support transportation of parents to services and visitation, not to exceed \$15 per card.
  2. Several cards may be provided to the parent, but should be signed out using the case ID.
3. Vehicle repairs which allow parents to participate in services, parent-child visits or supports their ability to increase their child's safety.
4. Food assistance for out-of-home concrete goods should be used to support parent-child visits.
5. Food assistance for in-home concrete goods should be authorized until a family becomes eligible for the following or until they can provide sufficient food on their own.
  1. Basic Food through the Department of Social and Health Services Community Services Office (CSO).
  2. The Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) nutrition program.
6. Documentation
  1. Initiate a payment request by creating a service referral through casework in FamLink, to generate the authorization and payment.
  2. Document in FamLink how the provision of:
    1. In-home concrete goods will meet increase, maintain, or establish child safety, reduce risk or stabilize reunification.
    2. Out-of-home concrete goods will support parent-child visits and/or promote the plan for reunification.

## Resources

- Concrete Goods Poster
- [In-Home Goods Provider Guide](#)
- [Medicaid Denial Process Fact Sheet](#)

# 4520. HIV/AIDS Support Services

## 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.

## Eligibility

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

## **Procedures for Access**

1. The social worker consults with their regional AIDS coordinator regarding HIV statute and policy whenever an issue surfaces that involves HIV.
2. 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.
3. See the Case Services Policy Manual, chapter 4000, section 4120, paragraph A, for requirements to disclose information regarding HIV infection and sexually transmitted diseases to the residential care provider for the child who is less than 14 years of age.

# **4521. Psychological/Psychiatric Services**

## **Service Definition**

1. 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.
2. 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.

## **Eligibility**

1. 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.
2. 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.
  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.

## Procedures for Access

1. Unless the child has already been referred, the caseworker will ensure a mental health referral is made within five working days of receiving notification from the CHET screening specialist that a mental health need has been identified.
2. 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 caseworker 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 caseworker must schedule a Healthy Kids examination to be completed within 30 days.
  3. For situations involving inpatient treatment, see section 4539, below.
  4. DCFS caseworkers supply mental health screeners and providers with the information they request to make screening decisions and to provide mental health services.
3. For DCFS direct-funded psychological/psychiatric services, the following steps shall be taken:
  1. The caseworker determines that Healthy Kids services are not available and that funding is not available for the service through other sources listed below.
  2. The caseworker authorizes psychiatric/psychological services utilizing the authorization guidelines in paragraph A above and regional procedure.
4. The caseworker authorizes psychological/psychiatric procedures using current SSPS codes and sends a copy of the authorization to the provider.
5. The caseworker requests a final report and terminates payment.

## Other Sources

1. 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 caseworker 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.
2. DDD may provide psychiatric/psychological evaluations and/or behavior management training or treatment for developmentally disabled children living in their own homes or parents.
3. The JRA or local juvenile probation offices may provide similar services for delinquent children.
4. 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 caseworker shall ask the SSI facilitator to access the SSI file for current medical or psychological assessments.

## 4522. Income Maintenance

## **Service Definition**

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

## **Eligibility**

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

## **Procedures for Access**

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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.

## **Other Sources**

1. Clients whose jobs have ended may be eligible for unemployment benefits.
2. 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.
3. Some clients injured in the course of employment may be eligible for financial assistance through the Department of Labor and Industries (L&I).
4. 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.

5. While not providing income maintenance, private non-profit credit counseling services are available in many communities to assist individuals in managing debt.
6. Food and formula supplements are available for some low-income women with infants through the WIC program to help promote healthy infant development.
7. Families and children of U.S. military service veterans may be eligible for veteran's benefits provided through the Veteran's Administration.

## **4523. Housing**

### **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.

### **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.

### **Procedures for Access**

1. 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).
2. 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.
3. For placement in out-of-home care for children, the social worker follows procedures outlined in this chapter.

### **Other Sources**

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



# 4524. Educational And Job Training Services

## 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.

## Eligibility

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

## Procedures for Access

1. 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.
2. The social worker refers youth emancipating from foster care to the regionally contracted ILS program for career and job counseling utilizing regionally established procedures.
3. 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.

## Other Sources

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. DVR and L&I provide services to train workers who have had injuries or disabilities so that they can regain employment.

# 4525. DCFS Administrative Approvals

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:** January 31, 2016

**Policy Review:** January 31, 2020

## Scope

This policy applies to all Children's Administration (CA) staff.

## Purpose

DCFS administrative approvals are requested when a policy indicates an administrative approval is required, exception to a policy is needed, or to provide reimbursement /supports to a licensed caregiver beyond what the foster care rate assessment or policy allows.

## Policy

1. Approval requests are only for exceptions to a policy, exceptional cost foster care reimbursement, or when a policy requires an administrative approval.
2. Approval requests must be submitted on [DCFS Administrative Approval Request form DSHS 05-210](#).
3. Exceptional cost foster care is only approved when the foster care rate assessment is completed and the support or supervision for the child needed goes beyond what the rate assessment can provide.
4. Exceptional cost foster care requests must be submitted on a [DCFS Administrative Approval Request form DSHS 05-210](#).
5. Exceptional Cost Foster Care Plans (ECP):
  1. Are developed for placements intended to be permanent or beyond thirty days when a child in out-of-home care has extreme physical, medical, emotional or intellectual impairments, and the licensed caregivers are providing intensive supervision or extra supports to meet the child's exceptional needs.
  2. Must only be considered when all other sources of financial or other supports have been explored to meet the special needs of the child.
  3. Must be reviewed by the assigned CA caseworker and supervisor at the time the foster care rate assessment is completed. Approval by the regional administrator or designee is required to initiate or maintain the plan and payment.
  4. May be backdated up to, but not exceed, 30 days. Approval must be granted before a payment can be made.
  5. Not required for crisis or emergent placements (Emergent placements are less than 30 days).

## Procedures

1. **Approval Request**  
The assigned caseworker must:

1. Determine if an approval request is needed. Requests may include, but are not limited to:
    1. Policy requirements ([4533. Behavioral Rehabilitation Services](#), etc.)
    2. Camps
    3. Additional funding allowed in policy, but not requiring an Exceptional Cost Foster Care Plan
    4. Exceptions to a policy
    5. Respite
    6. Caregiver supports
    7. Childcare services
    8. Exceptional Cost Foster Care Plans
  2. Complete and submit a [DCFS Administrative Approval Request form DSHS 05-210](#) when policy requires it or when an exception to a policy is needed.
  3. Send a completed [DCFS Administrative Approval Request form DSHS 05-210](#) for review and approval to the supervisor, area administrator, regional administrator or designee.
  4. Once approved, upload the document into FamLink.
- 2. Exceptional Cost Foster Care Plans (ECP)**
- The assigned caseworker must:
1. Complete and submit a [DCFS Administrative Approval Request form DSHS 05-210](#) when a placement is to continue beyond 30 days, and a foster parent needs exceptional reimbursement for supervision or support for a child with exceptional needs.
  2. Request an ECP reimbursement only for foster care reimbursement and not to pay for contracted services such as, but not limited to: case aides, counseling etc.
  3. Complete all required fields on [DCFS Administrative Approval Request form DSHS 05-210](#).
  4. Only state to a licensed caregiver that an ECP request will be submitted. The worker should not pay the ECP prior to approval.

## Forms and Tools

[DCFS Administrative Approval Request 05-210](#)

## 4527. Relative Placement

1. When placement is necessary, the social worker is required to exercise "due diligence" to identify and provide notification (DSHS 15-330) to all grandparents, all adult relatives, and Indian tribes or bands within 30 days after the child is removed from the custody of the parents (RCW 13.34.060(1)(a)).
2. The relative(s) must be considered as placement options for the child prior to consideration of placement in other types of out-of-home care. Preferred relative placements are those:
  1. Where the child is comfortable living with the relative;

2. The relative has a relationship with the child; and
  3. 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).
3. 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 the child remains in the home beyond 30 days. Non-related family members must also be considered as potential resources.

## Eligibility

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

## Procedures for Access

1. Relative Search"Unless there is reasonable cause to believe that the health, safety, or welfare of the child would be jeopardized or that the efforts to reunify the parent and child will be hindered, priority placement for a child in shelter care shall be with any person described in RCW 74.15.020 (2) (a). The person(s) must be willing and available to care for the child and be able to meet any special needs of the child. The person must be willing to facilitate the child's visitation with siblings, if such visitation is part of the supervising agency's plan or is ordered by the court. If a child is not initially placed with a relative pursuant to this section, the supervising agency shall make an effort within available resources to place the child with a relative on the next business day after the child is taken into custody. The supervising agency shall document its efforts to identify and to provide notification (DSHS 15-330) to all grandparents, and all adult relatives within 30 days after the child is removed from the custody of the birth parents and to place the child with a relative pursuant to this section on the FamLink Relative Search screen. Nothing within this subsection (1) (a) establishes an entitlement to services or a right to a particular placement **RCW 13.34.060 (1) (a).**

### 1. Definition of Relative:

1. Any blood relative, including those of half-blood and including first cousins, second cousins, nephew and persons of preceding generations as defined by prefixes of grand, great, or great-great; stepfather, stepmother, stepbrother or stepsister;
2. A person who legally adopts a child or the child's parent as well as the natural and adopted children of such persons, and other relatives of the adoptive parents in accordance with law;
3. Spouses of any persons named in (i), (ii) or (iii) of this subsection, even after a marriage is terminated,
4. Relatives, as named in i, ii or iii above, of any half sibling of the child; or
  1. In cases where ICWA applies an extended family member is defined by law or custom of the Indian child's tribe or, in the

absence of such law or custom, a person who has reached the age of 18 and who is the Indian child's grandparents, aunt or uncle, brother or sister, brother-in-law or sister-in-law, niece or nephew, first or second cousin, or stepparent who provides care in the family abode on a twenty-four basis to an Indian child as defined in 25 USC sec 1903(4) **RCW 74.15.020**

2. At the time placement is first considered or when out of home placement is necessary, the DCFS Children's Administration (CA) social worker must search for appropriate relatives to care for the child prior to consideration of placement in other types of out of home care. This search includes attempts to locate and notify all grandparents, adult relatives, including relatives of presumed, but not alleged fathers who can care for the child. Placement with an appropriate and qualified relative, even when there is no previous relationship with the child, may be in the best interest of the child, and CA prefers that placement rather than a placement with a foster parent who has no previous relationship with the child. See the definitions of "alleged" and "presumed" father in the CA Case Services Policy Manual, Appendix A.
3. When it is not possible to locate an appropriate relative prior to the initial placement, the CA worker or designee will begin relative search activities the next business day and document all information in FamLink Relative Search screen.
4. The relative search activities include a three tiered process including Initial Search, Secondary Search and Extended Search (Each region will decide how to implement the three tiers within the first 30 days after a child is removed from the parent's custody).
5. The initial relative search activities, required to be completed by the social worker or designee include:
  1. Asking the parents, the child, or other known relatives;
  2. Asking any other person having family knowledge such as the schools, medical providers, Faith Based community, CASA/GAL for the purpose of identifying all grandparents, all adult relatives, or other suitable individuals who are willing to become a placement option or provide support for the child;
  3. The tribe should be contacted to identify individuals available to care for or provide support for the children if the children are members of a federally recognized Indian tribe, eligible for membership in a recognized Tribe, or the biological child of a member of a recognized Tribe;
  4. Review the case files/records to identify names of relatives or extended family who could be contacted;
  5. Completing a DCFS computer search in FamLink to identify names associated with the child or parent;
  6. Checking the Department of Health online system. Birth certificates, death and marriage certificates can be accessed;
  7. For those children involved in a Dependency process, social workers are required to initiate a request to the Court to order parents to disclose

contact information for all grandparents, all adult relatives, and other individuals who might be a resource for the child - i.e. respite, mentor, childcare, visitation or future placement resource - within two weeks of an entered order,

8. Following Regional protocol, collaborate with other DSHS information systems (Community Service Office, Division of Child Support, and the Department of Corrections) to identify additional relationship history.
  9. If the assigned social worker has not identified any relatives within 7 working days of the child's removal from the parent's custody it is recommended that Relative Search Specialists begin searching for relatives utilizing the advanced search data base.
  6. The secondary relative search activities, required to be completed by the social worker or designee will include reviewing information in databases that CA currently has full or limited access to including ACES with narratives, Department of Licensing, Client Registry and Barcoding.
  7. The request for an extended relative search should be implemented after the initial and secondary search efforts have not identified all adult relatives within 7 working days of the child's removal from the parent's custody.
2. Relative Search includes:
1. Once CA identifies, provides notification to the relative (DSHS 15-330), and the relative agrees to be a placement option or support resource, CA shall assess the relatives for their ability to be a placement option or support resource to the child.
  2. Social workers may discontinue the relative search after consultation with the assigned supervisor. The supervisor must review and agree the standard of due diligence for the relative search has been met and all grandparents and adult relatives notified. The CA social worker or designee will document the search activities, all contact with the relatives and the rationale for selecting the permanent family. When a permanent placement is identified the decision to discontinue relative search efforts must be documented on the FamLink Relative Search screen.
  3. If the permanent placement disrupts, CA will resume the relative search efforts and will document the efforts in the FamLink Relative Search screen.
  4. The documentation of the relative search shall include the names of the relatives identified, notification (DSHS 15-33), and discussions with relatives concerning their decision of becoming placement option or a support resource to the child as well as any other relatives who may provide placement or support for the child and family.
3. 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.
4. 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. As part of the criminal background check, the worker must

contact local law enforcement agencies, including tribal police if the person resides or has resided on an Indian reservation or is known to be or may be affiliated with a particular Tribe. For emergent placements see Operations manual Chapter 5000, section 5517 and Practice and Procedures Manual Chapter 4000, section 45274.

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 licenser 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.
5. Information Sharing: Either prior to or soon after placement, the social worker must 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 must keep the care provider informed regarding the dates and location of dependency review and permanency planning hearings pertaining to the child.
  5. See the Case Services Policy Manual, chapter 4000, section 4120, paragraph A, for requirements to disclose information regarding HIV infection and sexually transmitted diseases to the residential care provider for the child who is less than 14 years of age.
6. Continuing Services
  1. At critical decision points when permanency planning options are being reevaluated, 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, the social worker will consider the child's attachment to their current placement caregiver and the relationship between the child and prospective caregiver (family member).
  2. The social worker provides case management support to relative caretakers in the same manner as any other type of placement.
    1. The child's assigned social worker must conduct a face-to-face interview, or have face-to-face contact with the child incapable of being interviewed, with the child placed into care after hours or on weekends in the placement facility within the next few days following placement. The worker must document the interviews and observations in the case SER.
    2. The child's social worker conducts face-to-face interviews in the home of the relative care provider with the child while in a relative placement

- on a quarterly basis and documents the interviews in the case SER. The social worker conducts these interviews to ensure the health and safety of the child, to assess the child's adjustment to the placement; to assess services needed by the child and the care provider; and to provide casework support.
3. The assigned social worker provides the relative caregiver with information about needed training and support as funding is available.
  7. Financial Support - For relatives needing financial support to care for the child, the social worker may assist the family to apply for TANF through the CSO, or the relatives may choose to receive foster care payments, without regard to eligibility for federal matching dollars, on behalf of the child if the relatives are licensed foster parents. See chapter 5000, section 5232.A.

## 45274. Placements with Unlicensed Relatives or Suitable Persons

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:** April 15, 2008

**Revised Date:** July 1, 2016

**Policy Review:** June 30, 2020

### Purpose

In order to support and preserve connections to family relationships, children should be placed in the safest setting that best meets their needs. Children are best cared for by a person they have a relationship with, when the caregiver is assessed as safe and suitable. An unlicensed caregiver is a relative or suitable person as described in [RCW 74.15.020\(2\)\(a\)](#) or [13.34.130\(1\)\(b\)](#).

### Scope

This policy applies to DCFS staff.

### Laws

[RCW 13.34.060](#) Shelter care—Placement—Custody—Duties of Parties

[RCW 13.34.065](#) Shelter care—Notice of Custody and Rights

[RCW 13.34.130](#) Order of Disposition for a Dependent Child



[RCW 26.44.240](#) Out-of-home care—Emergency Placement—Criminal History Record Check

[RCW 74.15.020](#) Definitions

[PL 110-351](#) Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008

## Policy

1. **Before** a child is placed with an unlicensed caregiver:
  1. All persons living in the home will be identified.
  2. The home and property will be assessed for safety concerns.
  3. The decision to place the child with an unlicensed caregiver will be based on the results of the character, competence and suitability assessment per [Operations Manual Chapter 5500 Criminal History and Child Abuse and Neglect History Checks for Out-of-Home Placement](#).
  4. The unlicensed caregivers will have an **approved home study** for the child being placed.
2. A child may be placed with an unlicensed caregiver prior to the completion of a home study under the following circumstances:
  1. An **emergent placement** refers to those limited instances when the department is placing a child in the home of unlicensed individuals, including neighbors, friends or relatives, as a result of:
    1. The sudden unavailability of the child's primary caregiver (i.e. biological parents, legal guardians, licensed or unlicensed caregiver);  
or
    2. A disrupted placement with a licensed or unlicensed caregiver.
  2. An unlicensed caregiver has been identified for a child in placement, has passed the required background check and the Area Administrator (AA) approved the placement with the unlicensed caregiver pending the outcome of the home study.
  3. The caseworker will provide the unlicensed caregiver with the appropriate forms needed to request a home study. Once the documents have been completed, the caseworker will submit the required documents to DLR **within 30 days** of the placement.
3. The child must be moved from the placement if the unlicensed caregiver's home study is not approved for that child.
4. Unlicensed caregivers will be made aware of the financial supports available to him or her when a child is placed in the home.

## Procedures

Caseworker must:

1. **Before placing** a child in an unlicensed caregiver's home:
  1. Conduct a walkthrough of the unlicensed caregiver's home and property using the [Household Safety Inspection for Unlicensed Placement and Adoptions](#)

- [Home Study Updates form DSHS 10-453](#). For courtesy supervision cases, follow requirements in [Courtesy Supervision policy](#).
2. Complete the assessment of character, competence, and suitability to determine if the caregiver is a suitable placement per [Operations Manual Chapter 5500 Criminal History and Child Abuse and Neglect History Checks for Out-of-Home Placement](#). This includes obtaining results of the background check for all household members aged 16 and older.
  3. Review the content in the completed home study in FamLink under the Provider icon to verify the caregiver has an approved home study for the child being placed.
  4. Obtain AA's approval on the [DCFS Administrative Approval Request form DSHS 05-210](#) when required per policy section 2.b. above.
2. In those limited instances where the unlicensed caregiver is being referred for a home study after the placement occurs, the caseworker must submit the following information to DLR [within 30 days of placement](#):
1. Foster Home Study Application DSHS 10-354 completed by the caregiver.
  2. Background check **summary** for all household members age 16 years and older indicating all members passed the required background check.
3. When discussing the financial support options available to the unlicensed caregiver include the following:
1. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits through Community Services Office (CSO)
  2. Relative Support Services Funds (RSSF)
  3. Licensed foster care
  4. [Clothing allowance](#)
4. Discuss the caregiver's requirement to comply with the case plan and court orders, including but not limited to parent/child visits, sibling visits and any other conditions ordered by the court. Non-compliance with the case plan or court order is grounds for removal of the child from the caregiver, subject to review by the court.
5. Document the following in FamLink:
1. Completion of the walkthrough of the home and property including any safety concerns identified.
  2. Results of the background check for all household members age 16 and older on the Background Check tab in the Person Management page.

## Forms and Tools

[Household Safety Inspection for Unlicensed Placement and Adoptions Home Study Updates form DSHS 10-453](#)

[Foster Home Study Application DSHS 10-354](#)

[DCFS Administrative Approval Request form DSHS 05-210](#)

## Resources

## 4528. Regular Receiving Care

### Service Definition

1. Receiving home care is out-of-home care provided in licensed foster homes which are designated to provide emergent or short-term care.
2. Receiving home care is temporary care not to exceed 30 days.
3. 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.

### Procedures for Access

1. The social worker first determines that relative care is not available.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. 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 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 licenser of placement of the child in a particular home.
6. The federal funding specialist shall notify the CSO Financial Services Specialist of the child's placement if the child is receiving TANF and, in all cases, the Division of Child Support (DCS) and provide a copy of the authority to place in care.
7. 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.

8. The child's assigned social worker shall conduct a face-to-face interview, or have face-to-face contact with the child incapable of being interviewed, with the child placed into care after hours or on weekends in the placement facility within the next few days following placement. The social worker shall document such interviews and contacts in the case SER.

## **4529. Specialized Receiving Care**

### **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.

### **Procedures for Access**

1. 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.
2. The social worker locates and contacts an available, appropriate specialized receiving home parent utilizing the locally determined placement system.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. See section 45282 for procedures regarding federal funding.
6. See section 45282, paragraph H, for the requirement to contact the child placed after hours or on weekends within the next few days following placement.
7. See section 45283 for information regarding TANF maintenance for the child's family.

## **4531. Private Child Placing Agencies**

Purpose

This policy outlines definitions and the requirements for use of in-state private Child Placing Agencies (CPA) for the following services:

1. Case Management
2. Parent-Child Visits
3. Intensive Case Management
4. Borrowed-Home
5. Follow-Up Services
6. Case Aide Services

#### Child Placing Agency Services Definition and Eligibility Requirements

1. Children in the custody of DSHS-CA placed in a Child Placing Agency foster home may receive one or more of the following services:
  1. Case Management
    1. **Definition** - Targeted Case Management Services **provided by the Child Placing Agency**. Case Management Services include coordinating or providing services to enable the child and caregivers to utilize medical, educational, social, and other services necessary for maintaining the child's physical, psychological, and/or developmental health. Responsibilities of the CPA include:
      1. Obtain initial and on-going medical screens under the published guidelines for the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) program.
      2. Ensure the child and caregiver participate in scheduled Child Health and Education Track (CHET) screens.
      3. In conjunction with CA, develop a plan for follow up on medical, dental, mental health or substance abuse issues identified through either the EPSDT evaluation, the CHET screen or other assessment procedures.
      4. Work with education advocacy coordinators as available for services to school age children.
      5. Assist with the development and implementation of Individualized Education Plans (IEP) as needed.
      6. Monitor progress of school age children who are enrolled in school.
      7. Assist in keeping the child's school placement stable while in foster care. Provide support to children and caregivers to assist the child(ren) in making yearly academic progress.
      8. Implement recommendations for age appropriate socialization or developmental remediation for services to pre-school children (i.e. enroll in developmental pre-school, Head Start/Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP), Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT).

9. Recognize culturally unique needs of each child and in conjunction with CA develop and implement a shared plan to maintain the connection between the child and his or her culture
  10. Assess and identify child strengths and talents and consider opportunities for the child to pursue those interests when developing shared plans.
  11. Support the foster parent in having contact with the birth parent, when appropriate, as determined by case manager or DCFS social worker.
  12. Offer youth age fourteen and over, appropriate opportunities for the youth to begin to acquire the skills necessary for a successful transition to adulthood.
  13. Refer eligible youth age 15 and over to Contracted IL services if available and appropriate.
  14. Support the ILS plan and services, as age appropriate.
  15. In conjunction with CA, ensure the Ansel-Casey Life Skills Assessment (ACLSA) is completed on all youth fifteen years (15) and older.
  16. Appear in court to testify as requested by CA
  17. Attend shared planning meetings as arranged or scheduled by CA.
  18. Arrange shared planning meetings as appropriate.
  19. Conduct 90-day Health and Safety visits.
2. **Eligibility** - The social worker and the supervisor will determine if case management services are appropriate when a child is placed in a private agency home. Individual offices may create internal guidelines to determine when to use private agency case management services.
2. Parent-Child Visits
    1. **Definition** - Transportation and visitation supervision services for children in placement.
    2. **Eligibility** - All Children receiving Case Management services are eligible for weekly parent-child visits conducted by the Child Placing Agency.
3. Intensive Case Management
    1. **Definition** - Intensive Case Management (ICM) is the additional support provided to children receiving case management services when extensive coordination of services is required. Services requiring extensive coordination may include:
      1. Behavior that requires intensive supervision
      2. Case Aide Services
      3. Mental health, medical, substance abuse or other therapeutic services
      4. In-home modeling, training and support for a caregiver to manage challenging behaviors
      5. Supports to stabilize placement and prevent disruption

6. *Note* - ICM services may be requested by CA or by the Child Placing Agency if there is a need for more intensive case management.
2. Eligibility - A child is eligible for time limited ICM services when receiving basic case management services from a contracted Child Placing Agency and one of the following applies:
  1. The child has been in a Behavioral Rehabilitative Services (BRS) placement for a minimum of three (3) months and is "graduating" from a BRS placement and in need of Intensive Case Management.
  2. The child's case requires extensive coordination of service.
  3. This is determined on a case-by-case basis. See referral procedures for more information.
4. Borrowed-Home Services
  1. **Definition** - Children's Administration (CA) borrows a foster home/bed from a Child Placing Agency.
  2. **Eligibility** - A child is eligible for Borrowed-Home services when the child is placed in a Child Placing Agency home and case management services are provided by CA.  
CA only pays the private agency to maintain the foster care license and provide any related licensing services. This service also covers maintenance of a foster care license for foster parent guardianships in a private agency home.
5. Follow-Up Services
  1. **Definition** - Follow-up care services are case management services provided by the Child Placing Agency after the child has left the CPA foster home.
  2. **Eligibility** - A child is eligible for Follow-Up Services when the child has moved out of Child Placing Agency foster care and returned home, in relative care, or in extended family/non-relative care and the private agency agrees to continue case management services to the child.  
Follow-up Services may be provided for up to six months.
6. Case Aide Services
  1. **Definition** - Case aide services are used to meet supervision and monitoring requirements for children in foster care. Case Aide (case aide) Services are intended to augment supervision and activity plans for children whose behaviors or developmental needs cannot be managed in a foster home without additional assistance.
  2. Case Aide Services must not be used when respite or childcare services are more appropriate.  
**Eligibility** - Case Aide services are for children with behaviors that require intense one-on-one supervision.
2. Social Worker Responsibilities
  1. Referral to Child Placing Agency
    1. When making a referral to the Child Placing Agencies social workers must use the Child Placing Agency Referral Form (DSHS 10-402 this

replaces the 15-190); the Child Information/Placement Referral Form (15- 300) and the Parent-Child Visit Plan form (15-209C).

2. Emergency Placements - If the CA social worker is unable to make a written referral prior to placement, the social worker will complete the referral within five (5) calendar days of placement.
3. Timeframe for Post Referral Follow up - The CA worker must contact the Child Placing Agency worker within one week of the referral and discuss required case management services, coordination, roles, and responsibilities.

4. Additional referral requirements related to specific services include:  
**Referral for Parent-Child Visits.**

The completed visit plan (15-209C) must be attached to the referral.

**Requests/Referral for Intensive Case Management. (ICM)**

The social worker must ensure all requests received from or for the Child Placing Agency for ICM services include:

- Child's name
- Intended length of ICM service
- Reason(s) for ICM services
- Description of ICM services above regular case management
- Additional number of case management hours expected
- Level of ICM requested (\$200 or \$400)

5. If the referral for ICM is not complete, the social worker must immediately return the referral to the Child Placing Agency with the reason(s) it was not accepted.

When the social worker receives or makes a request for ICM services, the social worker must obtain supervisory approval and forward the ICM request to the Regional Gatekeeper **within five (5) days**.

2. Authorization ICM Regional Gatekeeper Responsibilities
3. The **ICM Regional Gatekeeper will have an additional five (5) days**, for a total of ten (10) working days to review and approve or deny the request. **If the request is denied**, the ICM Regional Gatekeeper will return the request to the social worker with a statement citing the reason(s) for denial.

This approval process may be done via e-mail. The social worker must use the e-mail as the approval or denial of the request and document the activities in the case file.

The Regional Gatekeeper must track all requests and the decision of each request and reason for approval or denial.

4. Follow-up Care Services. Follow-up care services are limited to six months. Requests for extensions must be in writing and approved by the CA Regional Administrator or designee.
5. Monitoring

1. The CA social worker is expected to monitor CPA placements in the following ways:

1. Review quarterly progress reports from the CPA regarding the child. The CA social worker may return any CPA quarterly report that does not meet the expectations of CA. The social



worker shall send a letter outlining the concerns to the CPA with copies to the regional office licenser and contracts coordinator.

~~1.2.~~ Inform the regional licenser and contracts manager if there are on-going problems with reports or reason to believe that the health and safety of children in a CPA home is jeopardized.

~~2.3.~~ Visit with the child and caregiver as outlined in Monthly Social Worker Visit policy in section 4420 of Practices and Procedures manual 4000.

## 4532. Therapeutic Or Treatment Foster Care

### Service Definition

1. Therapeutic or treatment foster homes are those licensed foster families that have been identified to care for extremely behaviorally/emotionally disturbed children who cannot function in a family home without specialized treatment and expertise.
2. 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.
3. 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.

### Eligibility

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

### Procedures for Access

1. The social worker determines that appropriate relative care is not available prior to placement of the child in foster care.
2. The social worker locates and contacts an available, appropriate foster home parent utilizing the locally determined placement system.
3. The social worker informs the foster parent of DCFS responsibilities toward finding a relative 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.
4. In instances where placement is not emergent, the social worker must arrange pre-placement visits to reduce the anxiety of the child around the placement and to familiarize the child with the child's temporary family. When possible and appropriate, the social worker must involve parents in pre-placement visits. Unless emergency preempts such involvement, the child's social worker must be involved in the pre-

placement visits and the actual placement in the foster home. See section 45282, paragraph H, for the requirement to contact the child placed after hours or on weekends within the next few days following placement.

5. 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. See the Case Services Policy Manual, chapter 4000, section 4120, paragraph A, for requirements to disclose information regarding HIV infection and sexually transmitted diseases to the residential care provider for the child who is less than 14 years of age.
  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:
    1. Child's full name, birth date, and legal status.
    2. Last school of attendance and eligibility for special education and related services.
    3. Medical problems/history including name of doctor/ dentist and medical coverage.
    4. Name and address of parent/guardian.
    5. Reason for placement.
    6. Emergency procedures and any special instructions.
    7. The name and telephone number of the social worker and of the social worker's immediate supervisor.
6. See section 45282 for procedures regarding federal funding.
7. The social worker makes a contact with the foster home within three days following placement to see how the child is adjusting.
8. 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.
9. Whenever possible or appropriate, the social worker must provide parents/guardians with information about the child's adjustment, health, and school progress while in foster care.
10. After the initial contact following placement, the social worker must visit the foster home and have face-to-face contact in the foster home with the foster parents and child every calendar month not to exceed 40 days between visits. The social worker conducts these on-site interviews to ensure the health and safety of the child, to assess the child's adjustment to placement, to assess services needed by the child or foster parent, and to provide casework support to assist foster parents in caring for the child.

The social worker must document the activities in the case SER. 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.

11. For children who are dependent under chapter 13.34 RCW, the social worker must notify the current caregiver of the date of scheduled court review hearings pertaining to the child. The social worker almost notify the caregiver of the caregiver's right to an opportunity to be heard in the review hearing and to provide the court with information. This right to notice of hearings and opportunity to be heard applies to foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and relatives who are caring for the child at the time of the hearing. This hearing notice does not give the caregiver legal status as a party to the case. The court will make the final decision about whether and how the caregiver will provide input at the hearing.
12. 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.
13. 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.
14. 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.

## 4533. Behavioral Rehabilitation Services

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Asst. Secretary

**Effective Date:** September 27, 1995

**Revised Date:** July 1, 2014

**Sunset Review:** June 30, 2018

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### **Purpose**

Behavior Rehabilitation Services (BRS) is a temporary intensive wraparound support and treatment program for youth with high-level service needs. BRS is used to stabilize youth (**in-home or out-of-home**) and assist in achieving their permanent plan.

BRS services are intended to:

- Safely keep youth in their own homes with wraparound supports to the family
- Safely reunify or achieve alternative permanency more quickly
- Safely meet the needs of youth in family- based care to prevent the need for placement into a more restrictive setting
- Safely reduce length of service by transitioning youth to a permanent home or less intensive service

## Laws

[RCW 13.34.100](#)

[WAC 388-25-0100](#)

## Policy

1. Youth with high-level complex service needs are eligible for Behavioral Rehabilitation Services (BRS) when they meet specific BRS criteria.
2. All youth must be referred to an RSN/local county mental health provider for a Wraparound Intensive Services (WISe) screen, when services are available in the county of referring CA staff, prior to BRS referral and approval.
3. Youth can only receive BRS from contracted BRS service providers.
4. The youth's CA worker must participate in BRS Child and Family Team (CFT) meetings which must include the provider, youth, community partners, and others identified by the family.
5. The youth's CA worker will facilitate the discussion to identify a targeted discharge date and transition placement during the initial CFT meeting.
6. BRS services that last longer than 12 months or past the age of 18 years requires approval to assure the barriers preventing the youth from transitioning out of BRS are addressed.
7. If the youth requires out of state BRS, follow [4266 Out-of-State Placements](#) policy.

## Procedures

1. Eligibility and Referral

The Social Worker will:

1. Consult with the Regional BRS Manager to determine if a BRS referral is needed or appropriate for the youth. If BRS Manager agrees, complete the referral process as follows:
  1. Refer youth to the RSN/local county mental health provider for a WISe screen (when available in the county of origin). Once screening has been completed:
    - Request a copy of the WISe screen from the county mental health provider and include a copy in the BRS referral packet.

- If a hard copy of WISE screen result is not available, document the results on the BRS Referral form (DSHS 10-166a).
  - If a WISE screen was requested, but not completed by the RSN/local county mental health provider, document this fact on BRS Referral form (DSHS 10-166a).
  - Document in case notes when a WISE referral is made and the results of WISE screenings.
2. Identify needed supports and services for the youth and family during a Family Team Decision Making (FTDM) or Shared Planning Meeting held before a BRS referral is made.
  3. Complete a BRS referral form and packet when the FTDM or Shared Planning Meeting team indicates the youth would benefit from BRS.
  4. Obtain supervisor and Area Administrator approval before sending the referral packet to the regional BRS Manager.

The Regional BRS Manager will:

5. Review referral packet.
  6. Verify that a WISE screen referral was made or results are included in the referral packet. If a screen was not completed, ensure that the worker documented on the BRS referral form (DSHS 10-166a) that the screen was requested, but not completed, and the date referral was made. Approval for BRS must not be granted without this information in counties where WISE has been implemented.
  7. Determine youth's eligibility for BRS and review youth's discharge and or permanency plan.
  8. Send referral packet and negotiate the service level needed with the contracted service provider.
  9. Notify CA worker of the provider, service level and contracted rate once provider has been determined.
  10. When the youth's needs exceed the BRS level of care:
    1. Consult with CA HQ Intensive Resource Manager.
    2. Negotiate with potential in-state agencies regarding an Intensive Residential Child Specific wraparound service contract and obtain Regional Administrator or designee approval.
    3. Work with Regional Contract Manager to initiate the Child Specific contract if approved. DSHS 10-490 form must be completed by the potential contractor per instructions included in the form. This document must be included with the contract approval request.
    4. Follow Policy 4266 Out-of-State Placements if youth requires out of state Intensive Residential Child Specific contracted services. DSHS 10-490 form must be completed.
  11. Obtain approval from the receiving BRS manager when out-of-region BRS is needed.
2. The Service Period (In-home or out-of-home)

The CA Worker will:

1. Document service type, placement (if needed) and payment in the electronic case file.
2. Participate in all CFT meetings. Actively involve youth, youth's family and other identified supports in case planning. The meeting will focus on the youth's transition to a less intensive service or a permanent home.

**Important:** CFT meetings are usually held in the family's community and include the following people:

Youth, parents/caregivers, family members, community members, mental health professionals, educators, and other individuals agreed upon by the family.

3. Focus CFT meetings on measurable outcomes related to safety, stability, permanency and discharge planning for the youth.
4. During quarterly case reviews with the BRS Contractor:
  - ~~0.1.~~ Discuss WISE screen results
  - ~~1.2.~~ Review progress and discharge reports from the contractor (WISE screen results should be included). BRS Contractors are required to refer youth to the RSN/local county mental health provider for a WISE screen (when available in the county of origin) at least every six months and prior to discharge.
  - ~~2.3.~~ Document the results of case review in case notes.
5. Share information with the youth in accordance with the disclosure policy. Share information with the dependent youth about the court processes and their right to legal representation according to [RCW 13.34.100](#)
6. Assist youth 15 and older who are in out-of-home care for more than 30 days in completing the Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment (ACLSA) and Learning Plan (LP) per the [43102 CA Responsibilities to Youth 12 and Older policy](#).
7. Complete a personalized, youth directed Transition Plan for youth age 17.5 as required per the [43104 Transition Planning for Dependent Youth 15-18 Years policy](#).
8. Obtain written approval from the RA or designee to extend BRS when barriers exist that prevents the youth transitioning out of BRS within 12 months. Approval must be obtained prior to the 12th month and every six months thereafter. A copy of the written approval must be sent to Regional BRS manager.
9. For a youth to remain in BRS past age 18, policy [43105 Extended Foster Care](#) must be followed. Obtain written approval from RA or Designee and every six months thereafter. A copy of the written approval must be sent to the Regional BRS manager.

Regional BRS Manager will:

10. Provide oversight, guidance, consultation regarding BRS contractor's compliance. Including quality of service, outcomes and performance.
  11. Monitor and track regional BRS data, including but not limited to, date of entry, exit, length of stay, placement type, service and rate.
  12. Review every six months, the youth's service needs, level of care, target exit date, and transition plan in collaboration with the social worker and contracted service provider.
  13. Participate in CFT meetings when possible.
3. Aftercare (Out-of-home BRS)

The CA Worker will:

1. Participate in all CFT meetings to discuss after care wraparound planning that supports the youth and family to achieve stability, permanency or placement transition.

Regional BRS Manager will:

2. Consult with the social worker to develop an aftercare service plan.
3. Negotiate with the contracted provider on an aftercare service plan.

### **Forms and Tools**

- Behavioral Rehabilitation Services Referral Form (DSHS 10-166a)
- Child Specific Contract Rate Proposal Form (DSHS 10-490)
- BRS Screening Guide

## **4534. Crisis Residential Center (CRC) Placement**

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:** 1984

**Revised Date:** July 1, 2016

**Policy Review:** July 1, 2020

**Purpose**

Crisis Residential Centers (CRCs) are short-term, semi-secure or secure facilities for runaway youth and adolescents in conflict with their families. CRCs provide resources for emergency, temporary residence, assessment, and referrals to services for youth ages 12-17.

## Scope

This policy applies to all DCFS caseworkers.

## Laws

[RCW 13.32A.030](#) Definitions

[RCW 13.32A.080](#) Unlawful harboring of a minor

[RCW 43.185C.305](#) Youth Services-Crisis Residential Services-Removal From-Unauthorized leave

[RCW 43.185C.310](#) Youth services—Crisis residential centers—Removal to another center or secure facility—Placement in Secure Juvenile Detention Facility

[RCW 74.14A.020](#) Services for Emotionally Disturbed and Mentally Ill Children, Potentially Dependent Children, and Families-In-Conflict

[RCW 74.13.031](#) Duties of Department—Child Welfare Services—Children's Services Advisory Committee.

[RCW 74.13.035](#) Crisis Residential Centers Annual Records—Multiple Licensing

[WAC 388-145-1890](#) Crisis Residential Centers

[388-145-1980](#)

## Policy

### 1. Accessing Placement in a CRC

The caseworker will:

1. Refer to [2200. Intake](#) or [5400. Family Reconciliation Services](#) policies for service requests for non-dependent youth requiring placement
2. Send a Child Information Placement and Referral form DSHS 15-300 to the CA placement coordinator for dependent youth. The CRC will make the final determination for placement. Priority will be given to:
  1. Youth who have run from foster care placement; or
  2. Youth whose health and safety is at risk and a short-term placement is needed until an alternative is found.

### 2. Placement in a CRC

The caseworker will:



1. Contact the youth within 24 hours of placement, excluding weekends and holidays and:
    1. Identify the youth's emergent needs.
  2. Obtain legal authorizations for placements lasting longer than 72 hours, if needed.
  3. Placements in a CRC must not exceed 15 calendar days; and the placement should not be longer than it takes to facilitate family reconciliation, return of the youth to the youth's home, or to develop an alternative long-term placement plan.
  4. Ensure a youth's length of stay in a juvenile detention-based secure CRC does not exceed five calendar days.
  5. For youth moving between CRC and Secure CRC, the youth's stay cannot exceed 15 calendar days total.
  6. Notify the youth's tribe of the placement change if the youth is enrolled or is eligible for membership in a federally recognized tribe. Follow [ICW Chapter 5](#).
  7. When a child is in the care and custody of CA, and placed in a CRC:
    1. Schedule a [Family Team Decision Making](#) or [Shared Planning Meeting](#) within 72 hours of placement, excluding weekends and holidays.
    2. Authorize emergent medical and dental care.
    3. Transition the youth within five days of the discharge placement being identified.
    4. Relocate all dependent youth who have reached the maximum length stay of 15 days for CRC and Secure CRC.
  8. Document case coordination in FamLink
- 3. Information Sharing with CRC Staff**
1. For dependent youth for whom CA is requesting placement through a referral, the caseworker will:
    1. **Not** provide the youth's name or date of birth when inquiring about the availability of a placement at a CRC.
    2. Provide information per [RCW 74.13.280](#). Information can include:
      1. Gender
      2. Age (not date of birth)
      3. Behaviors
      4. Risks
      5. Special needs
      6. Sexually Aggressive/Physically Aggressive Assaultive Youth (SAY/PAAY) history
      7. Offense history
    3. Once the youth has been transported and placed at the CRC, provide the name and date of birth to the CRC staff.
  2. For dependent youth currently placed in a CRC due to self-referral or by law enforcement, the caseworker will provide and exchange information per [RCW 74.13.280](#) and [4413. Placement](#) policy. Information includes, but is not limited to:
    1. Name
    2. Date of birth

3. Gender
4. Behaviors
5. Risks
6. Special needs
7. Sexually Aggressive/Physically Aggressive Assaultive Youth (SAY/PAAY) history
8. Offense history

## **Forms**

[Child Information and Placement Referral form DSHS 15-300](#)

[Youth Run Prevention Plan DSHS 10-484](#)

[Return Child De-Briefing form DSHS 15-309](#)

## **Resources**

[Office of Homeless Youth](#)

# **4535. PERMANENCY PLANNING FAMILY PLACEMENT (PPFP)**

1. Purpose of a PPFP
  1. This policy establishes guidelines for CA staff to place children in an appropriate foster home to ensure the best interest of the child and to begin permanency planning during the early stages of dependency.
  2. The policy provides a secure and stable attachment to adults acting in a parental capacity that is essential for children. In order to promote appropriate attachments during the dependency process, it is beneficial to children to be placed in a home that has the potential for permanency if the child is not returned to his/her birth parents. Families willing to make permanent commitments to children, while understanding the child may be returned to his/her birth parents, are called Permanency Planning Family Placements (PPFPs).
  3. In order to be considered a PPFP, the family must understand the dependency process, be aware of the child's family situation, and support reunification efforts. This requires pre-service training, support for the PPFP family, and information sharing with the family.

## **Definition**

1. A PPF is one that is approved to care for the child on a temporary basis (relative or foster parent) and has an approved adoptive home study so that the PPF can be considered as an adoptive placement for the child, in the event that parental rights are terminated. If the child cannot be returned to his or her birth parents, the intention of the department and the family is that the family will adopt the child. The family is prepared to be partners with the department and the child's birth family in concurrent planning for the child.
2. PPFs are licensed foster families or relatives who are approved to care for the child. All statutory, regulatory, and procedural guidance apply to PPFs as they do to all foster parents and relative caregivers. All departmental policies and procedures related to social worker involvement with foster parents and relative caregivers also apply to PPFs.

## Procedures

Prior to implementation of this policy and procedure, each Children's Administration region is responsible to define and implement the specific procedures required for identifying PPFs, identifying children appropriate for placement with a PPF, and making placements. The regional procedures shall be consistent with this, and other, CA policies and procedures.

1. Identification of Families Appropriate for the Permanency Planning Family Program
  1. A Permanency Planning Family (PPF) is a family that is approved to care for the child on a temporary basis, has an approved foster care license or relative home study, and has an approved adoptive home study.
  2. PPFs will receive training in the dependency process, concurrent planning, the needs of children for secure attachments and continuity of relationships, and the needs of children for continued contact with their birth family and others with whom they have relationships. This training has been included since the adoption of the PRIDE curriculum. If a family has not taken training since the PRIDE curriculum was introduced, the region must develop a protocol to offer training options. Some options are for specialized training, attending certain sections of PRIDE training that covers the dependency process, concurrent planning, and other training defined in this section.
  3. PPFs agree to meet the biological family of the child and to support visitation with parents during the dependency process. PPFs also agree to facilitate on-going contact between the child and the child's siblings, extended family and others with whom the child has positive relationships as appropriate for the child before and after adoption. The safety parameters of these contacts will be discussed with the social worker that will include safeguards to protect the PPF and the child. In some cases, children and families will not be safe if the biological parent meets the PPF, even if on a first-name basis in a neutral setting. In-person contact will not be required in those circumstances.
2. Identification of Children Appropriate for Placement with a Permanency Planning Family
  1. Each DCFS region will establish procedures for review of the appropriateness of a child's placement in a PPF. Prior to placement in a PPF, a staffing will

occur that must include representation beyond the assigned social worker and supervisor. The licensor, placement coordinator, and social workers for other children in the home should be invited to attend the staffing or, if they are unable to attend, to provide written input. This staffing can occur in a variety of settings (such as prognostic, permanency planning, placement committee, LICWAC, Family Group Conferences, CPTs, Pre-Passport staffings, etc.) depending upon the organization of individual offices and the nature of the case.

2. The DCFS region will establish procedures that insure case plans will be reviewed from the earliest opportunity for appropriateness of placement with a PPF. Placement in a PPF may occur prior to a finding of dependency where it is highly likely the child will require adoptive placement (including when there are aggravated circumstances or extremely poor prognosis for reunification).
3. Factors to be addressed at the staffing include:
  1. Results of the diligent relative search and discussion with relatives about the child's situation, placement needs, and other relatives who might be placement resources for the child;
  2. Attempts to establish paternity;
  3. Indian Child Welfare (ICW) status;
  4. An assessment of the family situation and history including strengths and deficits that indicate the prognosis for reunification (it is recommended that established tools be used for this assessment such as those found in the publication Concurrent Planning: From Permanency Planning to Permanency Action ;
  5. Current legal status;
  6. Plans to support the continuity of relationships with people who are important to the child and contribute to the child's healthy development;
  7. Special needs of the child;
  8. Review of the current placement as a possible permanency placement that would include a referral for an AHS; and
  9. Ability of proposed PPF to meet needs of child and work with the family.
4. Prior to placement of an Indian child (all definitions of Indian Child included in the ICW Manual, Chapter 3.05) with a PPF, the social worker will staff the child's situation and needs with the child's Tribe, or LICWAC if the tribe has not intervened. The PPF must be chosen within placement preferences and in compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Manual.
3. Procedures For Placing Children In Permanency Planning Families
  - o Note: This conversation will be documented in the child's file. Before placement of a child into a PPF the family shall sign the DSHS 15-175 Permanency Planning Placement Agreement. The PPF may choose to review this agreement with their attorney.
  - 2. Prior to placement of a child with a PPF, the social worker will make all attempts to determine paternity. In addition to interviews with the mother and relatives and review of the birth certificate, a review of the Division of Child

Support's management information system (SEMS) will be made to determine if the Division of Child Support has determined paternity of the child.

3. Prior to choosing a placement for the child, parental input on placement preferences will be considered (see the Case Services Policy Manual, section 5762 (G.2.)).
4. Prior to placement of a child with a PFP, a relative search will be completed and documented. Documentation will include the names of relatives identified, attempts made to contact them, and discussions with them concerning placement of the child. The relative search may identify an appropriate family member, or a member of the family's support circle, as the PFP. These identified families should be given preference for placement if the placement is in the child's best interest and the relative is qualified, able to meet the needs of the child, able to assist with reunification efforts, and willing to be a permanent placement if necessary.
5. If placement in a non-related family home occurs, all identified relatives will either be unreachable, unavailable to meet the responsibilities and commitment expected of a PFP, ruled out for placement or will have declined placement of the child. Those declining placement of the child will be confirmed in writing, and they will be informed that this decision is anticipated to be final (see sample letter).
6. The social worker will request a home study through the Interstate Compact (ICPC) process for relatives identified as possible appropriate placements, who are able to meet the responsibilities and commitment expected of a PFP, and who reside out-of-state. The ICPC may include a request that the family is evaluated for both the child's current placement needs as well as a possible permanency family. If the ICPC process significantly delays the child's placement, it may be possible, in consultation with the ICPC program manager, to contract for a child placing agency to conduct the home study.
7. Prior to placement in the PFP, the child's social worker will staff the child's situation with the child's Tribe and/or LICWAC (see the ICW Manual Chapter 10.02 to determine when it is appropriate to staff with LICWAC) and obtain approval for the placement. The role of the PFP will be thoroughly explained to the Tribal representative. If the tribe does not give approval for placement in a PFP, then the placement will not be made.
8. Prior to placement in the PFP, the child's social worker will thoroughly review with the PFP:
  1. the child's birth family situation;
  2. the child's special needs;
  3. the child's cultural needs;
  4. current legal status;
  5. case plan;
  6. visitation plan;
  7. relationships with siblings and extended family with the PFP;;;
  8. the possibility that the child will be returned to the birth parents; and
  9. financial considerations-if adoption is the long term plan, foster care support will end when the adoption is finalized. Adoption support is

only available to families approved for adoption support prior to adoption finalization.

9. The social worker will explain to the birth parents, GAL/CASA and their attorneys the role of the PFP and share with them the agreement signed by the family with identifying information redacted.
  10. The social worker and the PFP will arrange with the current placement resource an appropriate transition of the child to placement in the PFP that takes into consideration the child's age, developmental level, strength of primary attachments, etc.
4. On-Going Support Of PFP Placements
0. DCFS Regions will establish on-going support to PFPs. This may include:
    1. Agency/staff support of foster parent associations, specifically supporting PFPs;
    2. Use of FPAWS and foster parent liaisons to assist in communication with foster parents;
    3. Support groups for PFPs;
    4. Mentor programs for PFPs, connecting experienced foster parents who have adopted with new PFPs;
    5. Notification and reminders of the availability of foster parent liaisons and other trouble-shooting procedures;
    6. Communication (written/verbal) that DCFS wants to know if they have concerns about the case plan or their interactions with the birth family or DCFS staff;
    7. Provision of in-service training with PFPs after placement of children. This would be an extension of the pre-service training sessions and include information on working with the attachment needs of children, interactions with birth families, and working with the system; and
    8. Quarterly meetings for PFPs to interface with agency staff for feedback, information sharing, and support.
  5. In each visit to the PFP (including the 90-day health and safety visits), the social worker will share the progress of the parents and the case plan of the department.
  6. The social worker will share all ISSPs with the PFP, invite them to attend court hearings to provide information to the Court concerning the progress of the child, and share with them the results of all court hearings. The child's PFP should also be invited to case staffings (LICWAC, CPT, prognostic, permanency, etc.) to provide information on the child and work with the birth family.
  7. If a petition to terminate parental rights is filed, the PFP family is not a party to the termination proceedings, but is a party in discussions concerning open communication agreements with the child's birth family. The social worker will advise the PFP that they may want to be represented by their attorney during the discussions and drafting of the agreement.
  8. A PFP foster parent will only be considered a prospective adoptive parent by the department when the following has occurred:
    0. Parental rights to the child have been terminated;
    1. The department plan for the child is adoption by the PFP;

2. The Tribe (or LICWAC, in the absence of tribal intervention), has given approval for the adoption of the child by the PFPF;
3. The Department has completed and approved an adoptive home study; and
4. Information on the child has been shared in accordance with Practices and Procedure Guide section 5361.

## **45353. Services to the Child**

1. 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.
2. The social worker and supervisor must 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**

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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**

1. 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.
2. 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.
  3. 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.
  4. 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.
  5. 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.
  6. 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 5361.

## 4536. Sexually Aggressive Youth

### Purpose Statement

To guide CA social workers in properly identifying Sexually Aggressive Youth (SAY) and provide the needed supervision and services to meet the needs of all youth determined as SAY.

### Laws

[RCW 74.13.075](#) Sexually Aggressive Youth - Defined

### Policy

1. When identifying and determining a youth as SAY they must be 8 years or older and must meet one of the following criteria:
  1. The Regional SAY Committee has approved the youth for SAY funded treatment (currently or in the past); or
  2. The Regional SAY/PAAY committee has determined the youth meets the definition of SAY as defined in [RCW 74.13.075](#) ; or
  3. A valid record exists documenting the youth has been found guilty in a court of law for a sexual offense.
2. All youth identified as SAY must have a signed Youth Supervision Plan (DSHS-15-352) prior to placement, but no later than 72 hours and the plan must be documented in FamLink within seven calendar days.



3. Youth Supervision and Safety Plans must initially be reviewed and approved by Regional SAY Committee.
4. All youth identified as SAY must be provided needed services.
5. Youth identified as SAY must *only* be placed with licensed caregivers who have completed the CA SAY training.
6. Youth already placed and then identified as SAY, the caregivers must complete the CA SAY training as soon as possible, but no later than 30 calendar days.
7. Youth identified as SAY and placed with unlicensed caregivers, the caregiver must complete the CA SAY training as soon as possible, but no later than 30 calendar days.
8. Regions must establish a SAY Committee. The SAY committees determine youth's SAY identification, eligibility for SAY funded resources as outlined in [RCW 74.13.075](#) and provide quality assurance oversight.

## Procedures

1. When identifying or removing a youth as SAY complete SAY Determination Referral DSHS-15-399 and submit to regional SAY committee.
2. Document in FamLink by checking or un-checking the SAY Warning Indicator on the Person Management Page within seven calendar days for youth identified as SAY.
3. Refer youth needing SAY treatment interventions to the Regional SAY committee, for authorization of SAY funding. Referrals must include:
  1. A detailed description of the youth's sexually aggressive act.
  2. Any other relevant information necessary to determine SAY funding needs.
4. Refer youth approved for SAY service funds to a CA contracted SAY provider for services. **Note:** Prosecutors may refer youth for SAY services and youth do not need to be CA dependent.
5. Coordinate services and Youth Supervision and Safety Plan with the SAY contracted provider, youth's caregiver and, if applicable, Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration or county probation.
6. Complete in FamLink a Youth Supervision Plan DSHS-15-352 on all youth identified as SAY with the youth's caregiver and DLR Licensor (if available) within seven calendar days. Identify with the caregiver as part of the supervision and plan any training, support or consultation they need.
7. Submit FamLink Youth Supervision Plan DSHS-15-352 to youth's caregiver for review and signature. Provide a copy of the signed plan to the caregiver and place a copy in the case file and upload document in FamLink. Notify the DLR Licensor via email the signed plan has been completed.
8. Review Youth Supervision Plans at least every six months with caregiver, supervisor and update as needed.
9. Verify the prospective licensed caregiver has completed the CA SAY training. If the licensed caregiver has not completed the training:
  1. Do not place youth identified as SAY with the caregiver, until training is completed and verified.
  2. Provide the caregiver with information on where and how to access the training.

3. Discuss and document in the electronic case file the date the caregiver agrees to complete the training.
10. Verify the unlicensed caregiver has completed the CA SAY training. If the unlicensed caregiver has not completed the training:
  1. Provide them with information on where and how to access the training.
  2. Discuss and document in the electronic case file the date the caregiver agrees to complete the training. This date must be as soon as possible, but no later than 30 days after placement.
11. Verify the licensed or unlicensed caregiver has completed the CA SAY training when a youth is identified as SAY following placement. If the caregivers have not completed the training:
  1. Provide them with information on where and how to access the training.
  2. Discuss and document in the electronic case file the date the caregiver agrees to complete the training. This date must be as soon as possible, but no later than 30 days of the identification.
12. Include the following information every six months when requesting reauthorization of funding from the Regional SAY Committee:
  1. SAY provider quarterly reports.
  2. New documented incidents of sexual aggression.
  3. Supervision Plan.
  4. Other new evaluations or reports that are important to determine SAY funding needs.
13. **Note:** Polygraph test can only be provided or funded for sexually aggressive youth if a court order requires the test. Plethysmograph will not be approved or funded for sexually aggressive youth.

## Forms and Tools

- Youth Supervision Plan DSHS-15-352
- SAY Determination Referral DSHS-15-399
- FamLink Document upload instructions

## Resources

- Youth Supervision Plan Tips
- [4413 Placement Services](#)

# 45362. Physically Assaultive/Aggressive Youth

## Purpose

To guide CA social workers in properly identifying Physically Assaultive/Aggressive Youth (PAA Y) and providing the needed supervision and services to meet the needs of all youth identified as PAA Y.

## Laws

[RCW 74.13.280](#) Client Information

## Policy

1. When identifying and determining a youth as PAA Y as defined by [RCW 74.13.280](#) a youth must exhibit one or more of the following behaviors that are developmentally inappropriate and harmful to the child or to others:
  1. Observed assaultive behavior;
  2. Reported and documented history of the child willfully assaulting or inflicting bodily harm; or
  3. Attempting to assault or inflict bodily harm on other children or adults when the child has the apparent ability to carry out the attempted assaults, including threats to use a weapon.
2. All youth identified as PAA Y must have a signed Youth Supervision Plan (DSHS 15-352) prior to placement, but no later than 72 hours and the plan must be documented in FamLink within seven calendar days.
3. Youth Supervision Plans must initially be reviewed and approved by Regional SAY/PAA Y Committee.
4. All youth identified as PAA Y must be provided needed services.
5. Youth identified as PAA Y must *only* be placed with licensed caregivers who have completed the CA PAA Y training.
6. Youth already placed and then identified as PAA Y, the caregivers must complete the CA PAA Y training as soon as possible, but no later than 30 calendar days
7. Youth identified as PAA Y and placed with unlicensed caregivers, the caregiver must complete the CA PAA Y training as soon as possible, but no later than 30 calendar days.
8. Regions must establish PAA Y committee to determine PAA Y identification and provide quality assurance oversight.

## Procedures

1. When identifying or removing youth as PAA Y complete PAA Y Determination Referral DSHS-15-400 and submit to regional PAA Y committee.
2. Document in FamLink by checking or un-checking the PAA Y Warning Indicator on the Person Management Page within seven calendar days for youth identified as PAA Y.
3. Coordinate service and Youth Supervision Plans for PAA Y youth with the contracted provider of services and caregiver.
4. Complete in FamLink a Youth Supervision Plan DSHS-15-352 on all youth identified as PAA Y with the caregiver and DLR Licensor (if available) within seven calendar

- days. Identify with the caregiver as part of the supervision and plan any training, support or consultation they need.
5. Submit all Youth Supervision and plans for review and signature by the youth's caregiver. Provide a copy of the signed plan to the caregiver and place a copy in the case file and upload document into FamLink. Notify the DLR Licensor via email the signed plan has been completed.
  6. Review Youth Supervision Plans at least every six months with caregiver, supervisor and update as needed.
  7. Verify a perspective licensed caregiver has completed the CA PAAY training. If the licensed caregiver has not completed the training:
    1. Do not place youth identified as SAY with the caregiver, until training is completed and verified.
    2. Provide the caregiver with information on where and how to access the training.
    3. Discuss and document in the electronic case file the date the caregiver agrees to complete the training.
  8. Verify an unlicensed caregiver has completed the CA PAAY training. If the unlicensed caregiver has not completed the training:
    1. Provide them with information on where and how to access the training.
    2. Discuss and document in the electronic case file the date caregiver agrees to complete the training. This date must be as soon a possible, but no later than 30 days after placement.
  9. Verify a licensed or unlicensed caregiver has completed the CA PAAY training when a youth is identified as PAAY following placement. If the caregivers have not completed the training:
    1. Provide them with information on where and how to access the training.
    2. Discuss and document in the electronic case file the date caregiver agrees to complete the training. This date must be as soon a possible, but no later than 30 days of the identification.

## Forms and Tools

- Youth Supervision Plan DSHS 15-352
- PAAY Determination Referral DSHS 15-400
- FamLink Document upload instructions

## Resources

- Youth Supervision Plan Tips
- [4413 Placement Services](#)

# 4537. Clothing Allowance For Children In Out-Of-Home Care

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:** September 27, 1995

**Revised Date:** August 6, 2015

**Policy Review Date:** August 6, 2018

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## **Purpose**

Provides for the essential clothing needs of children entering care or to assist in providing additional funding for an exceptional need not met through the standard clothing allowance in the foster care monthly payment or other community resources.

## **Scope**

This policy applies to CA caseworkers and fiduciaries.

## **Laws**

[WAC 388-25-0125](#)

## **Policy**

1. The CA caseworker will authorize a one-time clothing voucher up to \$200 for each child at the time of initial placement in out of home care, (licensed foster home or unlicensed caregiver home).
2. The CA caseworker with regional administrator (RA) or designee approval may authorize an additional clothing voucher up to \$200, per year after initial placement, when a child has an exceptional clothing need not met through local community resources or the standard clothing allowance in the foster care monthly payment (if the child is placed in a licensed foster home).
3. Reimbursement for clothing expenses may be authorized by the CA caseworker only with RA or designee approval if:
  - a. The expenses were pre-authorized by the caseworker with RA or designee approval.
  - b. The amount does not exceed \$200.
  - c. Expenses were identified at the time of initial placement or
  - d. There was a subsequent exceptional need identified and,
    - i. Other local community resources were not available
    - ii. The clothing need could not be met through the standard clothing allowance in the foster care monthly payment (if the child is placed in a licensed foster home).

4. All clothing purchased becomes the property of the child and is sent with the child if the placement changes.

## **Procedures**

1. **Initiating a clothing voucher**
  - a. The CA caseworker will approve the initial clothing voucher requests (at or around the time of placement) up to \$200.
  - b. The CA caseworker must create a service referral in FamLink
  - c. The supervisor must approve all clothing requests in FamLink.
  - d. The RA or designee must approve all clothing voucher requests to meet a child's exceptional need before processing.
  - e. The CA caseworker must document the reason for the child's exceptional need for clothing in the service referral and note the approval by the RA or designee.
2. **Processing a clothing voucher**
  - a. The fiduciary opens and processes the service referral, creating a service authorization and clothing voucher in FamLink. The fiduciary or designee retrieves the clothing voucher from FamLink, embosses it with a DSHS stamp and provides a hard copy to the assigned caseworker or designated individual in the office.
  - b. The CA caseworker or designated individual in the office signs and provides the hard copy to the caregiver.
  - c. The fiduciary pays the clothing voucher once the receipt is received and has confirmed the requested items were purchased for the authorized amount.
3. **Caregiver Reimbursement**
  - a. The CA caseworker will initiate a payment to reimburse the caregiver when the caregiver purchases clothing and provides a receipt and the RA or designee has approved the purchase.
  - b. The CA caseworker will work with fiduciary staff to set up an authorization for the clothing and process a payment to reimburse the caregiver based on receipts presented.

## **Resources**

[Concrete Goods Guide](#)

# **4538. Transportation**

## **Service Definition**

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

## **Eligibility**

1. A child/client of DCFS may be eligible for this service if a transportation need falls within the service definition.
2. CA may reimburse the expenses upon social worker authorization when the service is consistent with the ISSP, supports a permanent plan, or directly prevents a foster/group care placement, and is not payable from another source.
3. The Regional Administrator must 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.
4. Within the service definition, the social worker may authorize related travel for the child, parents, relatives, permanent planning resources, and care providers.

## **Procedures for Access**

1. The Regional Administrator must issue procedures to enable social workers to authorize transportation services in accordance with this section.
2. The social worker must receive written approval in accordance with regional procedures before authorizing transportation services exceeding regional limits.
3. 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:
    1. 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.
    2. The name of the purchaser. If the purchaser is the social worker, the worker's supervisor must initial the authorization form.
    3. 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.
4. The purchaser and vendor must follow these steps for payment to the vendor:
  1. The purchaser 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 to the remittance advice accompanying the warrant.
  3. The purchaser signs the receipt and routes it to the local DCFS office.
5. 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.

6. After the purchase, the following steps shall be taken:
  1. The social worker compares the DSHS 14-154A(X) to the receipt and resolves 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.
7. 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.
8. 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.

## **Other Resources**

1. The social worker attempts to obtain the following resources before committing DCFS to pay transportation costs or authorize payments:
  1. Parents/guardian/family.
  2. Volunteers (individual or organization).
  3. Other states for children who may be the responsibility of the other state.
  4. Schools, especially for education-related transportation needs.
  5. 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.
  6. 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.
  7. Foster care transportation funds.

# **4539. Inpatient Mental Health Treatment For Children**

## **Service Definition**

1. 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. Chapters 13.34 and 71.34 RCW

2. There are two types of inpatient mental health treatment for children in Washington state:
  1. Acute inpatient care provided in community hospitals and Evaluation and Treatment Centers, and
  2. Long term inpatient care, provided in the five Children's Long Term Inpatient Programs.

## **Eligibility**

1. Children who are in the care and custody of DCFS and who require inpatient mental health treatment are eligible for this service.
2. No social worker shall provide written consent for voluntary inpatient treatment of a minor child except as described in this section; nor shall the social worker 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.
3. 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.
4. Consent is not required if the child is involuntarily detained in an Evaluation and Treatment facility by a County Designated Mental Health Professional or is subsequently court ordered through the Involuntary Treatment Act (ITA), chapter 71.34 RCW.
5. Children 13 years of age and older may voluntarily seek and consent to inpatient treatment without consent of their parent/guardian or the department. Such a child must consent to inpatient treatment except under the conditions set forth in paragraph 4, above. Parental consent by itself is insufficient.
6. Admission to publicly-funded acute inpatient treatment shall occur only if the child meets medical necessity guidelines as determined by the Regional Support Network (RSN)-authorized mental health professional(s) and with the concurrence of the professional person in charge of the facility.
7. For long-term inpatient psychiatric care, the Children's Long-term Inpatient Program (CLIP) Committee must provide authorization prior to admission. Referral to the CLIP Committee shall only be made by the RSN/Prepaid Health Plan (PHP) of residence. Different access points and procedures may be applied by the local RSN/PHP.

## **Procedures for Access**

1. Emergent Or Non-Emergent (Elective) Voluntary Inpatient Mental Health Treatment for a Child in Custody of the Department
  1. For purposes of this policy, "voluntary patient" means:

1. A minor 13 years of age or older who has been evaluated and determined to meet criteria of medical necessity for inpatient treatment and who gives written consent for inpatient care; or
  2. Any child under the age of 13 whose parent or legal guardian makes application for the child to be evaluated by the appropriate professional and who has been determined to meet criteria of medical necessity for inpatient treatment. The consent of the child is not required in this instance.
  3. Any legally free child who is in the permanent custody of the department and who also meets the conditions outlined in ii above. The assigned DCFS social worker, with the approval of the supervisor, may sign the consent for treatment of the child under the age of 13.
2. The following conditions apply if the child is in the department's custody through a dependency order, a voluntary placement agreement (VPA), or a Child in Need of Services (CHINS) order.
1. If the social worker believes that a minor child is in need of psychiatric inpatient treatment, the social worker follows the following procedures:
    1. The social worker consults his/her supervisor and obtains the concurrence of the supervisor to seek inpatient treatment. The social worker must also consult with the child's parent/legal guardian whenever possible prior to seeking inpatient care.
    2. The social worker, with concurrence of the supervisor, makes an immediate referral to the RSN/PHP certification authority in accordance with state Mental Health Division (MHD) policy Memorandum #96-26 or subsequent revisions.
    3. Children shall only be admitted after a determination of medical necessity.
      - For acute psychiatric care, the RSN/PHP-authorized mental health professional(s) must determine whether medical necessity is met.
      - In either case, the professional person in charge of the facility concurs with the admission.
    4. Once a determination of medical necessity has been made, written consent for admission, treatment, and release of information is given in accordance with the following:
      - For children under 13 years of age, the consent of the parent or legal guardian is required whenever possible, even when the child is under a dependency order.
      - The social worker may give consent for elective care only after obtaining authority to do so from the juvenile court, except when the child is in the permanent custody of the department, in which case the social worker can consent under the permanent custody order. Court review shall occur within 48 hours of the petition except where the department has permanent custody.

- In emergencies, the social worker may provide written consent for immediate inpatient care within a community hospital.
- Parental agreement/consent or court review must sanction the social worker's consent within 48 hours, except where the department has permanent custody.
- Court review does not supplant the authority of the RSN/PHP designated mental health professional(s) and the professional person in charge of the inpatient facility who must determine medical necessity prior to admission.
- Children 13 years of age and older may consent to treatment without the consent of the parent or social worker. If the parent or social worker does not support inpatient care, they may give notice to the evaluation and treatment facility that admitted the child in accord with chapter 71.34 RCW.
- The Washington State Supreme Court, in the case of *State v. CPC Fairfax Hospital*, 129 Wn.2d 439 (1996), determined that a child 13 years of age or older admitted to that an inpatient facility on application of the child's parent was detained without due process. Since that decision, providers have declined admissions where the consent of the child has not been obtained prior to a voluntary inpatient admission.
  - Thus, for children 13 years of age and older who are unwilling to be admitted to inpatient care, the parental consent is not considered by care providers as sufficient consent for admission against the child's will.
  - In the absence of parental consent, or consent of the child age 13 or above, the social worker may petition the juvenile court for the authority to give consent for the admission against the child's will.
  - In emergencies the social worker may give consent immediately. This type of admission is considered a voluntary (parent-authorized) admission under chapter 71.34 RCW. Court review shall occur within 48 hours of the petition for elective care, and within 48 hours of admission for emergent care. Court review does not supplant the authority of the RSN/PHP designated mental health professional(s) and the professional person in charge of the inpatient

facility who must determine medical necessity prior to admission.

- If the custodial parent does not agree with admission to inpatient care for children of any age, the social worker may file a dependency petition with the court, if one does not already exist. At that time, the social worker may simultaneously request authority to provide consent for inpatient treatment.

2. Involuntary Inpatient Mental Health Treatment for a Child in Custody of the Department

1. The following conditions apply if the child is in the department's custody through a dependency order, a VPA, or a CHINS order.
2. Admission for involuntary treatment may only occur after a determination of medical necessity is made by a County Designated Mental Health Professional (CDMHP). The CDMHP has authority to initially detain for 72 hours in an acute psychiatric facility any child, 13 years of age or older, who meets the criteria for involuntary detention.

- **Children under the age of 13 may not be involuntarily detained through this process.**

2. CDMHPs are bound by law to explore and utilize less restrictive treatment options when they are available and appropriate. Consent of the parent or minor child is not required for involuntary admission to inpatient care.
3. Necessity for treatment beyond 72 hours is evaluated by the facility, in concert with significant others involved with that child, and must be ordered by the superior court in accord with chapter 71.34 RCW.
4. Youth exhibiting the following conditions, as a result of a mental disorder, may be referred to the local CDMHP for assessment if she/he is unwilling to be hospitalized voluntarily:
  1. 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; and/or
  2. Is a danger to self or others as evidenced by threats or attempts to commit suicide or inflict bodily harm to self or others; and/or
  3. Is likely to cause substantial loss or damage to the property of others.
5. Subsequent Admissions-Any subsequent admissions for voluntary care shall require a new assessment and determination and must follow the appropriate protocol as outlined above.

## 4540. Adoption Services

### 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.

## **Eligibility**

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

## **45403. Information Gathering and Sharing**

This section provides guidelines for Children's Administration (CA) staff for the collection and disclosure of full information regarding adoptive children and their birth families to adoptive parents.

1. The assigned social worker and private adoption agencies and entities must make reasonable efforts to locate records and information concerning the mental, physical, and sensory handicaps of the child and his/her birth parents, their family backgrounds, and social histories.
  1. The entities providing the information have no duty, beyond providing the information, to explain or interpret the records or information regarding the child's present or future health.
  2. The assigned social worker maintains the Health and Education record in accordance with guidelines contained in the CA Practices and Procedures Guide, chapter 4000, section 43092.
    1. For any child in placement after 90 days, or whose placement is expected to last longer than 90 days, the agency must gather medical, educational, and mental health background information concerning the birth parents and the child. The assigned social worker must ensure this occurs, but another employee or contractor of the department may complete the task.
      1. The social worker documents this information in the child's case file by maintaining all records gathered and by documenting information on the child's Health and Education Record or on the Health and Education Passport in FamLink. The worker also maintains copies of written requests for records from the child's and parents' physician, treating professionals, and the last school attended in the case file.
      2. The social worker reviews this information prior to the disposition and permanency planning hearings.
      3. Assigned staff must complete the Health and Education Passport and document efforts to obtain information about the child and birth parents prior to case transfer between social workers or units.

2. The social worker will ask birth parents, for every child in placement or expected to be in placement longer than 90 days, to sign appropriate release of information forms so that the department can gather information concerning both the child and the birth parents from treating professionals, physicians, and schools.
      1. If parents are unwilling to sign appropriate release of information forms, the social worker must request the court to order authorization of release of confidential records so that background information may be obtained.
      2. The social worker consults the AAG so that the language in the court order meets federal requirements for release of confidential information from substance abuse and mental health treatment programs.
    3. The social worker includes on the DSHS 13-041 information about the efforts, including unsuccessful efforts, made by the department to obtain information about the child and his/her birth family. Efforts to obtain information about the child include interviews with relatives; interviews with parents; and requests for information from treatment agencies, schools, and other sources from whom the parents received professional examination, evaluation, or treatment.
  2. The adoption worker shares information about children and birth family for whom a family is being considered with that family by using the following guidelines:
    1. General information about a referral may be shared with a family each time a referral is made.
    2. For policy regarding disclosure of information, see the Case Services Policy Manual, chapter 5000, section 5840.
    3. Guidelines for information shared with the adoptive family can be found in 42 USC 675, section 475, RCW 26.33.350, 26.33.380, and RCW 70.24.105, as well as the Case Services Policy Manual, chapter 5000, section 5840. See the Case Services Policy Manual, chapter 4000, section 4120, paragraph A, for requirements to disclose information regarding HIV infection and sexually transmitted diseases to the residential care provider for the child who is less than 14 years of age.
  3. The child's assigned social worker must make available and provide copies to the prospective adopting parent prior to adoptive placement the Child's Medical and Family Background Report, DSHS 13-041, the child's Health and Education Passport, and other available social information.
    1. The social worker need not copy information in the Passport on the DSHS 13-041, but may incorporate it by attaching the Passport, and documenting the attachment, on the DSHS 13-041.
    2. The complete medical report must contain all known and available medical information concerning the mental, physical, and sensory handicaps of the child. The report must not reveal the identity of the birth parent of the child, except if already known by the adoptive parents. However, the report must include any known or available mental or physical health history of the birth parent that needs to be known by the adoptive parent to facilitate proper health

care for the child or that will assist the adoptive parent in maximizing the developmental potential of the child.

3. Where known or available, the information must include:
  1. A review of the birth family's and the child's previous medical history, including the child's x-rays, examinations, hospitalizations, and immunizations;
  2. A report of physical examination of the child conducted within the previous 12 months by a licensed physician with appropriate laboratory tests and x-rays;
  3. A referral to a specialist if indicated in reports released in the DSHS 13-041; and
  4. A written copy of all evaluations of the child with recommendations to the adoptive family receiving the report.
4. Following reasonable efforts to locate the information, the placing social worker must give to the adoptive parents a family background and child and family social history report with a chronological history of the circumstances surrounding the adoptive placement and any available psychiatric, psychological, court, or school reports. Reports or information provided to the prospective adopting parent must not reveal the identity of the birth parents of the child but must include reasonably available non-identifying information. The form used for this report is the DSHS 13-041(X).
5. The social worker must share with the prospective adoptive family all reasonably available information about the child and his/her birth parents, with receipt, including date of receipt, documented on the DSHS 13-041.
  1. If a prospective adoptive parent reads the child's file, the social worker must document that activity and have the adoptive parent sign and date an acknowledgment of having read and reviewed the file.
  2. In addition, the social worker must request that the adoptive parent initial each page of each document, including the Service Episode Record (SER), the adoptive parent has reviewed. The adoptive parents' signature on the form signifies their intent to adopt the child and acknowledges receipt of the information provided. The prospective adoptive parents' signature on the DSHS 13-041 does not signify the agency's approval of the adoptive placement.
6. If CA staff withholds information from the adoptive parents, the adoption supervisor or a staffing in which adoption specialists are present (such as an adoption planning review) must approve the action. Following these approvals, the area manager must also approve withholding of information. The social worker must document the approval to withhold information in the child's archived file and needs to include the signatures of the adoption supervisor and/or adoption specialists authorizing the withholding of the information. Information may not be withheld if it could have any effect on the parenting of the child.
4. The social worker must disclose to adoptive parents when a child being placed for adoption is receiving or has received mental health services, is or has been prescribed psychotropic medication, has a sexually transmitted disease, and/or is HIV positive.

With respect to disclosure of HIV antibody testing or treatment of sexually transmitted diseases, department staff must comply with the following requirements:

1. The following persons may receive such information:
  1. A department worker;
  2. A child placing agency worker;
  3. A guardian ad litem who is responsible for making or reviewing placement or case-planning decisions or recommendations to the court regarding a child, who is less than 14 years of age, has a sexually transmitted disease, and is in the custody of the department or a licensed child placing agency;
  4. A person responsible for providing residential care for such a child when the department or a licensed child placing agency determines that it is necessary for the provision of child care services.
2. No person may release information concerning HIV status and sexually transmitted diseases to the adoptive parent of a child over the age of 14 without the consent of the child or an order from the court. No one may release mental health counseling and treatment information, including the prescription of psychotropic medications, to the adoptive parents of a child over the age of 13 without the child's consent to release of the information or court order.
  1. The social worker must not make a placement without full disclosure, either by consent of the child or court order, of diseases that the child may have or a condition that requires treatment.
  2. The social worker must inform the adoptive parents that information exists which cannot be released because of the failure of the child to sign a release of information:
    1. If the youth refuses to sign a release of information; or
    2. The social worker cannot obtain a court order authorizing release of information.
  3. The social worker must document in the case file that the child has refused the release of confidential information and that the social worker has informed the prospective adoptive parents of this fact.
  4. If the social worker cannot disclose HIV or mental health information because the worker does not have a court order or consent to release information, the social worker, the worker's supervisor, and the prospective adoptive parents will have to make a decision on an individual basis whether to proceed with the adoptive placement or finalization of the adoption.
3. The social worker must follow an oral disclosure with written notice within 10 days.
4. Whenever the social worker discloses information, the worker must accompany the disclosure with a written statement that includes the following or substantially similar language: "This information has been disclosed to you from records whose confidentiality is protected by state law. State law prohibits you from making any further disclosure of it without the specific written consent of the person to whom it pertains, or as otherwise permitted by law. A



general authorization for the release of medical or other information is NOT sufficient for this purpose.”

5. In addition to the requirements regarding the adoption placement decision in, chapter 4000, section 45407, below, the following conditions apply:
  1. If a child is already placed with the prospective adoptive family as a foster child or in a relative placement, the social worker shares the DSHS 13-041 with the family prior to the child's placement being considered an adoptive placement.
  2. An adoptive placement requires prior provision of all reasonably available child and family medical, school, psychological, and social reports to the prospective adoptive parents. CA considers a placement, including one with the current foster parents or relative care providers, to be an adoptive placement when:
    1. The birth parents' rights have been terminated;
    2. The prospective adopting parent(s) have formally expressed an intent to adopt (e. g., submitted an application for an adoptive home study and/or applied for Adoption Support), usually in writing; and
    3. The department has acknowledged the prospective adopting parent(s)' interest in a particular child by formally acknowledging the eligibility of the adoptive parent(s) to adopt a particular child, usually in writing.
      1. Acknowledging the eligibility of a prospective adoptive parent for a child may be contained in an ISSP, approval of an adoptive home study, approval of an Adoption Support application, or other written communication.
      2. An approved home study/pre-placement report is not required prior to an individual attaining the status of “prospective adoptive parent.”
  3. The department regards approval of an Adoption Support application, even one that later lapses because the adoption was not timely finalized, or inclusion of a plan for a family to adopt in an ISSP as formal acceptance of the suitability of the parent, even if the social worker or private agency representative has not yet completed an adoptive home study/pre-placement investigation . This formal acceptance triggers the duty to disclose, meaning that the social worker must promptly disclose the medical, family, and social histories to the adopting parents.
  4. The prospective adoptive family may consult with a specialist prior to agreeing to adopt the child and signing the DSHS 13-041. The DCFS social worker must provide to the prospective adoptive family all documents requested (with identifying information of the birth family deleted) in order to facilitate a consultation with a specialist of the family's choosing. If a prospective adoptive parent reads the child's file, the social worker must document that activity and have the adoptive parent sign an acknowledgment of having read and reviewed the file.
6. 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 requirements of case information. Thus, prospective

adoptive parents must agree to keep information about the child, family of origin, and foster family confidential.

7. For guidelines for archiving of records of legally free children, see the CA Operations Manual, chapter 13000, section 13930.

## **45404. Services to Parents**

1. Voluntary Adoption Plan-Under a voluntary adoption plan, the department must follow the wishes of the parent(s) and/or the alleged father in identifying the proposed adoptive placement of the child if the proposed family receives an approved home study and the court agrees that adoption by this family is in the best interests of the child. See the Case Services Policy Manual, chapter 5000, section 5762, for requirements of a voluntary adoption plan.
  1. The assigned department social worker must work with the parent to determine whether the parent will identify a preferred adoptive placement by name.
  2. If the parent identifies a preferred placement, the assigned social worker will advise the alleged father, the birth parent, and proposed adoptive parent(s) that either CA, a private agency, a qualified individual may do an adoptive home study.
  3. If the proposed adoptive parent chooses to have an adoptive home study completed by a private agency or qualified individual, CA retains the right to do its own home study if it has concerns regarding the recommendations contained in the non-departmental home study.
  4. If a private agency or qualified individual completes a home study and CA chooses to do its own adoptive home study, the CA social worker must prioritize scheduling this CA home study over pending studies of other proposed adoptive homes.
  5. Using approved procedures for determining suitability to be an adoptive home, the social worker must determine that:
    1. The family meets the criteria to be an adoptive placement as described in RCW 26.33.190; and
    2. The placement is in the best interests of the child.
  6. In the event that the social worker, the alleged father, birth parent, or current adoptive parent disagree about the suitability of the proposed adoptive placement, the court will determine whether the prospective adoptive resource is suitable and whether this placement is in the best interests of the child.
  7. If the Attorney General's office or the local prosecutor, as applicable, has filed a termination petition at the department's request and the parent agrees to relinquish parental rights, CA must consider the parent(s) or alleged father's adoption placement preferences for the child but is not required to accept it.
2. 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.
3. The social worker must inform Native American parents of an Indian child, of the federal/state law requirements regarding the adoption of Indian children and of the

department's requirements to follow the federal and state Indian Child Welfare Acts. Refer to the ICW Manual.

## **45405. Services to the Child**

1. 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.
  3. Arranging referrals to various professionals.
2. 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.
3. 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 must 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.
4. 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.
5. 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.
6. The assigned social worker conducts monthly Health and Safety Visits with the child:
  1. [See Section 4420- Social Worker Monthly Health and Safety Visit.](#)

## **45406. Family Selection and Recruitment**

1. Family selection and/or family recruitment and matching may be completed through utilization of local and/or regional adoption consortia and state, regional, and national adoption exchanges.
2. What children can be registered?
  1. Children who are legally free for adoption and who do not have an identified permanent family.
  2. Children who are not yet legally free can be registered with WARE under the following circumstances:

1. Termination of parental (TPR) has been initiated or TPR date has been set; or
  2. The child's worker has obtained a court order to search for an adoptive family; or
  3. The child's social worker has obtained the parents written consent to recruitment for an adoptive home.
3. The child's social worker shall refer all children with an identified plan of adoption with the Washington Adoption Resource Exchange (WARE) within 30 days of the court order ordering the termination of parental rights.
    1. The social worker sends the following documents to the WARE office:
      1. Adoption Exchange Child Registration; and
      2. A clear photograph of the child.
      3. 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.
    2. The social worker maintains a copy of the Adoption Exchange Child Registration in the child's social service file.
    3. The contracted provider of the WARE will:
      1. Send the child's social worker information on potential families.
      2. Coordinate child specific recruitment activities.
      3. Upon certain conditions, refers the child to other regional and national adoption exchanges.

## **45407. Placement Decision**

1. 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. A family need not be of the same ethnic background as the child in order to meet the ethnic or cultural needs of the child. In rare circumstances, the social worker may identify a compelling reason to attempt to place a child with a family of a particular racial or ethnic heritage. Otherwise, the department will not match children on the basis of race to families.
  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.
2. The social work staff of the CA office with administrative responsibility for the child makes the final decision on placement of a child with an adoptive family. 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 CA staff considers 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. A family need not be of the same ethnic background as the child in order to meet these needs. Unless the CA staff identifies a compelling reason, CA staff will not match children on the basis of race to foster or adoptive families.
  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:
    1. The relatives' previous relationship with the child.
    2. The relatives' ability to protect the child, if necessary, from the birth parents while avoiding portraying the birth parents in an unnecessarily negative manner.
3. For foster-adoptive placements, the foster-adoptive family must sign a Permanency Planning Placement Agreement, DSHS 15-175. See section 45351.

## **45408. 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).
  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.

## **45409. Adoption Placement Services**

1. For Foster-Adoptive Placements, the social worker needs to refer to section 4535.
2. 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.
  4. Inclusion of the following in the child's case record:
    1. Certified copies of all legal documents terminating parental rights.
    2. Signed copy of the Permanency Planning Placement Agreement, DSHS 15-175
    3. 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.
    1. 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.
    2. 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.
    3. 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.
    4. For out-of-area placements, local protocols shall determine whether the local office adoption worker or child's worker maintains case responsibility pending finalization.

## **454010. Post-Placement Services to the Family and the Child**

1. The purpose of post-placement services is to support continuing placement of the child in the family by providing needed services or referrals.

2. 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. The social worker must document the contacts in the case SER.
  2. Information and referral to community resources.
  3. Formation of and leadership in adoption support groups for parents of adoptive children.
3. 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 4000, section 4517, for Medicaid eligibility, and 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.
  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.
4. The assigned social worker is required to conduct monthly visits with the caregiver ([See Section 4420 - Social Worker Monthly Health and Safety Visit](#))
5. 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.
6. 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.
  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.
7. The assigned social worker completes court work that includes:
  1. Dependency reviews until adoption is finalized.
  2. Individual Service and Safety Plans.
  3. Post-placement report.
  4. Notification of GAL and juvenile court that adoption is finalized and obtain dismissal of dependency order.

## **454011. Post-Placement Report**

1. 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.
  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.
2. 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.

## **454012. 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.

## **454013. Post-Adoption Finalization Services**

Refer to section 4700, Case Resolution/Closure

## **4541. Psychotropic Medication Management**

### **Purpose and Scope**

1. This standard and procedure establishes guidelines for Children's Administration (CA) staff and CA-licensed or certified out-of-home care providers to follow when a child is



in the custody of the department, placed in out-of-home care, and is or may be administered psychotropic medication.

2. This standard applies to children placed in the department's custody, whether by voluntary placement agreement (VPA) or court order. It is prospective only. It applies only to children not receiving such medications on the effective date of this policy, June 1, 1997.

## Definitions

1. For definitions of "Medical History," "PRN," and "Psychotropic Medication" as they pertain to this section, see Appendix A.
2. "Informed consent" means consent given for administration of psychotropic medications by a person authorized by law or under this section following provision of information by a licensed medical professional regarding the purposes of the medication, the range of dosages, possible side effects, and expected results.

## Standard

1. The CA social worker and the out-of-home care provider must comply with the provisions of RCW 13.34.060 regarding authorization of routine medical and dental care for the child in the custody of CA.
2. For children who have been prescribed psychotropic medication, compliance with Chapter 71.34 RCW, Mental Health Services for Minors, is required.
3. Neither the CA social worker nor the out-of-home care provider may authorize the administration of psychotropic medications to a child in the custody of CA, with the following exceptions:
  1. The CA social worker may authorize the administration of such medications if the child is legally free and in the permanent custody of the department.
  2. The CA social worker may authorize the administration of such medications when it is impossible to obtain informed parental consent after normal work hours, on weekends, or on holidays. In such instances, the social worker must obtain either informed parental consent or a court order within 72 hours, excluding weekends and holidays, of authorizing administration of the medication.
4. The parent of the child in CA custody must provide informed consent for the administration of psychotropic medications to the child, unless the child is age 13 or older and competent to provide consent in his or her own behalf. If the parent is unavailable, unable, or unwilling to consent to the administration of medically necessary psychotropic medications, the social worker shall obtain a court order before the medications may be administered.
5. Consent for treatment will vary according to the child's age.
  1. Children age 13 years and older must consent to the administration of their own medication. They also have the right to maintain confidentiality of the information.

1. The CA social worker needs to encourage the adolescent to share information about the use of such medication with their parents, their out-of-home care provider, and their guardian ad litem. The care of the child is likely to be compromised if the out-of-home care provider does not have knowledge of the medication being used and access to the prescribing physician for consultation.
  2. If the child refuses to release information concerning medication to the out-of-home care provider, the CA social worker shall review the child's continued need for placement. If the child remains in out-of-home care and continues to refuse to release information about his/her medication, the social worker will request the court to order release of the information to the care provider and to the department.
  3. If the child refuses to release information to the parent, the parent, if wanting the information, needs to request a court order to obtain it.
2. Children who are 13 years of age and older may not be able to provide knowledgeable consent to administration of psychotropic medication due to cognitive disabilities. In such an instance, the treating medical professional determines if the child is capable of giving consent. If the child is unable to provide consent, the parent must provide consent or the social worker must obtain a court order to authorize treatment.
6. The informed parental consent or court order needs to be a general authorization for the administration of psychotropic medications at the direction of a qualified, licensed physician so that a change in the consent or court order is unnecessary when it is necessary for the physician to adjust the medication.
  7. The social worker may contact the statewide Child Abuse Consultation Network at 1-206-987-2194 or after hours at 1-206-987-2000 whenever medication management would be facilitated by expert medical consultation. For consultation with a pharmacist on prescribed or non-prescribed medications, the CA social worker, the foster parent, or other care provider may contact the Washington Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222. Department staff needs to identify himself or herself as a CA social worker, and ask to speak to the pharmacist on duty.

## **4543. Foster Care Assessment**

### **Service Definition**

1. The Foster Care Assessment Program is a multi-disciplinary contract between Children's Administration (CA) and Harborview Center for Sexual Assault and Traumatic Stress and its subcontractors to assess the needs of children who have been in out-of-home care for more than 90 days. Assessment services include a six-month follow-up period to assist the DCFS social worker in implementing a placement plan and to help meet the needs of the child and family.
2. The program has two goals:

1. Ensure that the physical and emotional health, developmental status, and educational adjustment of children in the care of the state have been assessed and any significant needs addressed; and
2. Identify and help resolve obstacles to reunification, adoption, guardianship, or other permanent plan.

## **Eligibility**

CA and Harborview give priority for the service to those children identified as likely to need long term care because the children face physical, emotional, medical, mental, or other long-term challenges that serve as barriers to achieving a plan for permanency.

## **Service Description**

1. The contractor's program social worker and a pediatrician will conduct each assessment. The social worker and the pediatrician will review case information and consult with key people in the child's life, including the DCFS social worker, parents, foster parents, the child's primary care physician, teacher, and other involved professionals.
2. The standard assessment consists of structured clinical interviews and the administration of standardized measures. A multi-disciplinary team representing pediatrics, psychiatry, psychology, social work, DCFS, and other consultants (e. g., ethnic/cultural and foster/adoptive parent) will review the preliminary results of the assessment.
3. All important parties in the child's life will be involved in the development of a concrete plan to address the child's health needs and to establish the best possible permanent family connection for the child.
4. A Harborview program social worker will provide six months of follow-up services to assist the DCFS social worker with the implementation of the child's plan.

## **Procedures for Access**

CA social workers refer children to the regional Foster Care Assessment Program coordinator in accordance with local procedures. The coordinator assists in prioritizing and processing referrals.

# **4544. Responsible Living Skills Program**

## **Service Definition**

1. Responsible Living Skills (RLS) programs provide permanent residential placements for dependent street youth aged 14-18.
  1. RLS programs provide youth with a permanent placement setting in concert with services critical for the youth's successful transition into adulthood.

2. RLS programs employ a positive youth development philosophy that focuses primarily on promoting a youth's positive development rather than identification and resolution of problems.
3. RLS programs may take the form of either group or single-family residential placement settings, depending upon proposals submitted for approval by individual RLS providers.
2. "Street youth" means a person under the age of eighteen who lives outdoors or in another unsafe location not intended for occupancy by the minor and who is not residing with his/her biological/adoptive parent(s) or at his/her legally authorized residence. Typically, these youth do not have families who are available to them, and traditional placement alternatives such as foster or group care have not met their needs.
3. RLS programs employ a service delivery model designed primarily to achieve competency in independent living skills for adolescents placed there. Specifically, RLS programs will focus on assisting youth in achieving competency in:
  1. Basic education, e.g., a GED;
  2. Job skills;
  3. Basic life skills (including but not limited to):
    1. Money management;
    2. Nutrition/meal preparation;
    3. Household skills;
    4. Parenting ;
    5. Health care;
    6. Access to community resources; and
    7. Transportation and housing options.
4. RLS programs will also provide/facilitate group and individual counseling as is appropriate. However, RLS programs are not BRS programs; they are intended for street youth committed to stabilizing their lives. Youth referred to an RLS program should exhibit significant degrees of impulse and behavioral controls.

## **Eligibility**

1. The priority and eligibility criteria for referrals are:
  1. Dependent street youth aged sixteen to eighteen years of age, whose permanency plan is independent living.
  2. Dependent street youth fourteen and fifteen years of age, who are not succeeding in family-based foster care. Placement of youth in this age range should be with the intent of enabling the youth to make a transition from a street living situation to a more stable placement setting.
  3. Criteria are all located in statute, and therefore Exceptions-to-Policy to waive one or all of these eligibility criteria are not permitted:
    1. Any youth referred to an RLS program must have previously resided in either a Secure Crisis Residential Center or a HOPE Center; the youth's social worker may waive this requirement if the social worker feels that given the minor's current circumstances, this is the most appropriate placement for the youth.

2. Youth must be a dependent youth under Chapter 13.34 prior to entry into an RLS program;
  3. The youth's primary and alternative permanency plan must not be Return Home.
2. Law Enforcement Access: Youth may not be placed directly into an RLS program by law enforcement. If the youth is a reported runaway, or if law enforcement is involved due to a family-in-conflict situation, the case is handled as any other FRS case, and placement, if required, made with extended family, CRC, SCRC, or other resource as appropriate.

## **Procedures for Access**

1. Street youth may be identified as potential referrals to RLS program services through the following means:
  1. HOPE Center: As part of a HOPE Center's permanency placement planning function, a Placement and Liaison Specialist (PALS) may contact the assigned DCFS social worker to discuss the youth's eligibility for placement in an RLS program.
  2. DCFS Staff: DCFS staff may also identify dependent youth among their caseloads that will not be returning home and also meet the other eligibility criteria.
  3. Secure CRC: While in residence at a SCRC, the youth may be identified as appropriate for RLS program services. The SCRC would discuss the youth's eligibility with the assigned DCFS social worker.
  4. The assigned DCFS Social Worker will refer the case to their Regional RLS Program Coordinator. If the RLSP Coordinator deems the referral appropriate, the case will be discussed with the provider. The contractor, youth and the DCFS social worker will mutually agree upon a youth's admission based on:
    1. The RLS Program offers services that meet the youth's needs as identified in the Report to the Court;
    2. The youth desires to participate in learning independent living skills;
    3. The youth demonstrates sufficient behavioral control to participate and benefit from the program.

## **45444. Legal Authorization for Responsible Living Skills Program (RLSP) Placement**

Created on:  
Jul 07 2015

1. The legal status of any youth placed in an RLS program must be a dependent youth per Chapter 13.34 RCW. There is no authority to execute an Exception-to-Policy waiver.
2. Additionally, a youth's primary and alternative permanency plan, per RCW 13.34.145, must not be Return Home.

## **45445. Length of Stay in a Residential Living Skills Program (RSLP)**

Youth must be under the age of 18 to be admitted to an RLSP and may reside in an RLSP until eighteen years of age. Youth 18 to 20 years of age may remain in residence voluntarily if they resided in the RLSP on their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday and are participating in Extended Foster Care. See [43105. Extended Foster Care Program](#)

## **45446. Re-Admission to an Residential Living Skills Program (RSLP)**

Created on:  
Jul 07 2015

1. Youth who leave an RLS program and are subsequently discharged (e.g., youth who run away and/or are placed in an alternative placement setting due to non-compliance with the RLS program), may be re-admitted if the youth's social worker and the RLS program determine that re-admittance is warranted.
2. Some factors for re-admittance would be based on the review of the situation, motivation of the youth, and any safety concerns for the youth and/or other residents.
3. The RLS program shall obtain written authorization from DCFS prior to re-admittance of the youth.

## **45447. Case Coordination**

1. Upon admittance into residency, the youth's DCFS social worker will provide the RLS program an Initial Baseline Assessment (IBL) tool.
2. Collaboratively, the RLS program and the DCFS social worker will utilize the IBL to establish an Independent Living Plan. The ILP will be developed within 30 days of a youth's entry into the RLS program.
3. A physical evaluation is required for any youth entering the RLS program if that youth has not had a physical exam within the last calendar year.

## **45448. Exit from an RLS Program**

Youth can exit an RLSP when they are 18-20 and want to leave the program. Youth over 18 must exit an RLSP when they choose to end participation in Extended Foster Care or are no longer eligible for Extended Foster Care. See [43105. Extended Foster Care Program](#)

# 4545. HOPE Center Placement

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:** 1999

**Revised Date:** July 1, 2016

**Policy Review:** July 1, 2020

## Purpose

Hope centers provide temporary residential placement, assessment and coordination of community services for street youth.

## Scope

This policy applies to Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) caseworkers.

## Laws

[RCW 13.32A.140](#) Out-of-Home Placement, Child in Need of Services

[RCW 43.185C.315](#) Youth Services, Hope Centers, Requirements

[RCW 43.185C.320](#) Youth services, Hope Centers, Eligibility, Minors

[RCW 74.13.280](#) Client Information

[RCW 74.14A.020](#) Services for Emotionally Disturbed and Mentally Ill Children, Potentially Dependent Children, and Families-In- Conflict

## Policy

### 1. Accessing Placement in a Hope Center

The caseworker will:

1. Contact extended family, CRC, or other resource as appropriate for non-dependent youth requiring placement refer to [2200. Intake](#) or [5400. Family Reconciliation Services](#) policies for service requests.
2. Send a Child Information Placement and Referral form DSHS 15-300 to the CA placement coordinator for dependent youth. The Hope Center will make the final determination for placement. Priority will be given to:
  1. Youth close to turning 18 years old and/or who could utilize a Hope Center placement before accessing:
    1. Responsible Living Skills Program (RLSP)

2. Independent Youth Housing Program (IYHP)
3. Extended Foster Care (EFC)
4. Other long term housing and service options.

## 2. Placement in a Hope Center

The caseworker will:

1. Obtain legal authorizations for placements lasting longer than 72 hours, if needed.
2. Ensure the youth does not stay in a Hope Center longer than 30 calendar days; a Hope Center may approve extensions, but placement cannot exceed 60 calendar days total. Efforts must be made to facilitate family reconciliation, return the youth home, or develop an alternative long-term placement plan.
3. Notify the youth's tribe of the placement change if the youth is enrolled or eligible for membership in a federally recognized tribe. Follow [ICW Chapter 5](#).
4. When a child is in the care and custody of CA, and placed in a Hope Center:
  1. Follow [4400. Health and Safety Visits](#) policy.
  2. Schedule a [Family Team Decision Making Meeting](#) or [Shared Planning Meeting](#) within 72 hours of placement, excluding weekends and holidays.
  3. Authorize emergent medical and dental care.
  4. Relocate all dependent youth who have reached the maximum length of stay of 60 calendar days.
5. Document case coordination in FamLink.

## 3. Information Sharing with Hope Center Staff

1. For dependent youth for whom CA is requesting placement through a referral the caseworker will:
  1. **Not** provide the youth's name or date of birth while attempting to establish the availability of a placement at a Hope Center.
  2. Provide information per [RCW 74.13.280](#). Information can include:
    1. Gender
    2. Age (not date of birth)
    3. Behaviors
    4. Risks
    5. Special needs
    6. Sexually Aggressive/Physically Aggressive Assaultive Youth (SAY/PAAY) history
    7. Offense History
  3. Once the youth has been transported and placed at the Hope Center, provide the name and date of birth to the Hope Center staff.
2. For dependent youth currently placed in a Hope Center due to self-referral or by law enforcement, the caseworker will provide and exchange information per [RCW 74.13.280](#) and [4413. Placement](#) policy. Information includes, but is not limited to:
  1. Name
  2. Date of birth
  3. Gender
  4. Behaviors



5. Risks
6. Special needs
7. Sexually Aggressive/Physically Aggressive Assaultive Youth (SAY/PAAY) history
8. Offense History

## **Forms**

[Child Information and Placement Referral Form DSHS 15-300](#)

[Youth Run Prevention Plan DSHS 10-484](#)

[Return Child De-Briefing Form DSHS 15-309](#)

## **Resources**

[Office of Homeless Youth](#)

# **4550. Youth Missing from Care**

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:** August 2004

**Revised Date:** July 1, 2016

**Policy Review:** June 30, 2020

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## **Purpose**

Dependent youth who run from out-of-home care are putting their safety and well-being at risk. When a youth runs from out-of-home care, staff need to act quickly to locate the youth and address the youth's reasons for leaving and develop a run prevention plan.

## **Scope**

This policy applies to all DCFS staff.

## **Laws**

[PL 113-183](#) Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act

[PL 106-386](#) Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protections Act of 2000

[WAC 388-148-1425](#) What are My Reporting Responsibilities When a Child is Missing from Care?

## Policy

### 1. Youth Missing From Care (MFC):

1. Active efforts must be made to locate a youth MFC within 24 hours of notification. Efforts include making contact with all known individuals or agencies important to the youth and his or her case.
2. Caregivers must be informed of the requirement to file a run report with law enforcement (LE) and contact the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) at 1-800-843-5678 when a youth is MFC. Caregivers must be informed he or she cannot give NCMEC consent to release child information.
3. A run report must be filed with LE and NCMEC when a youth is MFC. CA cannot give NCMEC consent to release child information.
4. The youth's dependency must continue while he or she is on the run until his or her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.
5. When a youth is MFC overnight or longer, the case must be staffed with a supervisor within two calendar days, excluding weekends and holidays.
6. An attorney must be requested for all youth MFC overnight or longer if the youth does not have an attorney.
7. Law enforcement and NCMEC must be contacted for a youth remaining on the run at 18 years of age to eliminate the run report.
8. [Commercially Sexually Exploited Children \(CSEC\) policy](#) must be followed regarding the completion of the CSEC screen on MFC youth.

### 2. Youth Returning to Care:

1. Law enforcement, NCMEC and individuals or agencies involved with the youth must be contacted within 24 hours when the youth returns to out-of-home care.
2. A debriefing interview must be conducted with the youth within two calendar days (excluding weekends and holidays) of returning to out-of-home care to:
  1. Evaluate the youth for health and safety concerns and assist with appropriate care and safe placement (if needed).
  2. Discuss the youth's interest in re-establishing connections with his or her siblings and other relatives for youth 16 and above. This includes discussing skills and strategies to safely reconnect with any identified family members, provide guidance and services to assist the youth.
3. A run prevention plan must be developed with the youth and caregiver within seven calendar days of the youth's placement with a licensed caregiver

## Procedures

1. Youth MFC  
CA staff must:

1. Create the Temporary Situation in Placement in FamLink to document youth is on the run.
  2. Document LE run report number provided by the caregiver in a case note. If the caregiver did not file a run report or contact NCMEC, immediately contact LE to file a run report and contact NCMEC at (1-800-843-5678).
  3. Notify individuals or agencies important to a youth within 24 hours of learning the youth is missing. Individuals to notify may include:
    1. Legal parent or guardian
    2. Relatives
    3. Child's Attorney, CASA, GAL
    4. School
    5. Therapist
    6. Tribe
  4. Notify the Regional MFC Lead within 48 hours of learning a youth is MFC.
  5. Conduct a MFC staffing with the supervisor within two calendar days (excluding weekends and holidays) for youth MFC overnight or longer. Document the staffing results in FamLink. The MFC staffing includes:
    1. Search strategies and efforts;
    2. Protective factors and vulnerabilities of youth;
    3. Individuals contacted;
    4. Potential reasons the youth ran;
    5. Determine if the youth needs an attorney appointed;
    6. Determine if a pick-up order and warrant are needed; and
    7. Discuss if a court hearing should be scheduled. Some factors to consider when making this determination are:
      1. Placement problems or no appropriate placement options available.
      2. All other efforts and interventions have failed.
      3. Youth is a chronic runner.
      4. Court sanctions would be an effective deterrent for the youth.
  6. Write and file a declaration for a pickup order or warrant for the youth with the court (if the court allows) if the supervisor determines appropriate.
  7. Discuss the following areas at the court hearing, if scheduled:
    1. Placement problems or no appropriate placement options available;
    2. Additional services needed to support or stabilize the youth;
    3. Search and run prevention strategies that have occurred; and
    4. Any efforts to locate the youth.
  8. Document the following in a case note (at least monthly) until the youth returns to out-of-home care or ages out of care:
    1. Continued efforts to locate youth.
    2. Any contact with the youth.
    3. Other contact disclosing critical information related to the youth health, safety, or whereabouts.
    4. Any follow-up action taken.
2. **Youth Returning to Care:**  
CA staff must:

1. Notify LE, NCMEC (1-800-843-5678) and other individuals important to the youth's case within 24 hours of the youth's return to care.
2. Assess and address any identified health or safety concerns and assist the youth in appropriate care within 24 hours of returning to care.
3. Close the Temporary Situation placement and document the youth's current placement in the Placement page in FamLink.
4. Conduct a debriefing interview with the youth within two calendar days (excluding weekends and holidays) of returning to out-of-home care.
  1. Complete the [Returning Child Debriefing form DSHS 15-309](#) with the youth.
  2. Upload the completed [Returning Child Debriefing form DSHS 15-309](#) or complete the debriefing form in FamLink once available
5. Develop a run prevention plan with the youth and caregiver within seven calendar days of the youth being placed with the licensed caregiver. Document the details of the run prevention plan in a case note or upload the completed [Youth Run Prevention Plan form DSHS 10-484](#).

## **Forms**

[Youth Run Prevention Plan form DSHS 10-484](#)

[Returning Child Debriefing form DSHS 15-309](#)

## **Resources**

MFC Lead and Locator directory (On CA Intranet)

[Youth at Risk for Running Away - Tips for Caregivers and Staff](#)

[Run Prevention Tips for Staff](#)

[How to Help a Youth Who is at Risk to Run - Prevention Tips for Caregivers](#)

[Resource Information for Youth at Risk to Run - Tips for Staff and Caregivers](#)

[When a Youth Runs & Returns - Tips for Caregivers](#)

[When a Youth Returns - Tips for Staff](#)

# **4600. CASE REVIEW**

## **General Information**

1. 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.
2. 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 a Native American/Alaskan Native child.
    5. Whether the child is in a rehabilitative service placement.
    6. Whether the case plan specifies adoption as the permanency plan.

## 46100. Monthly Supervisor Case Reviews

### Purpose

Monthly supervision provides practice guidance and case direction for the assigned Social Worker to address:

1. Appropriate and timely delivery of services to families and children,
2. Safety issues and family progress toward case goals,
3. Concurrent planning and family cultural needs and
4. Review of authorized family expenditures.

### Policy

Social work supervisors must conduct **monthly** supervisor case reviews with each assigned social worker and document each case reviewed in the client electronic case file.

The case review discussion must include:

1. A focus on child safety, including the supervisor's review that all monthly visits for the child, known parent/legal guardian and caregiver by the assigned social worker have been completed and documented as required in the Social Worker Monthly
2. Health and Safety Visit Policy.
3. Steps the family and/or children need to achieve permanency including concurrent planning, relative search, and community supports.
4. Assessment of the services provided to each family, including the family cultural and linguistic needs.
5. **Note:** Social work supervisors will not document social worker performance concerns in the client electronic case file.

### Procedure

Social work supervisors will conduct 100% case reviews monthly with staff. During these reviews, supervisors will:

1. Discuss the following practice areas with the assigned social worker during the case review:
  1. Timeliness of response time (CPS only)
  2. Child safety threats
  3. Monthly health and safety contacts
  4. Family progress towards achieving safety and permanency and concurrent planning to include relative search
  5. Current well-being of children in out-of-home or in-home care
  6. Child return home when identified safety threats of serious harm can be managed and controlled with an in-home safety plan.
2. Discuss the following issues to determine if case closure is appropriate:
  1. Safety threats have been reduced or eliminated and the parent or caregiver's protective capacities have increased to assure the child's safety and well being
  2. The legal action was terminated
  3. Service authorizations are closed
  4. Family connected to formal and informal supports and other community resources
3. Document and record a summary of the supervisor case review discussion under the supervision/administrative review code under the client case name.

## **46110. Complaint Resolution**

1. CA management will always make effort to resolve complaints at the lowest possible level in the organization, while involving affected staff in exploration and resolution of the issues.
2. As provided in WAC 388-74-035 and RCW 74.13.045, after making a reasonable effort to resolve a complaint with a social worker or licenser, a client, foster parent, or community member may contact the CA Constituent Relations office to request assistance. The toll free number is 1-800/723-4831.
3. When Constituent Relations staff and local CA staff have been unable to resolve the complaint, the Regional Administrator, the Office Chief, or the Constituent Relations supervisor may convene a panel to review the complaint in accordance with WAC 388-74-040. The panel must submit written findings and recommendations to the CA Assistant Secretary, who will issue a final, written report.
4. See the Operations Manual, chapter 3000, section 3220, for identification of those issues and topics that are not subject to the complaint resolution process described in RCW 74.13.045, chapter 388-39 WAC, and this section (46110).

## **4630. Periodic Case Review**

### **Legal Requirements**

1. 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 an administrative review.
2. 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.
3. 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.

### **Content of Periodic Reviews**

1. Periodic reviews cover the entire case plan and focus on child safety.
2. They shall include a review of:
  1. The safety threats which necessitated placement.
  2. Need or reason for the child's continued placement.
  3. The report to the court, Case Plan and Comprehensive Family Evaluation.
  4. The appropriateness of the type of placement and the permanent plan.
  5. Parental progress with the case plan and progress toward permanency.
  6. The projected date that the permanent plan will be completed.
  7. 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**

1. Administrative case review must occur in the following situations:
  1. Court procedures or hearings have not met the federal guidelines or time-frames for periodic review.
2. Administrative review may be used for other purposes as determined by the Regional Administrator.
3. The social worker shall give reasonable advance notice of the date, time, and place of review to:

1. Child's tribe, in accordance with the ICW Manual;
  2. Relative caretakers;
  3. Treatment Providers;
  4. Other professionals who play a significant role with the family;
  5. Individuals with responsibilities identified in the safety plan;
  6. The family, if appropriate, if not present, their perspective should be represented;
  7. Foster Parent;
  8. Child, if over 12 years of age.
4. 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**

1. The person designated by the review committee shall complete the Administrative Review Form, DSHS 05-203, after the review.
2. The Administrative Review Coordinator shall send copies of the DSHS 05-203 to:
  1. The parents of the child.
  2. The social worker for the child.
  3. Children over 12 subject to the review.
  4. The Indian child's tribe or LICWAC, as applicable.
  5. The private agency social worker responsible for placement of the child, when applicable.
  6. The GAL for the child.

## **4670. Permanency Planning Hearing**

1. The juvenile court makes a determination regarding the future status of the child by the 12th month of placement for all. To provide reasonable assurance that this has occurred, permanency planning hearings are held for any child in placement by the 12th month of original placement date and annually thereafter. See Appendix A for the definition of "Original Placement Date."
2. The social worker must 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**



1. The social worker submits an updated report to the court, to the juvenile court prior to the permanency planning hearing within timeframes established by regional and juvenile court policy. The report to the court submitted for a permanency planning hearing must clearly delineate the DCFS recommendations for permanency planning.
2. While it is always necessary when updating the report to the court 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.

## **4680. LICWAC Review**

For procedures regarding review of Indian children in placement, the caseworker follows Indian Child Welfare Chapter 7 policies and procedures.

## **4700. CASE RESOLUTION/CLOSURE**

### **General**

1. CPS investigations must be completed within 90 days of the date of referral.
2. FRS episodes of service are concluded within 90 days of the date of referral.
3. 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

## **4720. Cases Originating in CPS with No Court and No Placement Activity**

1. 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.
2. 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**

1. 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.
2. The social worker shall complete all forms and narrative recording within 90 days of a decision to terminate services and close a case.
3. 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.
4. 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 sends it to Olympia adoption archives.

## **4735. Youth Petition for Reinstatement of Parental Rights - Policy**

1. A child, age 12 and older, has the right to petition the court for reinstatement of parental rights if:
  1. She/he has been legally free for three (3) or more years from the date of termination or the exhaustion of appeals; and
  2. She/he has not achieved or will not imminently achieve a permanent plan.
2. A child younger than age 12 may petition the court for reinstatement of parental rights if she/he can show good cause and is able to meet the above requirements.
3. A proceeding to reinstate parental rights is a separate action from the termination of parental rights proceeding and does not vacate the original termination of parental rights order.

## **47351. Reinstatement of Parental Rights**

### **Purpose**

Eligible youth have the right to know and have counsel if a parent contacts the department, supervising agency or GAL about reinstatement of their parental rights. Assigned counsel can support youth when they consider petitioning the court for reinstatement of parental rights.

### **Laws**

[RCW 13.34.215](#) Petition Reinstating Terminated Parental Rights

### **Policy**

1. Youth 12 and older have the right to petition the court for reinstatement of parental rights when meeting certain criteria.

2. Verbal notice must be provided to eligible dependent youth 12 and older, of their right to have counsel appointed if a parent contacts CA, the supervising agency or GAL regarding reinstatement of their parental rights.

## Procedures

1. Notify *eligible* youth 12 and older who meet the criteria of their right petition the court for reinstatement of parent rights:
  - Previously found dependent under [RCW 13.34](#).
  - Age 12 and older
  - Legally free for at least three years; with the entry of a final order of termination
  - Permanent plan is not achieved or will not immediately be achieved
  - Permanent plan was achieved but not sustained for three years
2. Note: Eligible youth under age 12 may also petition the court for reinstatement of parental rights if good cause is determined.
3. The court will inquire if an eligible youth has received notification of right to counsel and the parental rights reinstatement at a review hearing. An eligible youth includes the following criteria:
  - Does not have a court appointed attorney;
  - Age 12 and older
  - Legally free for at least three years; with the entry of a final order of termination
  - Permanent plan is not achieved or will not immediately be achieved.
4. Note: After the eligible youth's 15th birthday the court will make an additional inquiry.
5. Document the notification in a Case Note or on the Shared Planning Form in the electronic case file.
6. Complete a Safety Assessment and background check of the parent(s) and any other adults in the home prior and be prepared to make recommendations. Consider the following:
  - Reinstatement of parental rights is in the best interest of the youth;
  - Reinstatement will present a risk to the health, safety, and welfare of the youth, and;
  - The parent(s) has addressed their parental deficiencies.
7. Complete the following when the court conditionally grants the petition to reinstate parental rights:
  - Change the permanency plan in the report to the court to reunification;
  - Complete a Safety Assessment and Plan and refer family for transitional services;
  - Supervise placement for six months as per [Trial Return Home 43051A](#) policy; and
  - Conduct monthly social worker visits/health and safety checks in the home, not to exceed 40 days between each visit as per [Social Worker Visit 4420](#) policy.
8. When the court determines the youth is safe and has lived with the parent for a minimum of six (6) months:
  - Document court decision to dismiss the dependency;

- Close the case.

## **Resources**

Guidelines for Reinstatement Hearings

### **Reinstatement Threshold Hearing Notification could include:**

Assist the youth with obtaining legal counsel upon the youth's request to petition the court for reinstatement of parental rights by:

1. Contacting the legal counsel already assigned to the case;
2. Requesting legal counsel at the next review hearing or if no hearing is scheduled make a request for an early review;
3. Notifying the youth's Tribe(s) if applicable.
4. Notifying all parties of the Threshold Hearing including:
  1. Youth's former parent whose parental rights are the subject of the petition;
  2. Youth's current foster parent, relative caregiver, guardian or custodian;
  3. Youth's Tribe(s) if applicable;
  4. **Note:** Hearing notification to all parties is by via personal service or certified mail or the court can order a specific type of notification.

### **Reinstatement Threshold Hearing could include:**

Request the court to order any assessments and/or evaluations needed to evaluate the parent's current fitness and interest in reinstatement. In determining what assessments and/or evaluations may be appropriate consider the following:

1. Deficiencies identified in the record of the prior termination proceeding;
2. Services recommended and not completed in the dependency action;
3. Any current concerns;
4. Current youth welfare check and BCCU background check;
5. Consult with the AAG regarding recommendations for any assessments and/or evaluations.

### **Reinstatement Merit Hearing Notification could include:**

Give prior notice of the merit hearing to the following parties:

1. The youth's former parent whose parental rights are the subject of the petition;
2. The youth's current foster parent, relative caregiver, guardian or custodian;
3. The youth's tribe if applicable.

### **Reinstatement Merit Hearing could include:**

Prepare documentation to show efforts made by the department to achieve permanency, such as:

1. Dates youth was staffed at Adoption Consortium;
2. Youth's registration with WARE;
3. Youth's registry with the Northwest Adoption Exchange;
4. Youth's participation in other recruitment projects (i.e. Wednesday's Child );
5. Dates of discussion with youth in which the youth was asked, about in-state and out-of-state placement options (include copies of relevant case notes);
6. On-going relative search documentation;
7. Dates of discussion with current and past foster parents (include copies of relevant case notes)
8. Any other recruitment activities as appropriate; and
9. Review of adoptive home studies considered and reasons why the family is not considered (include copies of relevant case notes).

## **4740. Closure of Legally Free Cases**

1. Following the completion of adoption finalization, the social worker:
  1. Terminates all DCFS medical and foster care payments effective the last day of the month in which the adoption is finalized.
  2. 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.
  3. Sends notification of finalization, including a copy of the adoption decree, to the regional adoption support program manager, when the child is to receive adoption support services.
  4. Provides notification to the CSO, if it is a relative adoption and the child is receiving TANF or SSI.
  5. Arranges for notification to the Trust Fund Unit.
  6. Notifies the Social Security Administration if the child is on SSI or SSA Title II, survivor's benefits.
  7. Prepare the child's legally free 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.
  8. Sends the prepared file, including all Title IV-E documents, to adoption archives.
  9. 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.
  10. Provide ongoing support and information and referral as requested and available through DCFS.
  11. 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.
12. 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.
2. If the child is an Indian child, follow the provisions of the CA ICW Chapter 8 policies and procedures in providing notification to the child's tribe.

## **4750. Guardianship**

[Refer to 4340](#)

## **5000: Case Support**

## **5100. Applying as a Foster Parent or Unlicensed Caregiver**

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:** 1974

**Revised Date:** August 31, 2015

**Sunset Review:** August 31, 2018

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### **Purpose**

Applications for foster home licenses, adoption, relative care, and suitable other are submitted to local offices and processed by Division of Licensed Resources (DLR) staff, to assess character, competence and suitability of potential caregivers for children in out-of-home care.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to all DLR licensing staff.

### **Laws**

[42 USC 671a](#)  
[RCW 74.15](#)  
[RCW 74.13.250](#)  
[WAC 388-148](#)

## Policy

1. Children's Administration(CA) is prohibited from denying any person the opportunity to become a foster or adoptive parent, on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, honorably discharged veteran or military status, sexual orientation, or the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability or national origin of the foster or adoptive parent, or the child, involved [42 USC 671a](#) and [RCW 49.60.030](#)
2. All applicants seeking to care for children in CA care and custody must have an approved family home study.
3. All licensing applicants must complete required training as noted in [4512. Foster Parent Training](#).
4. Relatives and suitable others seeking to be placement resources for children in foster care are not required to be licensed.
5. Applicants seeking only to be an adoptive placement are not required to be licensed.
6. Applicants seeking a foster home license must meet the licensing regulations specified in [WAC 388-148](#).
7. Foster care maintenance payments can only be issued to licensed foster homes.
8. All provider and case files (electronic and paper information) must be restricted for personnel or personnel's household members if employed by: Children's Administration (CA), Economic Services Administration (ESA), Department of Early Learning (DEL), or by DLR Administrator directive.
9. For DSHS employees seeking foster care licensing or adoption see **Administrative Policy 6.24**. See Resources below.

## Procedures

The DLR Worker or designee must:

1. Initiate the home study when an application and background checks for all household member(s) age sixteen (16) and older are received.
2. Date-stamp applications and accompanying documents from prospective applicants and assign to a DLR worker.
3. Create a provider, if needed, and enter the application into FamLink.
4. Compile a six section folder with documents filed with the most current document on top of the section. (See CA intranet under DLR Programs, DLR Forms)
5. Store large documents for regional licensing in an additional file, clearly labeled as to the contents.
6. Restrict access to provider files when applicable. See #8 above.

## Forms

- [Family Home Study Application DSHS 10-354](#)
- [Background Authorization DSHS 09-653](#)

## Resources

To locate DSHS Administrative policies, go to the DSHS Intranet titled Inside DSHS, click Resources, Other Employee Resources and Administrative Policies and Rules.

# 5105. Division of Licensed Resources (DLR) Monthly Supervisor Provider Reviews

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Effective Date:** March 31, 2017

**Sunset Review:** March 31, 2020

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## Scope

This policy applies to DLR state licensing and regional licensing supervisors.

## Purpose

DLR supervisors meet monthly with their staff to provide practice and guidance that addresses:

1. Status on pending applications, renewals, amendments, or unlicensed home study requests.
2. Issues or concerns with licensed, unlicensed, or pending providers.
3. Any new intakes or open provider actions.
4. Review of overcapacities, no referrals, or legal actions being taken on providers.
5. Timely completion of home studies and licenses.

## Policy

1. DLR supervisors and regional licensing supervisor's must conduct **monthly** provider reviews on all pending new license applications, unlicensed home studies, and renewals with each assigned DLR worker and ensure each review includes:
  1. The assessment of the caregiver to become or continue to be a placement resource for children in Children's Administration care and custody.
  2. The assessment of caregivers who are in the process of:



1. Becoming licensed as foster parents.
2. Renewing their foster care license.
3. Amending their foster care license.
4. Becoming approved as an unlicensed placement resource for children in Children's Administration's (CA) care and custody.
3. Review of provider timelines to ensure home study, new license or renewal process is progressing toward completion.
4. Creation of a plan if there are concerns or barriers to a timely completion of the home study or license.
5. Review of any new intakes or open provider actions per [5150. Licensing Investigations](#) policy.
6. Review of the DLR worker's FamLink ticklers.
7. Identification of any further steps the applicant(s) needs to do to complete the home study or licensing process.
8. Review of providers with open provider actions, no referrals, or that have pending legal actions with the assigned DLR worker.
2. DLR supervisors must document each review in FamLink and include:
  1. Dates of unlicensed home study requests, or the receipt dates of new or renewal license applications.
  2. A plan of action if there are concerns or barriers to a timely completion of the home study, license, or renewal.
  3. Information noting the steps the DLR worker or the applicant(s) need to do to complete the home study, licensing process, or renewal.
3. Regional licensing supervisor must:
  1. Review all new private agency or group care licenses and pending private agency or group care renewals.
  2. Verify completion of biannual health and safety visits as required in [5130. Regional Licensing](#) policy.
  3. Review completed and scheduled Comprehensive Reviews as in [5140. Comprehensive Reviews](#) policy.
  4. Document the following information for all pending applications over 90 days for new child placing agencies (CPA), group care licenses, or CPA foster homes, or renewals for CPAs, CPA foster homes, or group care facilities:
    1. Dates of receipt of application for the new or renewal license applications.
    2. A plan of action if there are concerns or barriers to a timely completion of the license or renewal.
    3. Information noting the steps the Regional Licensor or private agency licensor must do to complete the licensing process.

## 5110. Completing the Home Study

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:**

**Revised Date:** March 31, 2017

**Sunset Review:** March 31, 2020

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## **Purpose**

Children placed in out-of-home care are particularly vulnerable and have a special need for placement in a safe, stable and nurturing environment. Assessing the applicant's ability to provide a safe and healthy environment for every child is critical to a child's well-being.

## **Scope**

This policy applies to all DLR licensing staff.

## **Laws**

[RCW 74.13](#)

[RCW 74.14A.020\(3\)](#)

[RCW 74.15](#)

[RCW 26.33.180](#)

[RCW 26.33.190](#)

[RCW 43.20A.205](#)

## **Policy**

1. The home study process must be initiated on any individual who wants to care for children placed out-of-home regardless of whether the applicant(s) intends to be licensed. Home studies are not required for youth participating in the Extended Foster Care Program.
2. The home study referral must be made within 30 days of the start of the placement. See [45274. Unlicensed Placements](#).
3. The home study must include an assessment of the character, competence, and suitability of the applicant(s) as well as the physical setting of the placement.
4. The DLR worker must interact with the applicant(s) in a manner that is culturally competent and solution based.
5. The DLR worker must have a discussion about cultural awareness and competency with the foster parent(s) to educate the foster parent(s) on the importance of meeting the child's cultural needs.
6. The DLR worker must assess the applicant'(s) ability to care for children in out-of-home care by reviewing or completing the following:
  1. Application packet
  2. [Background Authorization DSHS 09-653](#)
  3. [Administrative Review Request for Crime and/or Negative Action DSHS 15-367](#) if applicable.

4. Condition of the home
5. Applicant interviews
6. Applicant's children's interviews (including adult children and other children residing in the home)
7. Other collateral contacts, as applicable.
7. The DLR worker must contact or document at least two attempts to make contact with all adult children.
8. The DLR worker will obtain at least three references. No more than one reference may be related to the applicant(s) by birth, marriage or former marriage as noted in [5201. Emergency Planning for Licensed and Unlicensed Caregivers](#).
9. The DLR worker must complete a minimum of three in-person contacts, with two visits in the applicant's home.
10. The DLR worker must complete a joint interview if there are two applicants; and a separate individual interview for each applicant and each household member (including children).
11. Licensed providers and all household members must have influenza and pertussis vaccinations when licensed for children ages birth to two years, unless a medical exemption has been approved for influenza. [WAC 388-148-1320 \(6\)](#)
12. Licensed and unlicensed providers and all household members must have pertussis vaccinations prior to taking placement of children birth to two years.
13. The DLR worker must complete the required number of licensed or unlicensed home studies per **DLR Performance Goals** located on the CA intranet under DLR Programs.
14. An adoption home study update is required when:
  1. There is a change within the family, e.g. divorce, someone new moves in the home, a medical condition or significant change affecting the caregiver's ability to care for children.
  2. The needs or characteristics of a child considered for adoption is significantly different than when the family was assessed in a previously approved home study.
  3. The family previously adopted a child and is now adopting another child, unless the child (subject of the current adoption) was residing in the home during the previous home study and assessed.
  4. The local court requires an update.
15. All home studies and adoption home study updates must be approved, denied or withdrawn in writing. NOTE: Denied foster home licensing applicants have a due process right to an administrative hearing. Denied unlicensed home study applicants or suitable others do not have a right to an administrative hearing. [RCW 43.20A.205](#)

## Procedures

### 1. New Home Study

The DLR worker must:

1. Review the completed [Family Home Study Application DSHS 10-354](#), supporting documentation and forms to confirm all information is complete.

2. Launch the home study icon in FamLink when an application and background authorization forms for all household member(s) age 16 and older are received.
3. Complete all of the following
  1. Background checks on all household members age 16 years and older using the [Criminal Background Check DSHS 09-653](#) form.
  2. Fingerprints on all household members age 18 years and older, unless they have previously been completed.
  3. A FamLink person search and CA file review on all persons, regardless of any age living in the home, or who are being cleared to provide substitute care for children.
  4. An out-of-state child abuse and neglect registry check per criminal background check policy.
4. Notify the applicant by phone, or email or mail the [Incomplete Application DSHS 15-433](#) form within one week of application receipt. Indicate whether their application is complete or if more documentation is needed.
5. Follow-up with the applicant a minimum of every 30 days, if there are outstanding application materials.
6. Inform relatives not seeking licensure that foster care reimbursements can only be issued to licensed foster homes, but that they can apply for child-only Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).
7. Obtain a copy of any previous home studies if completed outside of CA. The DLR worker must obtain a signed release of information and request a copy from the agency or person who completed that home study. If unable to obtain the previous home study the DLR worker will document his/her efforts to do so.
8. Contact DCFS regarding any barriers in completing the home study, for families referred by DCFS for a home study.
9. Review the completed [Personal Information DSHS 15-276](#) to assist in formulating questions for the interviews.
10. Conduct applicant and household member interviews.
11. Complete the [Family Home Study DSHS 10-043](#), using the Family Home Study Guide as a reference.
12. Complete [Reference Questionnaire DSHS 15-286](#) on at least three people designated by the applicant.
13. Complete and document in FamLink the [Verification of Indian Status DSHS 15-128](#) if an applicant is Native American and provides Tribal verification.
14. Complete the [Foster Home Inspection Checklist DSHS 10-183](#) for all applicants requesting licensure. If the relative/suitable other or adoptive applicant is not seeking licensure, complete [Household Safety Inspection for Unlicensed Placements and Adoption Home Study Updates DSHS 10-453](#).
15. [Licensing and Safety Supervision Plan For Site Specific Conditions DSHS 10-419](#) if the home presents child safety hazards for an applicant for licensing. Complete a plan in the home study addressing the hazards for an **unlicensed** applicant.

16. Staff with DLR supervisor if there are parenting concerns, barriers to the home study, or if requiring the applicant(s) to provide additional information or complete evaluations.
  17. Require the applicant to provide additional information or complete an evaluation(s) if concerns are identified in the personal statements, interviews, or other times during the home study process. Evaluations required are at the applicant's expense or in rare situations can be paid by DCFS.
    1. Obtain a release signed by the applicant allowing information sharing before, during, and after the evaluation.
    2. Provide all the information to the evaluator prior to the scheduled evaluation related to the worker's concern and document the results or conclusions in the home study.
  18. Use the [Home Study File Checklist DSHS 10-182](#) for **licensed** homes or the [Unlicensed File Checklist DSHS 10-182A](#) for **unlicensed** homes to confirm home study requirements are met.
  19. The DLR supervisor will review and approve all home studies for finalization in FamLink in a timely manner.
- 2. Adoption Home Study Update**
- The DLR worker must:
1. Complete a minimum of one in-person contact with the applicant(s) at his/her home.
  2. Complete all of the following.
    1. Background checks on all household members age 16 years and older using the [Criminal Background Check DSHS 09-653](#) form.
    2. Fingerprints on all household members age 18 years and older, unless they have previously been completed.
    3. A FamLink person search and CA file review on all persons, regardless of any age living in the home, or are being cleared to provide substitute care for children.
    4. An out-of-state child abuse and neglect registry check per criminal background check policy.
  3. Conduct interviews of minor and adult children, and any other household members.
  4. Complete new references or a follow-up call discussing the applicant's ability to parent with the references identified for the previous home study.
  5. Complete a [Household Safety Inspection for Unlicensed Placements and Adoption Home Study Updates DSHS 10-453](#), whether licensed or unlicensed.
  6. [Emergency Evacuation Plan DSHS 16-204](#), unless there have been no changes from the previous plan.
  7. Obtain [Applicant Medical Report DSHS 13-001](#), [Financial Worksheet DSHS 14-452](#) and [Marital History DSHS 09-979](#) if the initial home study was not completed as a unified home study.
  8. Complete a [Home Study File Checklist DSHS 10-182](#) for licensed applicants, or [Unlicensed File Checklist DHS 10-182A](#) for unlicensed applicants.
- 3. Upon Approval or Denial of the Home Study**
- The DLR worker must:

1. Maintain an original and a copy of the home study in the provider or licensing file.
  2. Provide a second original home study to the CA Adoption worker when requested.
4. **Home Study Denial on Unlicensed Home**
- The DLR worker must complete the following when considering a home study denial for an applicant not seeking licensure:
1. Use [Shared Decision Making Matrix](#)
  2. Request a staffing with DCFS staff if they referred the family.
  3. The home study denial must be approved by the DLR Supervisor or DLR Area Administrator.
  4. If the denial is approved, send the applicant a copy of his/her denied home study or denial letter. The denial letter must be approved for use by the DLR Supervisor. A copy of the denied home study or letter goes in the licensing file and to the referring DCFS worker.
  5. Enter information obtained in the home study icon in FamLink.
  6. Record information about the denial in the home study recommendations section.
  7. Approve the home study in FamLink and the supervisor will enter a provider note stating that the home study was denied with a description of the basis for the denial.

NOTE: See Denials for applicants seeking licensure see [5160. Adverse Licensing Actions](#)

## Resources

CA staff's engagement of families can directly affect the willingness of the family to proceed with the home study. Applicants may need a variety of supports or assistance. The DLR worker should utilize the application process to build a relationship of trust and collaboration with caregivers, and maintain a strong commitment to customer service.

# 5120. Licensing State Foster Homes

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Effective Date:** 1974

**Revised Date:** March 31, 2017

**Sunset Review:** March 31, 2020

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## Purpose

The Division of Licensed Resources (DLR) licenses and re-evaluates foster homes to safeguard the safety and well-being of children in out-of-home care by assessing and monitoring their compliance with minimum licensing requirements (MLRs).

## Scope

This policy applies to all DLR licensing staff.

## Laws

[RCW 74.15.040](#)

[RCW 74.15.100](#)

[RCW 74.15.110](#)

[RCW 74.15.130](#)

[RCW 74.15.140](#)

[RCW 74.13.260](#)

[RCW 43.20A.205](#)

## Policy

### 1. New Licenses and Renewals

1. Follow the [5110. Completing the Home Study](#) policy.
2. The DLR worker must interact with the applicant(s) in a manner that is [culturally competent](#).
3. DLR worker must have a discussion about cultural awareness and competency with the foster parent(s) to educate the foster parent(s) on the importance of meeting the child's cultural needs.
4. DLR worker must confirm that all [WAC 388-148](#) requirements are met before a foster home license is issued and maintained throughout the duration of the license.
5. The DLR worker must assess the physical setting of the applicant's property and premises to determine the residence meets MLRs.
6. Waivers to WAC requirements must be approved by the DLR Administrator.
7. Licenses are issued for a maximum of three years.
8. Licenses will be issued or denied in writing.

### 2. Foster Home Moves

1. Foster parents moving to a new residence with an acceptable history of child care and if the family remains intact, may continue to provide care under their previous license for 30 days from the move date. The DLR worker must visit the home and approve the family's new home within 30 days. [RCW 74.15.100](#)
2. Foster home moves are completed as an amended license, and have the same expiration date as the current license.

### 3. Modifications

Modifications must be completed when the license capacity (age, gender, and/or number) is modified due to change in household members, adoption, licensee request, or through shared decision-making.

#### 4. **Foster Home Change in Circumstance**

1. Foster parent(s) must have his or her suitability reassessed when there has been a change in his or her circumstances that affects his or her ability to parent.
2. Changes in circumstances will result in the completion of the [Foster Home Re-Assessment DSHS 10-405](#) form, license modification, **or** new three year license. The DLR worker must staff the situation with a supervisor to determine which of these licensing actions to complete.
3. Foster parent(s) must apply for a new license when there is a change in circumstance due to the absence or presence of an additional caregiver.
4. Changes to the license with or without the licensee's approval require written notification of the licensee's appeal rights unless the changes occur at license renewal.

[RCW 43.20A.205](#)

#### 5. **Health and Safety Monitoring**

The DLR worker or designated DLR worker must annually monitor a random sample of no less than 10% of his/her total state licensed foster homes by July 1st of each year.

[RCW 74.13.260](#)

#### 6. **Waivers and Administrative Approvals**

1. The DLR worker must submit a [Licensing Waiver DSHS 15-411](#) to the DLR Administrator when the WAC does not allow discretion and the DLR worker supports an exception to the MLRs.
2. Waivers are time limited, usually child specific, and may compromise federal funding for all children placed in out-of-home care.
3. Non-safety waivers for relative homes do not affect federal funding.
4. The IV E Specialist must be notified of all approved waivers.
5. The DLR worker must submit an [Administrative Approval DSHS 15-411](#) to the DLR Area Administrator when the WAC specifically allows DLR discretion for approval.

## **Procedures**

### 1. **New Licenses**

The DLR worker must:

1. Verify that a [Family Home Study Application\(s\) DSHS 10-354](#) has been received and that a [Background Authorization\(s\) DSHS 09-653](#) was completed for all household members 16 years and older, and that fingerprints were completed on members 18 years and older.
2. Complete the Home Study and required forms. See [5510. Completing the Home Study](#) policy.



3. Determine the applicant(s) have sufficient income to meet his or her family's personal needs without reliance on foster care payments. [WAC 388-478-0015](#)
4. Verify the [Policy Agreements DSHS 10-290](#) form has been completed.
5. Verify the Verification of Indian Status DSHS 15-128 is completed and documentation is provided, if applicable.
6. Verify and document completion of Orientation, Caregiver Core Training, First Aid/CPR/Blood-Borne Pathogens training, and Tuberculosis (TB) test.
7. Verify foster homes licensed for children under the age of two years have completed pertussis and influenza vaccinations on all household members, unless a medical exception has been approved for the influenza vaccine. [WAC 388-148-1320 \(6\)](#)
8. Verify all requirements on the [Home Study File Checklist DSHS 10-182](#) are completed and the home meets the MLRs.
9. Document the license start and expiration date in FamLink as three years minus one day.
10. Provide a paper copy of the license, [New License Letter DSHS 10-429](#), and Foster Parent ID cards to the foster parent following supervisor approval.

## 2. Renewals

The DLR worker must:

1. Send a re-application packet to the licensee 120 days in advance of the license expiration date. For applications received prior to the expiration date the license remains in effect until DLR completes the renewal. The packet must include:
  1. [Family Home Study Application DSHS 10-354](#)
  2. [Background Authorization\(s\) DSHS 09-653](#)
  3. [Policy Agreements DSHS 10-290](#)
  4. [Emergency Evacuation Plan DSHS 16-204](#)
  5. [Employed Foster Parent Child Care Plan DSHS 10-406](#)
2. Send the [Foster Care License Renewal Notice DSHS 10-436](#).
3. Track his or her expiration dates and demonstrate diligent efforts to assist a family to renew.
4. Notify the foster parent(s) at least two weeks prior to the license expiration, that placement and payment must be stopped if his or her foster care application is not received before the license expiration date.
5. If an application has not been received within one day of the license expiration date, the DLR worker must contact the licensee and assist in obtaining an application if the foster parent(s) intends to renew.
6. Close the license if a signed application is not received by the license expiration date. If there are children placed in the foster home, the DLR worker must notify the placement worker that the license has been closed.
7. Complete an updated home study in FamLink if the family is planning to adopt within the next twelve months.
8. Complete additional forms depending on the changes in family circumstances. Forms include, but are not limited to
  1. [Financial Worksheet DSHS 14-452](#)
  2. [Applicant Medical Report DSHS 13-001](#)
  3. [Marital/Civil Union/Domestic Partnership History DSHS 09-979](#)

4. [Licensing and Safety Supervision Plan for Site Specific Conditions DSHS 10-419](#), as applicable.
  9. Require the applicant to provide additional information or complete an evaluation(s) when concerns are identified during the interview or on the renewal paperwork. Evaluations required are at the foster parent's expense.
  10. Obtain a release signed by the applicant allowing information sharing before, during, and after the evaluation.
  11. Provide all information to the evaluator related to the worker's concern.
  12. Complete all of the following.
    1. Background checks on all household members age 16 years and older using the [Criminal Background Check DSHS 09-653](#) form.
    2. Fingerprints on all household members age 18 years and older, unless they have previously been completed.
    3. A FamLink person search and CA file review on all persons, regardless of any age living in the home, or are being cleared to provide substitute care for children.
    4. An out-of-state child abuse and neglect registry check per criminal background check policy.
  13. Complete the following required forms:
    1. [Home Study File Checklist DSHS 10-182](#)
    2. [Foster Home Inspection Checklist DSHS 10-183](#)
    3. [Foster Home Re-Assessment DSHS 10-405](#)
    4. [Licensing and Safety Supervision Plan for Site Specific Conditions DSHS 10-419](#), as applicable.
    5. Document individual training plan for the next renewal period. Worker may use the [Individual Training Plan DSHS 06-166](#).
  14. Confirm the completion of required foster parent training. See [4512. Foster Parent Training](#) policy.
  15. Approve or deny the license in writing following the supervisor's review of the license. (Link to adverse policy)
  16. Provide a paper copy of the license, Renewal License Letter DSHS 10-431, and Foster Parent ID Cards to the foster parent following supervisor approval.
3. **Foster Home Moves**
- The DLR worker or Child Placing Agency (CPA) Licensor must:
1. Obtain a [Family Home Study Application DSHS 10-354](#).
  2. Assess the physical setting and issue an amended license within 30 calendar days.
  3. Complete the following forms:
    1. [Foster Home Re-Assessment DSHS 10-405](#)
    2. [Home Study File Checklist DSHS 10-182](#)
    3. [Foster Home Inspection Checklist DSHS 10-183](#)
    4. [Emergency Evacuation Plan DSHS 16-204](#)
    5. [Licensing and Safety Supervision Plan for Site Specific Conditions DSHS 10-419](#), as applicable.
  4. The DLR worker must notify a IV E Specialist if a license is not issued within 30 days of a move.

5. The DLR worker may issue a new three-year license in lieu of amending the license if the license expires within six months of the move. The renewal paperwork is required to complete this license.

#### 4. **Modifications**

The DLR worker must:

1. Verify the home and applicant(s) meets MLRs.
2. Conduct a site visit and an additional assessment if the modification is significantly different than the original assessment.
3. Provide the foster parent with written notice of the modification using the Revised License Letter DSHS 10-430 to inform him or her of their appeal rights even if the applicant requested the modification per [RCW 43.20A.205](#).
4. Issue a modified license; the expiration date of the license is the same as the current license.

#### 5. **Foster Home Change in Circumstance**

The DLR worker must:

1. Conduct interviews or obtain additional information from the licensee when re-assessing the suitability of the applicant to care for children in out-of-home care.
2. Document the information by updating the home study in FamLink or on [Foster Home Re-Assessment DSHS 10-405](#).
3. The DLR worker may modify the license at any time during licensure depending on the circumstances, evaluation of the DLR worker, or by request of the licensee. [RCW 43.20A.205](#)

#### 6. **Health and Safety Monitoring**

The DLR worker must:

1. Complete [Foster Home Monitoring Visit DSHS 10-416](#) for each monitoring visit following [RCW 74.13.260](#).
2. Conduct announced or unannounced visits. The DLR worker should schedule his or her visit at a time when foster children are available to be interviewed in the home.

#### 7. **Overcapacity/Age/Gender Administrative Approvals**

The DLR worker must review the Overcapacity Administrative Approval DSHS 15-349 form in FamLink to approve or deny placements that are outside the license capacity. Overcapacities for respite will be completed on the paper DSHS 15-349.

[WAC 388-148-1305](#)

#### 8. **No Referral Process**

The DLR worker must:

1. Create a "no referral" in FamLink when a licensee requests no additional placements be made in his or her home.
2. Discuss if there is a provider safety, health or well-being concern with the DLR Supervisor to determine whether to recommend a "no referral."
3. When recommending a "no referral" on a foster home:
  1. Notify DCFS and other involved agencies.
  2. Complete a letter to the foster parents notifying them that no more placements will be made in his or her home and send to the DCFS regional administrator (RA) or designee for approval. If approved, the

- DCFS RA or designee must send the letter to the foster parent and notify the DLR worker.
3. If approved, inform all involved DCFS, DDA staff, and tribes when a decision is made not to place.
  4. Create a "no referral" in FamLink.
  4. When lifting a "no referral" on a foster home that was previously approved by DCFS:
    1. Notify DCFS RA or designee for approval. If approved, the DLR worker will remove the "no referral" in FamLink.
    2. Notify the foster parent.
    3. Notify the placement desk.

## Forms

- Revised License Letter DSHS 10-430
- Verification of Indian Status DSHS 15-128
- Overcapacity Administrative Approval DSHS 15-349

NOTE: Forms that are not linked are on the CA intranet under DLR Programs, DLR Forms.

## Resources

- DLR Performance Goals (see intranet under DLR Programs, DLR Resources)
- CA is prohibited from denying any person the opportunity to become an adoptive parent, on the basis of the race, color, or national origin of the adoptive parent, or the child involved.
- [WAC 388-148](#) Child foster homes minimum licensing requirements

# 5130. Regional Licensing

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:** August 31, 2015

**Revised Date:** May 3, 2017

**Sunset Review:** May 3, 2020

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## Purpose

Regional Licensing assesses, licenses, and monitors services provided to children in out-of-home care by group care facilities and private child placing agencies.

## Scope

This policy applies to all Division of Licensed Resources (DLR) regional licensing staff.

## Laws

[RCW 74.15](#)

[RCW 74.15.020 \(2\)](#)

## Policy

1. Group Care Facilities (GCF), Child Placing Agencies (CPA) and Adoption Services and Child Foster Homes must meet licensing requirements. [WAC 388-145](#); [WAC 388-147](#); [WAC 388-148](#).
2. Waivers to WAC requirements must be approved by the DLR Administrator. [Licensing Waiver DSHS 15-411](#)
3. Licensing application documents must be received within 90 days of receipt of application or it may be withdrawn. Regional Licensors must work with the agency and notify them prior to withdrawing an application.
4. GCF's may have more than one type of license depending on the services offered.
5. Foster homes certified by the CPA must meet minimum licensing requirements (MLRs).
6. The Regional Licensors must complete the required number of child placing agency foster homes licenses per month per **DLR Performance Goals** located on the CA intranet under DLR Programs.
7. Foster parent(s) must apply for a new license when there is a change in circumstance due to the absence or addition of an identified caregiver.
8. A CPA may certify homes in more than one geographic region as long as the agency provides supervision and support to the home. The license must be issued from the region in which the family physically resides.
9. The CPA license is approved by the regional licensors in the region where the license is issued.
10. Licenses are issued for a maximum of three years.
11. Licenses will be issued or denied in writing.

## Procedures

### 1. **New Licenses for Group Care Facilities and Child Placing Agencies**

The Regional Licensors must:

1. Verify the Application for Child Care Agency License DSHS 10-408 and that the application materials are complete.
2. Contact references for a newly hired agency director or administrator using the DLR Agency Letter of Reference DSHS 16-211. A minimum of three

references are required. Agency references may be accepted for the agency director or administrator if the agency has upper management to complete the references.

3. Process the background check for licensing applicants, staff, and volunteers in accordance with [WAC 388-06A](#).
4. Complete FamLink person search and CA file review on all licensing applicants, staff, and volunteers.
5. Determine if a person is disqualified and/or denied from association with a child care or private agency for not meeting MLRs in [RCW 74.15](#) and [WAC 388-145](#), [WAC 388-147](#), and [WAC 388-148](#). (See [5160. Adverse Action on a Foster Care License](#))
6. Evaluate the agency's policy and procedures, physical setting, personnel files, child files, and/or provider files using the designated checklist for the type of license. Review sample files for agencies currently pending licensure. (See CA intranet DLR Programs, DLR Forms)
7. Request an inspection from the Department of Health and the Washington State Patrol's Fire Protection Bureau for all **group care facilities** with the exception of Staffed Residential Homes licensed for five or fewer children. Approved inspections must be documented prior to issuing the license. Additional inspections may be requested if concerns are noted.
8. Confirm that all staff having unsupervised access to children are cleared through a background check [WAC 388-06A](#).
9. Confirm that an adequate number of staff are available to provide services. This may include review of the shift logs or a calendar to verify appropriate staffing levels. [WAC 388-145-1480](#)
10. Confirm all WAC licensing requirements for the applicable license are met before a license is issued.
11. Document the license start and expiration date in FamLink as three years minus one day.
12. Submit the file for supervisory review.

## 2. **New Licenses for Child Placing Agency Foster Homes**

The Regional Licensor must:

1. Verify that a [Family Home Study Application DSHS 10-354](#) has been received and that a background authorization form is completed for all household members 16 years and older, and that finger prints are completed on household members 18 years and older.
2. Complete FamLink person search and CA file review on all persons, of any age, living in the home, or who are being cleared to provide substitute care for children.
3. Verify the home study meets the Home Study policy requirements.
4. Verify the CPA foster home application materials are complete.
5. Require the applicant to provide additional information or complete an evaluation(s) when concerns are identified during the interview or on the renewal paperwork. Evaluations required are at the foster parent's expense.
  1. Obtain a release signed by the applicant allowing information sharing before, during, and after the evaluation.

2. Provide all information to the evaluation related to the worker's concern.
6. Submit the file for supervisory review.
7. Issue a license based on the CPA's certification that a foster home meets the MLRs.
8. Provide a paper copy of the license and Foster Parent ID cards to the agency for the foster parent following supervisor approval.
9. The Regional Licensors must ensure the following information is in the Regional Licensing paper file:
  1. [Certification for License of Foster Home DSHS 10-016](#)
  2. [Family Home Study Application DSHS 10-354](#)
  3. [Home Study File Checklist DSHS 10-182](#)
  4. [Foster Home Inspection Checklist DSHS 10-183](#)
  5. Home Study
  6. [Emergency Evacuation Plan DSHS 16-204](#)
  7. [Background Authorizations DSHS 09-653](#); 16 years and older and Fingerprints; 18 years and older
  8. [Administrative Review Request For Crime and/or Negative Action DSHS 15-367](#), if applicable
  9. Verification of required training
  10. [Licensing and Safety Supervision Plan DSHS 10-419](#), if applicable
  11. Verification of Indian Status DSHS 15-128, if applicable

NOTE: Other required licensing documents not listed above are required to be maintained in the CPA files (medical statement, marriage and divorce statements and documentation, financial statement, policy agreements, immunizations, etc.).
3. **Renewal for Group Care Facility or Child Placing Agency**  
The Regional Licensors must:
  1. Send a courtesy renewal notice to the agency 120 days in advance of the license expiration date. For applications received prior to the expiration date, the license remains in effect until DLR completes the renewal.
  2. Verify the Application for Child Care Agency License DSHS 10-408 and renewal materials are complete.
  3. Document compliance with all applicable items on the designated checklist. Areas of non-compliance are documented on a [Compliance Agreement DSHS 10-248](#).
  4. Complete c-1 requirements in the New Licenses for Group Care Facilities and Child Placing Agencies section.
4. **Renewals for Child Placing Agency Foster Homes**  
The Regional Licensors must:
  1. Send a courtesy email to the private agency if a renewal application has not been received within one month of the license expiring.
  2. Contact the agency if an application has not been received within one day of the license expiration date.



3. Close the license if a signed application is not received by the license expiration date. If there are children in placement, the regional licensor must notify the placement worker that the license has been closed.
  4. Verify that a [Family Home Study Application DSHS 10-354](#) has been received and that a background authorization form is completed for all household members 16 years and older, and that finger prints are completed on household members 18 years and older.
  5. Complete FamLink person search and CA file review on all persons, of any age, living in the home, or who are being cleared to provide substitute care for children.
  6. Review the renewal materials provided by the private agency.
  7. Submit the file for supervisory review.
  8. Issue a license based on the CPA's certification of a foster home meeting MLRs.
  9. Provide a paper copy of the license and Foster Parent ID cards to the agency for the foster parent following supervisor approval.
  10. The Regional Licensor must ensure the following information is in the Child Placing Agency Foster Home paper file for a renewal:
    1. [Certification for License of Foster Home DSHS 10-016](#)
    2. [Family Home Study Application DSHS 10-354](#)
    3. [Home Study File Checklist DSHS 10-182](#)
    4. [Foster Home Inspection Checklist DSHS 10-183](#)
    5. Home Study
    6. [Emergency Evacuation Plan DSHS 16-204](#)
    7. [Background Authorizations DSHS 09-653](#); 16 years and older and
    8. Fingerprints; 18 years and older
    9. [Administrative Review Request For Crime and/or Negative Action DSHS 15-367](#), if applicable
    10. Verification of required trainings
    11. [Licensing and Safety Supervision Plan DSHS 10-419](#), if applicable
- 5. Moves for Group Care Facilities**
- Regional Licensors must:
1. Verify the Application for Child Care Agency License or Certification DSHS 10-408 is complete.
  2. Review the agency floor plan and evacuation procedures for compliance with the MLRs.
  3. Verify that all agency staff have a background check completed following the [5500. Criminal and Child Abuse and Neglect History](#).
  4. Complete a physical inspection of the agency using the designated checklist.
  5. Request an inspection from the Department of Health and the Washington State Patrol's Fire Protection Bureau for all group care facilities with the exception of Staffed Residential Homes licensed for five or fewer children. Approved inspections must be documented prior to license issuance. Additional inspections may be requested if concerns are noted.



6. Document compliance with all applicable items on the designated checklist. Areas of non-compliance are documented on a [Compliance Agreement DSHS 10-248](#).
7. The new facility must be licensed and operating prior to children being moved.
8. The Regional Licensor may issue a new three-year license in lieu of amending the license if the license expires within six months of the move. The renewal paperwork is required to complete this license.
9. Provide a paper copy of the license to the agency following supervisory approval.

**6. Moves for Child Placing Agencies**

Regional Licensors must:

1. Verify the Application for Child Care Agency License or Certification DSHS 10-408 is complete.
2. Verify that all agency staff have a background check completed following the [5500. Criminal and Child Abuse and Neglect History](#).
3. Complete a physical inspection of the agency.
4. Document compliance with all applicable items on the designated checklist. Areas of non-compliance are documented on a [Compliance Agreement DSHS 10-248](#).
5. The Regional Licensor may issue a new three-year license in lieu of amending the license if the license expires within six months of the move. The renewal paperwork is required to complete this license.
6. Provide a paper copy of the license to the agency following supervisory approval.

**7. Moves for Child Placing Agency Foster Homes**

See Foster Home Family Moves located in the [5120. Licensing State Foster Homes](#) policy.

**8. Child Placing Agency Foster Home Change in Circumstances**

The Regional Licensors must:

1. Review the private agency's assessment of their foster home that had a change in circumstance affecting his or her parenting.
2. Require the agency to complete the [Foster Home Re-Assessment DSHS 10-405](#) or update the home study.
3. Staff the change in circumstance with the DLR supervisor and private agency licensor to determine the appropriate licensing action (Foster Home Re-assessment, license modification, or new three-year license).
4. The Regional Licensor may modify the license depending on the circumstances, evaluation of the Regional Licensor and CPA Licensor, or by request of the licensee. [RCW 43.20A.205](#)

**9. Health and Safety Monitoring**

1. The Regional Licensors must complete six-month health and safety reviews on all contracted Behavioral Rehabilitative Services (BRS) child placing agencies and group care facilities.
2. For group care facilities and CPAs, regional licensors must:
  1. Complete a site inspection using the designated checklist for the type of license.

2. Complete a review of a minimum of three personnel files during at least one of the six-month health and safety monitoring visits.
3. Complete a review of a minimum of three child files during at least one of the six-month health and safety monitoring visits.
4. Review other documents and conduct interviews as necessary.
5. Document the six-month health and safety reviews in a FamLink provider note with the activity “Regional Licensing Health and Safety.”
6. The six-month health and safety reviews are not required for a BRS provider for the review period following completion of a Comprehensive Review or renewal.
7. For group care facilities, regional licensors must also:
  1. Complete a review of storage, administration, and documentation related to medication.
  2. Complete 10% percent of the six-month health and safety monitoring visits unannounced.

#### 10. **Comprehensive Review**

The Regional Licensor must participate in comprehensive reviews for contracted BRS providers or contracted and/or licensed providers. See [5140. Comprehensive Reviews](#).

#### 11. **Overcapacity/Age/Gender Administrative Approvals**

The Regional Licensor must review the Overcapacity Administrative Approval DSHS 15-349 form in FamLink to approve or deny placements outside the license capacity for private agency foster homes. Overcapacities for respite will be completed on the paper DSHS 15-349. [WAC 388-148-1305](#). Once approved the Regional Licensor will send the agency a copy of the DSHS 15-349.

#### 12. **No Referral Process**

The Regional Licensor must:

1. Create a “no referral” when an agency or licensee requests no additional placements be made in a CPA foster home.
2. Staff with the DLR Supervisor if the agency is not in agreement with the “no referral” and **if there is a safety, health or well-being concern** to determine whether to recommend a “no referral.”
3. When recommending a “no referral” on a **CPA foster home**:
  1. Notify DCFS, and other involved agencies.
  2. Complete a letter to the foster parents notifying them that no more placements will be made in his or her home and send to the DCFS RA or designee for approval. If approved, the DCFS RA or designee must send the letter to the foster parent and notify the DLR worker.
  3. If approved, inform all involved CPA, DCFS, DDA staff, and tribes when a decision is made not to place.
  4. Create a “no referral” in FamLink.
4. When lifting a “no referral” on a CPA foster home that was previously approved by DCFS:
  1. Notify the DLR Administrator and DCFS RA or designee for approval. If approved, the DLR worker will remove the "no referral" in FamLink.
  2. Notify the foster parent.
  3. Notify the placement desk

5. When recommending a “no referral” on a **group care facility**:
  1. Staff with DLR Administrator.
  2. Notify DCFS, and other involved agencies.
  3. Complete a letter to the group care facility notifying them that no more placements will be made in his or her facility and send to the DCFS RA or designee for approval. If approved, the DCFS RA or designee must send the letter to the agency and notify the DLR worker.
  4. If approved, inform all involved DCFS, DDA staff, and tribes when a decision is made not to place.
  5. Create a “no referral” in FamLink.
6. When lifting a “no referral” on a group care facility that was previously approved by DCFS:
  1. Notify the DLR Administrator and DCFS RA or designee for approval. If approved, the DLR worker will remove the “no referral” in FamLink.
  2. Notify the foster parent.
  3. Notify the placement desk.
7. For facilities that do not accept placement of children in care and custody of the department, staff with DLR supervisor and AAG for possible summary legal action if health and safety of children is at risk.

## Forms

- Application for Child Care Agency License or Certification DSHS 10-408
- Maternity Services Checklist DSHS 16-184
- Child Placing Agency Checklist DSHS 16-185
- Crisis & Secured Crisis Residential Checklist DSHS 16-186
- Medically Fragile Children and Children with Severe Developmental Disabilities Checklist DSHS 16-188
- Group Home and Staff Residential Home Checklist DSHS 16-189
- Emergency Respite Center and Resource and Assessment Center Checklist DSHS 16-183
- Overnight Youth Shelter Checklist DSHS 16-190
- DLR Agency Reference Letter DSHS 16-211
- [Child Placing Agency Foster Home Licensing Investigation DSHS 23-036](#)
- [Child Placing Agency Foster Home Licensing Investigation Interviews DSHS 23-036A](#)
- DLR Licensing Findings DSHS 27-068

NOTE: Forms that are not linked are on the CA intranet under DLR Programs, DLR Forms.

## Resources

- DLR Performance Goals located on the CA intranet under DLR Programs.
- THERE IS NO CURRENT CHECKLIST FOR GROUP RECEIVING CENTER OR DAYTREATMENT SERVICES\*
- [WAC 388-145](#) Group Care Facilities minimum licensing requirements
- [WAC 388-147](#) Child-placing agencies and adoption centers minimum licensing requirements

- [WAC 388-148](#) Child foster homes minimum licensing requirements

## 5140. Comprehensive Reviews

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Effective Date:** October 31, 2014

**Revised Date:** March 31, 2017

**Sunset Review:** March 31, 2020

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### Purpose

Comprehensive reviews help Children's Administration (CA) Contracts, Behavioral Rehabilitation Services (BRS) and Division of Licensed Resources (DLR) staff evaluate the ability of contracted licensed BRS providers and other resource providers to meet the health, safety and well-being needs of children in their care.

### Scope

This policy applies to DLR regional licensing, BRS program managers and Contract Unit staff.

### Policy

1. Comprehensive reviews measure compliance with licensing standards and contract requirements, while also monitoring the overall performance of a program.
2. Comprehensive reviews are completed by a CA regional or headquarters staff team consisting of DLR, Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS), BRS, contracts and other program staff. External stakeholders may also participate, e.g. Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA).
3. Comprehensive reviews must be conducted on each facility or Child Placing Agency (CPA) under an in-state BRS contract:
  1. Every three years, beginning at or around 18 months after entering into a new license or during each renewal period.
  2. Other times identified by the Comprehensive Review team, i.e., when there is a high score on the Contract Risk Assessment/Analysis tool DSHS 15-466, frequent intakes, a critical incident, or newly identified concerns.
  3. Comprehensive reviews may also be conducted on other licensed or contracted group care facilities or CPAs that do not have a BRS contract when deemed necessary by the review team.

4. If the BRS provider or other contracted and/or licensed provider has an open DLR/CPS investigation(s) during a comprehensive review, the Comprehensive Review team will notify and invite the DLR/CPS Investigator to participate in the review.
5. Biannual health and safety reviews are not required for a contracted licensed BRS provider for the review period following completion of a comprehensive review.

## **Procedures**

### **1. Percentage of Information to be reviewed:**

#### **1. Group care facilities**

1. Review a minimum of 20% of all active child files or files of children placed within the last 30 days of the comprehensive review date, with no fewer than six files being reviewed.
2. For group care facilities with less than 50 personnel files, review a minimum of 20% of personnel files, with no fewer than six files being reviewed.
3. For group care facilities with 50 or more personnel files, review no fewer than ten files.
4. If the contractor has fewer than six child or personnel files, complete a 100% review.
5. Interview a minimum of 20% of children and staff, with no fewer than two youth and staff for each residential living unit.
6. For group care facilities with 50 or more staff, interview no fewer than ten staff.
7. If child safety or a health issue is identified during the Comprehensive Review, interview a minimum of 50% of children and staff for the residential living unit with the identified issue.

#### **2. CPAs**

1. For CPAs with less than 50 active child files, review a minimum of 20% of all active child files or files of children placed within the last 30 days of the comprehensive review date, with no fewer than six files being reviewed.
2. For CPAs with 50 or more active child files review no fewer than ten files.
3. Review a minimum of 20% of personnel files, with no fewer than six files being reviewed.
4. If the contractor has fewer than six child or personnel files complete a 100% review.
5. Interview at least one staff who is responsible for certifying CPA homes.
6. Conduct in-person or telephone interviews of ten or more children placed in foster homes through the CPA. If the contractor has fewer than ten children placed in foster homes through the CPA interview all children placed.

### **2. The Regional Licensor in each region will:**

1. Facilitate an annual meeting with the Comprehensive Review Team held between October and December. The purpose of the meeting is to identify:
  1. The next year's review schedule.
  2. Licensed or contracted providers to be reviewed.
  3. Individuals leading each review, rotating between DLR, BRS, and Contracts Unit staff.
2. Search for licensing and/or DLR/CPS investigations for the period under review and provide information found to the review team.
3. **The Comprehensive Review Team Lead** will:
  1. Notify the licensed or contracted provider four to six weeks prior to the Comprehensive Review and include the following information:
    1. Date, time, and location of the review.
    2. Questions about their program strengths, challenges, and any technical assistance.
    3. Documents or items to be reviewed.
    4. Copies of the forms/tools that will be used during the on-site visit.
  2. Collaborate with the team members prior to the onsite visit and:
    1. Review the tools and instructions for use.
    2. Discuss existing concerns.
    3. Identify individual tasks for completion.
    4. Discuss relevant WACs, BRS Handbook, or contract issues.
  3. Facilitate an on-site meeting with the agency director and other agency staff at the start of the review to discuss:
    1. Purpose of the Comprehensive Review.
    2. Comprehensive Review process
    3. Location where the files will be reviewed.
  4. Conduct the Comprehensive Review with team members at the CPA office or group care facility being reviewed. If two or three facilities for the same parent agency are being reviewed, conduct interviews and facility inspection at each facility.
  5. Ensure the comprehensive review team reviews no more than three licensed facilities during each Comprehensive Review. Licensed facilities must be associated with one parent agency under one BRS contract and the license expiration dates are within six months of each other.
  6. Ensure the Comprehensive Review includes (as applicable), but is not limited to, a review of the following:
    1. Program Review
    2. Personnel files
    3. Child files
    4. Youth interviews
    5. Staff interviews
    6. Social Worker questionnaires
    7. Foster parent interviews
    8. Incident reports
    9. Medication logs
    10. Documentation of consultant hours

11. Staff schedules
12. Facility inspection
7. Facilitate a staff debriefing on the last day of the review to:
  1. Ensure all Comprehensive Review forms located on the DLR intranet are completed.
  2. Discuss strengths, concerns, and patterns that will be shared with the agency director and other agency staff during the exit interview.
8. Facilitate an exit interview on the last day of the review with the agency director and other agency staff to:
  1. Discuss any health and safety, licensing, and/or programming concerns.
  2. Complete an Immediate Action Plan Compliance Agreement DSHS 10-522 if there is an immediate licensing or contracts violation and give it to the licensed or contracted provider to implement.
9. Notify the agency director that the Final Report and compliance agreement will be sent within 30 days following the review. The compliance agreement will address licensing and programming issues, and the health and safety of the youth being served.
10. Complete the Final Report DSHS 10-520 with the assistance of the Comprehensive Review team **within 30 days** following the on-site review.
11. Provide the Final Report to the licensed and/or contracted provider and staff that participated in the review and place in the DLR and CA Contracts' files.
4. **Disagreement with the Final Report:**
  1. If review members disagree about the report, the final decision shall be made by the following members:
    1. DLR Supervisor if WAC is the standard cited for the findings of non-compliance.
    2. BRS Program Manager if the BRS Handbook is cited for the findings of non-compliance.
    3. Contracts Program Manager if the Contract is being cited for non-compliance.
  2. If the **licensed and/or contracted provider** believes there are factual errors in the report, he/she will submit a written document within 30 days of receipt of the Final Report that outlines his/her concerns. The following members will respond and resolve:
    1. Regional licensor if the concern is a licensing issue.
    2. BRS or Contracts manager if the concern is a program or contracts issue.
5. **Monitoring Compliance Agreements:** Responsibility to monitor compliance agreements rests with the regional licensor, BRS program manager, and/or Contracts manager, depending on which standard is used in the plan as noted in Procedures 4.a.

## Forms and Tools

The following forms are located on the CA Intranet site under the DLR program:

- DSHS 10-510 Comprehensive Review: BRS / Contracts Program Review

- DSHS 10-511 Comprehensive Review: DLR Program Review
- DSHS 10-512 Comprehensive Review: BRS Contractor Client File
- DSHS 10-513 Comprehensive Review: DLR Client File
- DSHS 10-514 Comprehensive Review: Personnel Files
- DSHS 10-515 CA Worker Questionnaire
- DSHS 10-516 Youth Interview
- DSHS 10-517 Staff Interview
- DSHS 10-518 Foster Parent Interview
- DSHS 10-519 Incident Report Review
- DSHS 10-520 Comprehensive Review Final Report
- DSHS 10-521 Comprehensive Review: Compliance Agreement
- DSHS 10-522 Comprehensive Review: Immediate Action Plan Compliance Agreement

## Resources

Comprehensive Health and Safety Reviews Tips Sheet

# 5150. Licensing Investigations

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Effective Date:** 1998

**Revised Date:** August 31, 2015

**Sunset Review:** August 31, 2018

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## Purpose

Licensing Complaint Investigations are conducted to determine if a violation of the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) licensing regulations has occurred in a licensed facility. When violations occur, DLR will take steps to remedy the violation.

## Scope

This policy applies to all DLR staff.

## Laws

[RCW 74.15](#)

## Policy



1. The DLR/CPS Handbook must be used for all concurrent DLR/CPS and licensing investigations of child abuse and neglect (CA/N) allegations.
2. Licensing complaint investigations must begin within 5 days of receipt of the intake. Document the beginning of the investigation in a provider note.
3. A site visit must occur unless circumstances exist that would eliminate this requirement. Such circumstances must be approved by a supervisor.
4. Conduct a thorough licensing investigation by identifying and addressing all WAC violations, and utilizing shared decision making as necessary.
5. Investigation findings (“Valid” or “Not Valid”) must be made within 45 days on licensing only investigations, using the following criteria:
  1. **Valid:** Based on the facts obtained in the investigation, there is reasonable cause to believe a licensing violation occurred.
  2. **Not Valid:** Based on the facts obtained in the investigation, there is reasonable cause to believe a licensing violation did not occur or it cannot be determined if a licensing violation occurred.
6. Before an investigation is extended beyond 45 days due to a DLR/CPS investigation or extenuating circumstances, the supervisor must approve and document this extension in a provider note.
7. DLR staff will immediately address any violations which threaten the health and safety of children and document in the provider module. If merited, DLR will inform DCFS and/or the private agency of the intake and recommend a “no referral” be placed on the home. This could result in recommendations for removal of children or in no additional children placed in the home. Findings must be documented in a Provider Action in FamLink.
8. DLR staff will notify the licensee of the findings in writing. Regional licensors must copy the supervising agency when they notify the licensee. Additional WAC violations noted during a licensing complaint must be addressed so that the violation is remedied.
9. A compliance agreement is created in collaboration with the licensee with a plan to remedy all WAC violations.
10. The Provider Action will remain open until all legal actions, including appeals, are complete.
11. Contracts staff will be notified of any “valid” findings on providers who are also contracted with the state.
12. Infractions alleged to have occurred on applicants not yet licensed, will be addressed in the home study.
13. If a licensee has a full license and a pending application with another agency, the investigation will focus on the fully licensed facility.

## Procedures

1. **Homes and facilities directly licensed by CA**

The complaint investigator or DLR licensor will:

  1. Review the following case and provider information as applicable:
    1. Case numbers associated with the provider.
    2. Case and provider notes.

3. Intakes attached to the Person ID numbers to include the child.
4. Incident reports and any past compliance agreements.
2. Collaborate with the licensor if the complaint investigator is someone other than the licensor.
3. Send intake to law enforcement if a crime has been alleged.
4. Notify the appropriate Tribe if the intake involves an identified child who is of Indian ancestry.
5. Notify the licensee of the following at the earliest possible time that does not jeopardize the investigation:
  1. Allegations in the intake.
  2. Investigation process and timelines.
  3. Information about Foster Intervention and Retention Support Team (FIRST) or other supports if the allegation is against a foster home.
6. Contact the referrer to confirm the information in the intake and gather additional details.
7. If the child has a worker, notify the child's worker of the allegation and invite the worker to the child interview. The complaint investigator will determine the interview questions.
8. Interview the identified child(ren) individually. A third party (not named in the intake) may be present if requested by the child.
9. Conduct private interviews of all individuals with relevant information (foster parents, staff, verbal foster children, etc.)
10. Document all interviews in provider notes.
11. Obtain approval from a supervisor to not interview an identified child or a child with relevant information when circumstances merit it. The supervisor must document approval in a provider note.
12. Maintain ongoing communication with the assigned child's worker of any issues affecting a child's permanency, safety, and well-being.
13. Complaint investigations may include:
  1. Interviews of the assigned child worker(s) for the children currently or previously in the foster home or facility.
  2. Interviews with children not in the Department's custody (parental consent required).
  3. Collateral contacts, including, but not limited to:
    1. Foster child's therapist
    2. Foster child's medical providers
    3. Foster child's teachers/school counselors
    4. Professionals providing services to the foster parent

Some of these collaterals may require a signed release of information. A release of information signed by youth over age 13 in CA custody is required for mental health and substance abuse treatment providers providing services to the child.
14. Require the licensee to complete an assessment(s) if needed and identify the issues to be assessed. DLR may specify the provider and require the licensee to pay for the evaluation.

15. Staff with the supervisor and any relevant individual(s) if new information creates:

1. Cause to re-refer to CA intake or law enforcement.
2. Placement reconsideration by the child's social worker.
3. Cause for action related to licensing or placement.
4. Cause to re-assess safety.

**2. Foster homes certified by a Child Placing Agency (CPA)**

The regional licensor will:

1. Be responsible for investigative activity including directing and providing support and assistance to the CPA staff.
2. Send intake to law enforcement if a crime has been alleged.
3. Notify the appropriate Tribe if the intake involves an identified child who is of Indian ancestry.
4. Review the provider history.
5. Communicate the following to CPA staff:
  1. Intake allegation(s). Note: Do not provide a hard copy of the intake to CPA staff.
  2. Potential licensing violation(s).
  3. Specific parties to be interviewed by CPA staff. Regional licensors may attend the interviews as needed.
6. Inform CPA staff that if a child discloses abuse and neglect during the investigation, the CPA staff only collects as much information as needed for a CPS intake. He or she will not conduct a child forensic interview. CPA staff will call CA intake to report the new information.
7. Determine and document the findings in FamLink.
8. Determine whether the violation can be corrected. Collaborate with the CPA staff to complete a [Compliance Agreement DSHS 10-248](#) with the foster family remediating each of the "valid" findings.
9. If the licensee remains out of compliance with minimum licensing requirements (MLRs) or the compliance agreement does not remedy the deficiency, supervisory staffing and additional licensing action may be merited.

**3. Closing complaints on homes directly licensed by CA:**

1. The complaint investigator must notify his or her supervisor of the completion of the licensing complaint investigation.
2. For "not valid" finding(s), the complaint investigator's supervisor must review all documentation, complete the approval process in FamLink and send a findings letter to the licensee informing them of the "not valid" finding.
3. For "valid" finding(s):
  1. The complaint investigator's supervisor will:
    1. Review the information within the provider action.
    2. Document review in a provider note.
    3. Communicate to the licensor and the licensor's supervisor the "valid" finding.
  2. The licensor will develop a compliance agreement in collaboration with the licensee when he or she is notified of the "valid" finding. The

licensor may ask the complaint investigator for input on the compliance agreement. The compliance agreement will:

1. Address the specific WAC violation(s).
  2. Include a completion date for all specific action items.
  3. Be signed by the licensee and uploaded into FamLink.
  4. Be monitored by the licensor.
3. The licensing supervisor will complete the approval process in FamLink when the compliance agreement is completed and the deficiency is remedied.
  4. If the licensee remains out of compliance with MLRs or the compliance agreement does not remedy the deficiency, supervisory staffing and additional licensing action may be merited.
4. **Closing complaints assigned to Regional Licensors**
1. The regional licensor selects “complete” on the provider action.
  2. For all “not valid” findings, the supervisor must review all documentation, complete the approval process in FamLink and send the findings letter to the licensee.
  3. For a “valid” finding(s), the supervisor must review the information within the provider action. The review is documented in a provider note by the reviewing supervisor.
  4. The regional licensor will upload the compliance agreement in FamLink and monitor until completion. The compliance agreement includes the following:
    1. Specific WAC determined to be in violation.
    2. A completion date for all specific action items.
    3. Licensee signature.
  5. The regional licensor’s supervisor will approve the provider action in FamLink upon completion of the compliance agreement, unless other action is being taken. If the licensee remains out of compliance with MLRs, additional licensing action may be merited.

## Forms

- [Compliance Agreement DSHS 10-248](#)
- [Compliance Agreement Continuation DSHS 10-248A](#)
- [Child Placing Agency Foster Home Licensing Investigation DSHS 23-036](#)
- [Child Placing Agency Foster Home Licensing Investigation Interviews DSHS 23-036A](#)

## Resources

Licensing complaint investigations are an opportunity to provide training and technical assistance through a supportive and collaborative approach.

Government to government relationships must be respected when working with Tribal CPAs and facilities. Follow Tribal Agreements when interviewing Tribal children in a CA licensed foster home, private agency foster home, or group care facility.

[WAC 388-145](#)  
[WAC 388-147](#)  
[WAC 388-148](#)

# 5160. Adverse Action on a Foster Care License

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:** 1974

**Revised Date:** August 31, 2015

**Sunset Review:** August 31, 2018

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## Purpose

Provide Division of Licensed Resources (DLR) staff direction when a licensing violation occurs in a licensed foster home or facility that affects the health, safety and well-being of children placed.

## Scope

This policy applies to all DLR licensing staff.

## Laws

[RCW 43.20A.205](#)  
[RCW 74.14A.020](#)  
[RCW 74.15.010](#)

## Policy

1. DLR has jurisdiction over all foster home licenses and licensing applicants even if a person requests to withdraw his/her licensing application, or fails to renew his/her license. [WAC 388-148-1625\(3\)](#).
2. DLR must deny, suspend, or revoke a license when a licensee cannot care for children in a manner that provides for the safety, health and well-being of children.
3. DLR may limit or restrict a license or require the licensee to enter into a compliance agreement to ensure the safety, health and well-being of children in care.

4. DLR may suspend or revoke a license, if a foster home or group care licensee has more children, different ages or genders than the license allows without prior approval from the licenser.
5. DLR must disqualify any person from having unsupervised contact with children in out-of-home care if he or she does not meet licensing requirements. RCW 74.15; [WAC 388-06A](#)
6. If DLR denies a request for an exemption to the Minimum Licensing Requirements (MLR), a licensee does not have appeal rights.

## Procedures

### 1. **Considering a legal action:**

The DLR worker must:

1. Consider a legal action against the licensee when one of the following has occurred:
  2. Substantiation of child abuse or neglect.
  3. Serious licensing violations that cannot be corrected.
  4. Follow the [Shared Decision Making Matrix](#) and consult with the Assistant Attorney General's (AAG) Office when considering a legal action or change to a license.
  5. Determine the adverse action in consultation with DLR management.
6. Changes to a license action include:
  1. The DLR worker may modify the license at any time during the licensing period depending on the circumstances or wishes of the licensee.
  2. The DLR worker must notify the state home licensee of his/her appeal rights when any modification is made to the license, unless the change occurs at license renewal.
7. Changes to a probationary license, actions include:
  1. DLR may issue a probationary license as part of a corrective action plan when the licensee is unable to comply with MLRs or has been the subject of multiple complaints or concerns about noncompliance with licensing regulations. Probationary licenses are rarely issued, and should only be considered as a final attempt to bring a licensee into compliance. Probationary licenses are not considered full licenses and placements with probationary licenses are not eligible for IV-E funding.
  2. When deciding whether a probationary license will be issued, the following must be considered:
    1. An intentional or negligent violation of licensing requirements.
    2. A history of violation of licensing requirements.
    3. A current violation of licensing requirements.
    4. Whether the licensee is making a good faith effort to comply with the licensing requirements.
    5. Any other factors relevant to the specific situation.

8. In collaboration with the licensee, the DLR worker will develop a plan to correct the area of noncompliance within the probationary period.
  9. A probationary license may be issued for up to six months and, at the discretion of DLR, and may be extended for an additional six months.
  10. DLR must 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.
  11. An existing license is invalidated when a probationary license is issued.
  12. At the expiration of the probationary license, DLR will reinstate the original license for the remainder of its term, issue a new license, or revoke the original license.
  13. Probationary licenses will only be issued following staffing with the DLR Administrator and the AAG, with an agreement from the licensee.
  14. Upon approval as to form and content by the AAG, the DLR Area Administrator must sign and send the final letter by certified mail or other proper method of service to the licensee as provided in [RCW 43.20A.205](#).
  15. Licensees may request to be placed on a no referral status at any time.
  16. The licensee does not have appeal rights if DLR makes the decision not to issue a probationary license.
2. **Agency Staff Disqualification, or Licensing Denials, Suspensions or Revocations**  
The DLR worker must:
1. Consult with the AAG when considering agency staff disqualification, denial, suspension, or revocation, to determine legal sufficiency.
  2. Prepare a draft disqualification, denial, suspension, or revocation (as applicable) letter for review by the AAG when a determination is made to take adverse licensing action. The letter must include:
  3. Document a concise summary of the CPS or licensing allegations (if applicable), RCW, and WAC violations, findings, and conclusions.
  4. Document any corrective action attempted, if appropriate.
  5. Detailed citation of all applicable RCW/WAC violated.
  6. Complete information advising the licensee of their administrative hearing rights, including the filing process and timeframes.
  7. Send an approved letter by the AAG to the DLR Supervisor to sign and send to the DLR Area Administrator for final approval.
  8. Send the signed letter by certified mail or other proper method of service to the licensee. [RCW 43.20A.205](#)
  9. Send the DLR Administrator settlements to review and approve.
  10. Consult with the AAG when an Administrative Law Judge overturns the licensing action.

## 5170. Recruitment and Retention of Homes

Recruitment and retention activities are an on-going statewide 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 licensor. 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.

## **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. The foster family's ability to meet the child's cultural, linguistic, and religious needs. A foster family need not be of the same ethnic background as the child in order to meet the ethnic or cultural needs of a child. Unless CA staff identifies a compelling reason, CA staff will not match children on the basis of race to foster or adoptive families.
- D. In the case of behaviors that pose a danger to other children, a home that have either no children or children older than the child being placed.
- 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.

## **5182. Support Services**

1. 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 must 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.
2. The licensor informs the foster parents that they have access to peer support through the statewide 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.

3. 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 must 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.

## **5184. Foster Parent Liaison**

1. The legislature, in RCW 74.13.340, mandated that CA provide foster parent liaison positions throughout the state. See the CA Case Services Policy Manual, chapter 8000, section 8110. CA contracts with the liaison agencies to:
  1. Provide support, consultation, and assistance to foster parents in accessing the DCFS and DLR systems;
  2. Troubleshoot issues;
  3. Promote teamwork between the foster parent and the social worker; and
  4. Expedite the licensing process.
  5. See the specific foster parent liaison contract for additional details on services.
2. The CA social worker must refer the foster parent to a liaison in instances where the foster parent requests assistance from a liaison.

## **5190. Property Damage Reimbursement**

1. Within available funds and subject to such conditions and limitations as the department may establish, the department shall reimburse foster parents for property damaged or destroyed by foster children placed in their care.
2. The department shall establish by rule in the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) a maximum amount that may be reimbursed for each occurrence.
  1. The department shall reimburse the foster parent for the replacement value of any property covered by this section.
  2. If the damaged or destroyed property is covered and reimbursed under an insurance policy, the department shall reimburse foster parents for the amount of the deductible associated with the insurance claim, but to the limit per occurrence as established by CA. [RCW 74.14A.020](#); [RCW 74.13.335](#)

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

1. When a child is placed in out-of-home care, a due diligent search for the child's parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s) shall be initiated by the assigned social worker. The due diligent search shall continue until the child is legally free or the permanent plan for a child has been completed. The search for any custodial, non-custodial, or absent parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s) may include the following actions:
  1. When a child is placed in out of home care under a voluntary placement agreement, the parent or legal guardian(s) who signs the agreement must provide information regarding a child's other parent, legal guardian(s), or relatives.
  2. For a child placed by court order, the court order shall include specific language requiring the parent(s) or legal guardian to provide information regarding relatives (including absent parent(s) or legal guardians).
  3. If a parent(s) or legal guardian(s) does not provide information regarding other custodial, non-custodial, or absent parents, the child's social worker can access the Federal Parent Locator service which is available to Children's Administration through an Inter-Agency Data Sharing Agreement with the Division of Child Support (DCS). However, this service is not available for locating relatives. Children's Administration has designated employees (federal funding staff) in regional and field offices that have been approved to access the DCS Support Enforcement Management System (SEMS).
  4. Follow any relative search policy including searches in-state and out-of-state.
2. If the Children's Administration is unable to locate parent(s), relatives, and/or legal guardian(s) as stated in (1. a-c), then the social worker will document other reasonable efforts to locate custodial, non-custodial, absent parents, and/or legal guardians and other relatives.
3. Once a child is legally free, the due diligent search for the child's parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s) shall be terminated; however, CA shall continue to search for relatives as possible long term placement resources until the permanent plan is completed.

## **5201. Emergency Planning for Licensed and Unlicensed Caregivers**

### **Purpose**

1. To store current licensed and unlicensed caregiver(s) name, address and phone number and emergency contact information for all children in out-of-home care, in case of a disaster or emergency.

### **Policy**

1. The assigned DLR licensor (licensed placements) and the assigned Social Worker (unlicensed placements) will ensure the following information is documented in the information management system:

- a. Emergency Contact Name; Recommend One In-State and One Out-of-State Contact
  - b. Current Address for Caregiver and Emergency Contact Person(s)
  - c. Current Phone Number(s) for Caregiver and Emergency Contact Person(s) (As applicable)
2. The licensor and/or social worker as applicable is responsible for reviewing and updating this information as change occurs and at a minimum once a year.

## **Service Description**

1. After considering the custodial or the non-custodial parent as a placement resource, DCFS regards relatives to be the first priority for placement of children who are removed from their homes. The relatives must be assessed as being appropriate to the child's needs and capable and willing to cooperate with the case plan. The search for relatives shall continue as long as it is in the best interest of the child or until the permanent plan for a child has been completed. The social worker shall document all search efforts for relatives.
2. When a child is being placed through a voluntary placement agreement the social worker shall request from the parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s) information regarding relatives who could be considered as possible placement resources by the department.
3. For a child placed by court order, the court order shall include specific language requiring the parent(s) or legal guardian to provide information regarding relatives or other suitable persons who could be considered as possible placement resources by the department.

## **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 74.15.02

## **Procedures**

1. Relatives of the child exempt from licensing
  1. Persons related by blood, marriage, or legal adoption to the child, through the mother or presumed or biological father, including:
    1. Grandparent
    2. Step Parent
    3. Brother
    4. Step Brother
    5. Sister
    6. Step Sister
    7. Uncle
    8. Aunt
    9. Nephew

- 10. Niece
  - 11. First Cousin
  - 12. Second Cousin
2. Persons of preceding generations related by blood or adoption as denoted by prefixes of grand, great, and great-great.
  3. Spouses of the above persons, even after the marriage is terminated.
  4. Relatives of any half-sibling of the child as stated above.
  5. "Extended family members" as defined by law or custom of the Indian 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.
  6. Unless known to the child or family and approved for placement by the court, any other relatives, including relatives of alleged fathers, must be licensed if DCFS or a child placing agency makes or supervises the placement. See the Case Services Policy Manual, Appendix A, for the definition of "alleged father."
2. To consider a relative, who is exempt from licensing as a caretaker, the social worker completes a home study/assessment (per Section 45274 Relative Placement Home Study). 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.

## **5232. Maintenance Funding For the Placement**

1. Many relatives and suitable persons known to the child or family are eligible for Temporary Assistance to Needy Families ( ) or other payment source on behalf of the child. The licensed care giver may select foster care or TANF or other payments on behalf of the child in care.
2. If relatives or suitable persons are licensed as foster family homes they may receive state-funded or federally matched foster care payment as reimbursement for the care of the child.
3. 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. However, the licensed care provider may choose either TANF or foster care assistance without regard to eligibility for federal matching funds for costs of foster care.
4. The social worker follows the steps outlined in the Operations Manual, chapter 11000, on federal funding, for proper eligibility determination.
5. 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.

## 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.

# 5250. Caregiver Transportation and Mileage Reimbursement

## Purpose Statement

Support caregivers\* as important team members who have a vital role in meeting the individual needs of children. Establish requirements for reimbursing caregivers for mileage when transporting children in their care.

\*Caregivers include: Foster parents, relatives, and suitable persons

## Laws

[WAC 388-25-0090](#) - Foster care providers to whom the department makes reimbursement for services

Admin-Policy-19-10-04 Mileage - Mileage Reimbursement

## Policy

- A. CA reimburses mileage expenses to caregivers that meet the individual needs of children as identified in case planning for the child. The child's individual needs include safety, stability, education, or treatment.
- B. CA reimburses mileage expenses to caregivers for child related transportation for official state business when other resources are not available.

## Procedures

- A. CA will reimburse caregivers for transportation necessary to meet the needs of the child as identified through ongoing case planning. Reimbursements may include but is not limited to the following:
  - 1. Visitation with parents
  - 2. Visits with siblings
  - 3. Court hearings
  - 4. Court-ordered activities
  - 5. Medical, dental, counseling sessions or WIC appointments
  - 6. Attendance at child specific meetings and at the request of CA staff.
  - 7. Child specific State approved caregiver trainings are:
    - a. Trainings specific to the needs of the children in the home, and

- b. First aid and HIV/Blood Borne Pathogens training.
  8. Transportation to maintain educational stability or participation in school-related extracurricular activities
  9. Transportation by a respite provider to maintain continuity for the child's education or child care
  10. Transportation to and from respite, for mileage in excess of 10 miles each way
  11. Transportation to and from childcare, for mileage in excess of the caregiver's regular commute to work
  12. Transportation to and from the parent-child/sibling visit or appointment that is longer than 3 hours and the caregiver returns home
  13. Other transportation necessary to meet the needs of the child identified in ongoing case planning
- B. Transportation activities that are part of typical parenting and/or age development appropriate activities are not reimbursed. These activities include:
1. Haircuts
  2. Sports events
  3. Vacation
  4. Birthday parties
  5. School except as indicated above
  6. Recreational activities, practices or lessons
  7. Shopping
- C. Reimburse mileage when it is necessary to address the specific needs of a child as identified in their Individual Service and Safety Plan, service plan, or case notes.
- D. Review and verify the caregiver's explanation and purpose for the trip by completing the following steps:

Important: Mileage submitted after 90 days can not be reimbursed.

1. Document in the (office use only) box the appropriate number that matches the explanation the caregiver documented on the mileage form.
  2. Approve and sign the Caregiver Monthly Mileage form(s) and submit them to your regional business office per local instructions.
- E. Obtain Area Administrator prior approval for exceptions to mileage reimbursement only to meet the individual safety and stability needs of a child.
- F. Contact caregiver and discuss reasons for denying any or part of the reimbursement request. (Contact may be by email or phone)
- G. Obtain payment approvals for the following:
1. Transportation reimbursement requests up to \$300.00 require social worker and supervisor approval.
  2. Transportation reimbursement requests \$301.00 to \$500.00 also require Area Administrator approval.
  3. Transportation reimbursement requests of over \$500.00 also require Regional Business Manager approval.
  4. Send the approved Caregiver Monthly Mileage form to your Regional Fiduciary Specialist for payment.

## Forms and Tools

[DSHS 07-090 Caregiver Monthly Mileage form](#)

# **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 participates 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**

1. 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.
2. Child specific recruitment is designed to identify a family for a waiting child. The social worker may include the following activities:
  1. Present information about children from the WARE Bulletin and the Northwest Adoption Exchange () 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. Adoption Services Inquiries**

1. Refer all inquiries regarding adoption to a DLR supervisor.
2. All family inquiries regarding adoption shall be referred directly to the adoption worker.
  1. The worker will provide the caller with information on the adoption program of the agency.
  2. Information to be provided should include:
    - a. The requirement that foster and adoptive applicants (including relatives) need to attend Orientation. Two parent households will be encouraged to have both parents attend the Orientation.
    - b. Information on the dates, times and registration information.
    - c. 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.
    - d. 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.
    - e. The procedures for a family to follow in pursuing adoption through DCFS, the differences between foster parent, adoptive, and foster-adoptive placements.
    - f. The legal risk involved in foster-adoptive placements and the placement of legally free children under appeal.
    - g. The legal procedures involved in adoption, the roles and responsibilities of the family and the department in adoption.
  3. 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.
  4. 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.
  5. 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.
3. All departmental requests to initiate an adoptive home study for a foster parent, relative, or interstate adoptive placement must 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.
4. DCFS must not accept applications from persons:
  1. Receiving adoption services from another agency.
  2. Still in the process of finalizing the adoption of another child.



## **5340. Native American Adoptive Families**

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

1. Upon initial acceptance of a case for service, the social worker must seek to discover and document whether the involved child is of Indian ancestry. The social worker must do this in every case.
2. Each time the case is transferred from one worker or program to another, the social worker receiving the case must confirm that verification of Indian ancestry and tribal membership inquiry has previously been completed per ICW Chapter 3 policies and procedures.

## **5345. Indian Foster Homes**

### **Purpose and Scope**

This policy applies to Children's Administration (CA) Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and Division of Licensed Resources (DLR) staff involved in placement of foster children. The intent is to clarify that DLR is responsible for verifying the Indian status of foster parents.

### **Policy**

1. This policy requires the verification of Indian homes rather than self-identification of Indian status by foster parents. WAC 388-70-091 defines the term "Indian." WAC 388-70-093 states that documented efforts shall be made to avoid separating the Indian child from his parents, relatives, tribe or cultural heritage.
2. Indian Child Welfare (ICW) policies and procedures directs both DSHS and private agencies to verify American Indian Status of foster parents for the placement of Indian children. This policy directs DLR foster home licensors to verify American Indian status. DLR licensors are to follow the provisions set forth in the Indian Child Welfare policies and procedures and in the Federal Indian Child Welfare Act.

### **Definitions**

1. "Indian Foster home" is defined as a home in which at least one of the foster parents is a member of a federally recognized Indian tribe, including Eskimo, Aleut, or other Alaska Native or eligible for membership in a federally recognized tribe including Eskimo, Aleut, or other Alaska Native. The form for providing verification of Indian

Status is located in Chapter 13 of the Indian Child Welfare Manual (DSHS form 15-128).

2. "Canadian Indian Foster Home" is defined as a home in which at least one of the foster parents is a member of a Canadian First Nations Tribe, a Metis Community, or a nonstatus Indian community from Canada.
3. "Unenrolled Indian Foster Home" is defined as a home in which at least one of the foster parents who does not meet the definition of an Indian foster home or Canadian Indian Foster home is considered to be Indian by a federally or non-federally recognized Indian tribe or off-reservation Indian/Alaska Native community organization regardless of enrollment or membership status.

## **Procedures**

1. Verification of Indian Status
  1. DLR staff are to ensure compliance with Section 7.05, (B), (3 and 4) of the Indian Child Welfare Manual. The placement preference order for Indian children is not affected by this policy. See the Indian Child Welfare Manual Section 7.05 for policy regarding placement of Indian children.
  2. DLR will verify the Indian status of every foster home licensed. DLR will document whether the home has been verified as an "Indian Foster Home", a "Canadian Indian Foster Home, or an "Unenrolled Indian Foster home".
  3. The form for providing verification of Indian Status is located in Chapter 13 of the Indian Child Welfare Manual (DSHS form 15-128). Please use this verification form to identify foster parents as Indian. The home study and reassessment needs to document verification.
  4. Self-identification of Indian status is not sufficient to consider a foster parent Indian; rather, Indian status must be verified. If the foster parent cannot verify Indian status, the home study is to reflect non-verification even though the foster parent self-identifies as Indian. The home study should state this home has not been verified as an Indian foster home for ICW purposes.
  5. The foster home study shall address Indian status and include verification used to document Indian status in the homestudy.
  6. DLR will document verification of Indian Foster Home in CAMIS.
2. Reporting requirements
  1. Self-identification of Indian status is not sufficient to consider a foster parent Indian. Reports shall not identify a foster home as an Indian foster home unless there is proper verification.
  2. Reports under DSHS Administrative Policy 7.01 are to reflect the number of Indian homes that have verified Indian status. Any reference to Indian homes in DLR reports must have verified the Indian status of the foster parents.

## **5350. WARE Withdrawal**

1. DCFS must 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.
2. 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 must inform the family at any time the family is withdrawn from WARE.
  3. 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.

## 5361. Pre-Adoption Disclosure

### Purpose

Provide prospective adoptive parent(s) with all known and available medical and social information regarding a child and birth family.

### Laws

[RCW 26.33.350](#)

[RCW 26.33.380](#)

[RCW 70.24.105](#)

[WAC 388-27-0090](#)

[WAC 388-27-0100](#)

### Policy

- A. CA must make reasonable efforts to disclose medical, education, family and social background history on the child and birth parents.
- B. Child and birth family information must be documented on the Child's Family & Medical Background Form (DSHS 13-041).
- C. CA must share non-identifying child and birth family information with a prospective adoptive parent/s prior to an adoptive placement.

- D. Information provided to a prospective family must be kept confidential per [Operations Manual 3230 Confidentiality Policy](#) and must be redacted unless the identifying information is known.

## Procedures

- A. An adoptive placement occurs when the:
1. Department has written to the prospective adoptive parents, expressly stating that the adoptive parents have been selected as the prospective adoptive home for a particular child, and

**Note:** Once family is identified as the adoptive family CA must share all known information per procedure A.

2. Prospective adoptive parent/s has an approved adoptive home study per PP-5330 Home Study Assessment for Foster, Adoptive and Relative Caregivers Policy; or
3. Child is legally free; or
4. The termination of Parental rights has been filed with the court.

B. Medical and Education

1. Provide known information to adoptive families that includes the following:
  - a. Copies of all children's medical and educational information, including CHET, Passport, FCAP, etc.

**Note:** Medical information must remain confidential per [Case Services 4120 Confidentiality Policy](#).

- b. The Health/Mental Health and Education Summary
- c. Birth parent health and education documentation includes the following:
  - i. Redacted copies of the social history information in the psychological and drug/alcohol evaluation when there is social history information on the birth parent and/or the birth family.
- d. Sibling health and education information documented on the child's DSHS 13-041.

C. Legal

1. Provide legal documents that include the following:
  - a. Current legal and placement information
  - b. Most recent Guardian at Litem (GAL) report
  - c. The most recent report to the court. The report to the court is shared with all Caregiver(s) outlined in Practices and Procedure [4413 Placement Services](#).
    - i. Dependency Petition
    - ii. Termination Petition
  - d. Court orders from the following court hearings:
    - i. Dependency Findings of Facts and Conclusions
    - ii. Termination Orders Findings of Fact

iii. If an Appellate Court upheld termination of parental rights, note this on the 13-041 with the date of the decision.

D. Other information to be disclosed includes:

1. One copy of all redacted case notes beginning with CA's involvement with the child to present
2. Referral history beginning with CA's involvement with the child to present

**NOTE:** Throughout the life of a case some information is already shared with the caregiver. The items identified in this policy must be provided again for pre-adoption disclosure.

## **5362. Placement Selection and Decision**

1. 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:
  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.
  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.
2. The professional staff of the CA office with administrative responsibility for the child makes the final decision on placement of a child with an adoptive family. 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 CA professional staff considers 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, linguistic, and religious needs of the child. An adoptive family need not be of the same ethnic background as the child in order to meet the ethnic or cultural needs of the child. Unless CA staff identifies a compelling reason, the social worker will not match children on the basis of race to adoptive parents.
  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:

- 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.
3. 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.
  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**

1. The purpose of post-placement services is to support continuing placement of the child in the family by providing needed services or referrals.
2. 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. The social worker must document these activities in the case SER.

2. Information and referral to community resources.
  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 must note the family's response in the child's file. The worker must 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.
3. 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.
  4. An attorney retained by the adoptive family files the adoption petition. 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. The documents include:
    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.
    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.
  5. The assigned social worker completes court work that includes:
    1. Dependency reviews until adoption is finalized.
    2. Individual Service and Safety 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.

## **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.

## **5392. Post-Adoption Services**

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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.



# 5400. CHILD CARE

## Purpose

To provide safe, quality child care to meet the needs of the family, and promote safety, permanency and well-being. **Laws**

[WAC 388-165-210](#)

[WAC 388-165-108](#)

[WAC 388-165-235](#)

## Policy

1. Prior to authorizing payment for child care, social workers must verify:
  1. The child has an open CA case; and
  2. The child is 12 years old or younger, or is under age 19 with verified special needs per [WAC 388-165-210](#); and
  3. The child's case plan identifies the need for child care and is based on the needs of the family.
2. Social workers must verify that child care services are provided by a qualified provider per [WAC 388-165-108](#) and [WAC 388-165-235](#).
3. Planned Terminations - Social workers must provide a verbal and/or written notice (email or letter) to the child care provider at least ten (10) calendar days prior to the planned termination date.
4. Unplanned Terminations - In the event of an unplanned termination (e.g., child's placement changes or court order), social workers must notify the provider as soon as possible and reimburse providers for child care services provided.

## Procedures

### A. Child Care for Children Placed in Out-of-Home Care

The social worker will:

1. Use Early Head Start, Head Start or Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP), when available, as the first option over CA funded child care for children birth-5 years old.
2. Authorize funding for part-time or full-time child care (depending on need) for:
  - a. Caregivers who have on-going commitments, such as part-time or full-time employment, or continuing education to maintain employment.
  - b. Extra-ordinary circumstances that require child care (e.g. a child enrolled in a child care program who needs continuity of care between placements or short-term employment transition of caregiver).

Note: CA is responsible to provide child care for children with open CA cases not the Economic Services Administration/Community Services Office (CSO) Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) program.

3. **Not authorize** child care funding for:
  1. A two-parent caregiver family when one parent is employed and the other parent is not employed and at home.
  2. A two-parent caregiver family when both parents are not employed and at home.
  3. Caregivers requesting child care for placement stabilization (in these cases, respite or other services should be offered).
4. Develop a Child Care Program Agreement form (DSHS 15-397), obtain the caregiver's signature and include the agreement in the case plan.

*Note: This agreement requires the caregiver to notify the social worker of any changes in status that might warrant a change in child care authorization (e.g. employed to unemployed).*

#### B. Child Care for Children Living in Their Own Home

The social worker will:

1. Only approve child care funding for children living in their own homes when necessary to address safety issues or prevent out of home placement.
2. Use Early Head Start, Head Start or Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP), when available, as the first option over CA funded childcare for children birth-5 years old.
3. Develop a Child Care Program Agreement form (DSHS 15-397), obtain the caregiver's signature on the agreement and include the agreement in the case plan.

*Note: This agreement requires the caregiver to notify the social worker of any changes in status that might warrant a change in child care authorization (e.g. employed to unemployed).*

#### C. Payment for Licensed Child Care

The social worker will only authorize payment for licensed child care when one of the following criteria is met:

1. The facility providing the center-based child care program is licensed by Department of Early Learning (DEL) or the equivalent agency in another state.
2. The licensed family home providing the child care is licensed by DEL or the equivalent agency in another state

3. If a child care program or family home is exempted from the licensing requirements by DEL (military, public schools or Tribal Nations), the home or center must be certified by DEL or equivalent agency in another state.
- D. Payment for Unlicensed Family, Friends, and Neighbors (FFN) Child Care

The social worker will:

1. Authorize payment for child care services to an unlicensed home only when the provider is:
    - . A person unrelated to the child providing child care in the child's own home; or
    - a. A relative (specified below), who lives outside the child's home, and provides child care in the child's home or in the relative's own home. Approved relative relations, includes:
      - i. Grandmother or grandfather
      - ii. Aunt or uncle
      - iii. Cousin
      - iv. Adult siblings not living with the child's parent(s).
  2. Consider the family's culture, which may support a broader definition for relative. Authorizations for other degrees of relationship are approved on a case-by-case basis, and may include, but are not limited to, great and great-great grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc.
  3. **Not authorize** child care payment when provided by the following relatives:
    0. Father or Mother
    1. Siblings living with either parent, or siblings under the age of 18
    2. Stepfather or stepmother,
    3. Step siblings living with either parent, or step-siblings under the age of 18.
  4. Verify and document the following to approve the unlicensed FFN provider:
    - . The age, maturity, and suitability of the caregiver. The caregiver must be 18 years of age or older, and of sufficient physical, emotional, and mental health to meet the needs of the child.
    - a. Completion of a background check per policy ([5513 BCCU Background Check Policy](#)).
  5. Obtain the parent/guardian signature on the Child Care Program Agreement (DSHS 15-397) and follow the requirements of [WAC 388-165-235](#).
- E. Planned Terminations - Licensed Child Care Center, licensed family home or unlicensed Family, Friends, and Neighbors

The social worker will:

1. Provide child care providers with notice of termination at least ten (10) calendar days prior to the planned termination date. Notice of termination will be provided in one of the following ways:
  - . Verbally

- a. Written notice using the DSHS form 10-433 Child Care Planned Termination; or
  - b. e-mail (The provider email list is posted on Children's Administration intranet under Policy tab on the CA home page)
2. Document all verbal, written or e-mail notice of terminations in FamLink case notes.
  3. Ensure payment authorization in FamLink is terminated and document termination in a case note in FamLink within three days of the termination.
- F. Unplanned Terminations** - Licensed child care center, Licensed family home and Unlicensed Family, Friends, and Neighbor (e.g. unplanned placement change or court order) The social worker will:
1. Notify the provider as soon as possible of the termination and document all verbal, written or e-mail notice of unplanned termination in FamLink case notes.
  2. Reimburse the provider for any child care services provided in the event of an unplanned termination.

*Note: Providers may request reasonable compensation when they have incurred costs in anticipation of providing ongoing child care (e.g. extra staffing for a special needs child) to a child who has been subject to an unplanned termination.*

3. Ensure payment authorization in FamLink is terminated and document termination in a case note in FamLink within three days of the termination.

## **Forms and Tools**

- Child Care Planned Termination form DSHS 10-433
- The provider email list is posted on Children's Administration intranet under the Policy tab on the CA home page
- Child Care Program Agreement (DSHS 15-397)

## **5420. Licensed Child Day Care Providers**

Supportive to DCFS client families, child day care licensing is administered by the DLR Such facilities include:

- A. Child Care Center-A Child Care Center cares for 13 or more children in an out-of-home facility and must be licensed by DSHS.
- B. Family Child Care Home-A Family Child Care Home cares for up to 12 children in a family home and must be licensed by DSHS.

## **5500. INDIVIDUALS ENGAGED BY CA**

## **Service Description**

Volunteers, students, interns, and any other individual, whether paid or unpaid, engaged by CA 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.

## **Eligibility**

Prospective employees or volunteers will have appropriately clear criminal history and CA 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 must possess a valid driver's license recognized by the state of Washington along with adequate insurance coverage.

## **Procedures**

1. The social worker or Community Resource Program Manager must 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. As part of the criminal background check, the worker must contact local law enforcement agencies, including tribal police if the person resides or has resided on an Indian reservation or is known to be or may be affiliated with a particular Tribe.
2. The worker completes a review of CA records that may exist, including a CAMIS inquiry.
3. Local or regional procedures may designate a specific person other than the social worker to complete the above steps.
4. Approved applicants for volunteer or paid positions shall complete any required documentation applicable to the service they are providing.

## **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 on the Placement of Children**

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Effective Date:** July 1984

**Revised Date:** October 31, 2014

## Purpose

The Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) governs the arrangement of all placements of children in CA care who cross state boundaries.

## Laws

[RCW Chapter 26.34 Interstate Compacts on Placement of Children](#)

[Safe & Timely Interstate Placement of Foster Children Act of 2006 H. R. 5403](#)

## Policy

1. HQ ICPC is responsible for administering and overseeing of the Compact to ensure compliance with federal and state regulations.
2. Children requiring ICPC in or out-of-state placement must be placed in a safe and suitable environment, and with persons or facilities meeting qualifications of the state where the child is located, to provide for the care of the child.
3. Child safety, permanency and well-being must be the focus throughout the home study process, supervision and ICPC closure.
4. ICPC Offices are responsible for monitoring licensed group care facilities as guided by the Compact:
  1. Approving placement prior to sending the child.
  2. Monitoring the facility while the child is placed there.
  3. Preventing abandonment of a child in a residential facility in another state.
5. ICPC must be followed when a child is placed across state lines in the following situations:
  1. Relatives or foster care placements for public child welfare agencies.
  2. Parent placement unless the court has found the parent to be fit and the placement with the parent is in the child's best interest as determined by the court.
  3. Adoption, including public child welfare agency and private independent adoptions.
  4. Group Care or Residential placements, public child agency and private parent placements.
6. CA worker must notify HQ ICPC immediately if:
  1. A placement is disrupting and whether services are recommended to assist in stabilizing the placement, e.g., individual or family counseling, crisis intervention services, etc.
  2. A child is removed or can no longer remain in the approved placement home.
  3. Any intake received on a child placed in or out-of-state on an ICPC placement resource.

7. The ICPC is violated in the following situations:
  1. Placing a child in or out-of-Washington without ICPC approval.
  2. Extending a visit.
  3. Establishing a permanent plan without HQ ICPC concurrence.
  4. Parents moving into an approved ICPC placement without HQ ICPC approval.
8. Consequences if the compact is not followed (applies to in or out-of-state ICPC placements):
  1. A child may need to return to the state that has jurisdiction.
  2. A child in another state without ICPC approval does not receive courtesy supervision or services.
  3. ICPC request may not be processed or denied.
  4. Sanctions

## **Resources**

ICPC Regulations- issued by the Association of Administrators of the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children

# **5601. Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children Placed Out-of-State**

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Effective Date:** July 1984

**Revised Date:** October 31, 2014

**Sunset Review:** October 31, 2018

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## **Purpose**

To seek a safe and suitable placement resource and courtesy supervision for a Washington State child placed out-of-state through the Interstate Compact.

## **Laws**

[RCW Chapter 26.34 Interstate Compacts on Placement of Children](#)

[Safe & Timely Interstate Placement of Foster Children Act of 2006 H. R. 5403](#)

## **Policy**

## 1. ICPC Out-of-State

### 1. Request and Approval Process

1. An ICPC request and approval is required prior to:
  1. Sending a **dependent** child out-of-state for placement with the following:
    1. Biological parent(s) - unless the court has found the parent to be fit and that placement with the parent is in the child's best interest.
    2. Relative(s)
    3. Foster home
    4. Adoptive home
    5. Residential program or group care facility.
  2. Sending an Indian child out-of-state if Children's Administration (CA) has jurisdiction **or** the Tribe has jurisdiction and would like to request an ICPC. The Tribe must agree to follow the content of the ICPC and the receiving state/Tribe agrees to complete the ICPC process as a courtesy.
2. CA worker must contact the Washington State probation or parole office when a child is on probation or parole to verify the applicability of Interstate Compact on Juveniles prior to submitting an ICPC request.
3. HQ ICPC must receive approval from the receiving state's ICPC Compact Administrator or alternate prior to a child's out-of-state placement.
4. States may choose to contract out their ICPC home study or courtesy supervision services. Washington State cannot impose any restrictions on another state's decision to contract out for these services.

### 2. Placement

1. CA worker must place a child in an out-of-state placement within **six months** of the placement approval date on the [ICPC Placement Request - 100A DSHS 15-092](#).
2. CA maintains jurisdiction after a child is placed out-of-state and is responsible for the case work and financial obligations including medical and educational expenses.
3. CA worker must request [monthly health and safety visits](#) from the receiving state.
4. HQ ICPC receives Supervision Reports quarterly from the receiving state for a child in an approved parent, relative, foster or adoptive ICPC out-of-state placement. HQ forwards the report to the CA worker.
5. A child placed out-of-state must return to Washington State within **5 business days** if the receiving state requests return.
6. CA worker must notify HQ ICPC if an ICPC violation has occurred and work diligently to come into ICPC compliance. Coming into compliance could include:
  1. Submitting an ICPC request to CA HQ.
  2. Returning a child to Washington State.
7. HQ ICPC must maintain the ICPC record in FamLink.



8. Written concurrence from the receiving state's ICPC office must be received prior to finalizing a permanent plan, changing a placement, or transferring custody.
3. **Closing an ICPC**

HQ ICPC closes the ICPC case when any of the following occur:

1. A permanent plan for the child is achieved which occurs only after a period of supervision, placement stability and by agreement of the receiving state's ICPC office.
2. A child is no longer placed in an approved placement.
3. An approved ICPC placement will not be used.

## Procedures

### 1. ICPC Out-of-State

#### 1. Request and Approval Process

1. CA worker submits a completed [ICPC Placement Request - 100A DSHS 15-092](#) with supporting documents (See checklist located on the ICPC page on the CA Intranet) to HQ ICPC.
2. HQ ICPC reviews and forwards the ICPC packet to the receiving state.
3. CA worker must receive the following from HQ ICPC before placing a child out-of-state.
  1. An approved Home Study (not required for residential/group care).
  2. Approved and signed [ICPC Placement Request - 100A DSHS 15-092](#)
4. CA worker must review the receiving state's home study to determine whether it adequately evaluates the safety, suitability and competence of the caregiver(s). Note: home study requirements vary in each state and are completed according to the laws and regulations of the receiving state, e.g., fingerprint based background checks for relative placements are not completed in every state.
5. CA worker may resubmit a placement request to HQ ICPC if the placement request is denied and the reasons for denial have been corrected. The receiving state may, at its discretion, accept the new request.
6. CA worker submits the [ICPC Report on Child's Placement Date or Change of Placement- 100B](#) if the approved placement **will not** be used.

#### 2. Placement

1. CA worker submits the [ICPC Report on Child's Placement Date or Change of Placement- 100B](#) within **5 business days** of placement to HQ ICPC.
2. HQ ICPC forwards the 100B form to the receiving state.
3. CA worker is responsible for travel per [Travel Policy](#).

4. CA worker initiates foster care payment for a child placed in an approved foster placement.
  5. HQ ICPC forwards quarterly supervision reports for parent, relative, foster and adoptive homes to the CA worker.
  6. CA worker must contract for health and safety visits for children in group care or as otherwise required and not provided.
  7. CA worker must review supervision reports to assist in case planning, and to initiate any services that would benefit the placement.
  8. CA worker must work with his/her regional contracts manager to initiate and pay for services out-of-state.
  9. CA worker must notify HQ ICPC if an **ICPC violation** has occurred and work diligently to come into ICPC compliance. This could include:
    1. Submitting an ICPC request.
    2. Returning a child to Washington State.
  10. CA worker must request written concurrence through HQ ICPC. **Concurrence** only occurs after a period of supervision and placement stability.
3. **Closing an ICPC**
1. CA worker receives concurrence from the receiving state ICPC office, completes the permanent plan and submits the 100B and appropriate court order to HQ ICPC.
  2. CA worker submits 100B when a child returns to Washington State, the approved placement is not utilized or a child is no longer in the approved ICPC placement.
  3. HQ ICPC forwards the 100B and court order to the receiving state ICPC office to close the compact agreement.

## Forms and Tools

- [ICPC Placement Request DSHS 15-092](#)
- ICPC Report on Child's Placement Date or Change of Placement 100B [DSHS 15-093](#)
- [Statement of CA Worker DSHS 10-491](#)
- ICPC closure letter [DSHS 27-104](#)

ICPC Page on the CA Intranet

- ICPC Checklist
- Financial and Medical Plan
- Border Agreement

## Resources

- [WAC 388-25-0200: What payment procedures must the department follow for children placed across state borders?](#)
- Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance (ICAMA)
- Interstate Compact for Juveniles (ICJ) [RCW 13.24](#)

# 5602. Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children Placed in Washington State

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Effective Date:** July 1984

**Revised Date:** October 31, 2014

**Sunset Review:** October 31, 2018

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## Purpose

To assess the safety and suitability of a placement resource and provide courtesy supervision at the request of a sending state for a child placed through interstate Compact in parent, relative, foster and adoptive homes in Washington State.

## Laws

[RCW Chapter 26.34 Interstate Compacts on Placement of Children](#)

[Safe & Timely Interstate Placement of Foster Children Act of 2006 H. R. 5403](#)

## Policy

### 1. ICPC In-State

#### 1. Request and Approval Process

1. CA HQ ICPC receives a written request from another state to assess a placement resource.
2. HQ ICPC approval is required before a child is placed in Washington State.
3. HQ ICPC must document the placement request information in the ICPC record.
4. Washington State may choose to contract out its ICPC home study or courtesy supervision services.

#### 2. Placement

1. The sending state must place a child in Washington **within six months** of the placement approval date noted on the 100A form.
2. The sending agency maintains jurisdiction and is responsible for the case work and financial obligations for the placement.
3. CA worker must complete [monthly health and safety visits](#).

4. CA worker determines the placement no longer meets the needs of the child. The child may be removed from his or her home and placed in a safe and appropriate setting. The CA worker will notify HQ ICPC and the sending state.
  5. CA worker must submit quarterly supervision reports for biological parent, relative, foster or adoptive homes to the HQ ICPC office. HQ ICPC sends quarterly supervision reports to the sending state's ICPC office.
  6. HQ ICPC can request a child return to the sending state within **5 business days** if the placement is no longer in the best interest of the child.
  7. The sending state cannot move toward finalizing a permanent plan until a period of supervision, placement stability and with a written recommendation from HQ ICPC.
3. **Closing an ICPC**

HQ ICPC closes the compact agreement when any of the following are met:

1. A permanent plan for a child is achieved which occurs only after a period of supervision, placement stability and with agreement from HQ ICPC.
2. A child is no longer placed in an approved placement.
3. An approved ICPC placement will not be used.

## Procedures

### 1. ICPC In-State

#### 1. Request and Approval Process

1. HQ ICPC receives the home study request and sends it to Central Intake for a non-CPS intake and case creation.
2. HQ ICPC sends the home study request to the Washington State local office for assignment.
  1. Division of Licensed Resources completes relative, foster and adoptive home studies following the Family Home Study Guide.
  2. Division of Children and Family Services completes the parent home study using the Parent Home Study Guide.
3. CA worker sends the completed home study with placement recommendations by the due date on the ICPC request. If the home study is not completed by the due date, a preliminary report or **closing letter** must be provided.
4. The completed home study or closure letter is due no later than **180 calendar days** after assignment.
5. HQ ICPC will send the home study or closure letter and 100A placement decision to the sending state.

#### 2. Placement

1. HQ ICPC sends notification to the local supervisor to begin supervision.

2. Local office supervisor assigns the case for courtesy supervision.
  3. CA worker must complete the first [health and safety](#) visit no more than **30 calendar days** after HQ ICPC case assignment to the local office is made. Continue monthly visits until HQ ICPC provides written notification to stop courtesy supervision.
  4. CA worker may remove the child and place he or she in a safe and appropriate placement if the ICPC placement no longer meets the needs of the child.
    1. CA worker must notify HQ ICPC and the sending state immediately.
    2. CA worker may place the child in a licensed facility or with relative or suitable persons using the [Unlicensed Placements under Emergent and Urgent Circumstances](#) procedures.
    3. In cases where the placement resource is uncooperative, and present danger exists, the CA worker must take a [protective action](#).
    4. If a shelter care hearing is held, inform the court that the child is placed in Washington State pursuant to ICPC and that another state maintains legal jurisdiction. CA, the sending state and courts will work together until the child is returned to the sending state.
  5. CA worker must complete a quarterly supervision report and send to HQ ICPC within **10 business days** after the last home visit of the quarter. HQ ICPC forwards the report to the sending state. HQ ICPC requests a written recommendation from CA worker regarding finalization of the permanent plan upon the request of sending state.
  6. HQ ICPC reviews recommendations and provides written decision to the sending state and the finalization of the permanent plan can occur.
  7. HQ ICPC will inform the sending state ICPC office of any placement concerns.
3. **Closing an ICPC**
1. HQ ICPC notifies the CA worker of ICPC case closure when:
    1. A permanent plan is achieved and the 100B form and/or court order is received.
    2. Placement is no longer in the child's best interest and notification was provided to the sending state of compact termination.
    3. A child returns to the sending state.
  2. HQ ICPC will provide written notification to the CA Worker when the ICPC is closed.
  3. HQ ICPC closes the FamLink case.

## Forms and Tools

- ICPC closure letter DSHS 27-104
- ICPC Parent Home Study DSHS

- Family Home Study DSHS 10-043

ICPC Page on the CA Intranet

- Quarterly Supervision Form
- Border agreement
- ICPC Parent Home Study Guide

## Resources

- Family Home Study Guide for Social Service Specialists on the DLR page on the CA Intranet
- Interstate Compact for Juveniles (ICJ)[RCW 13.24](#)
- Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance (ICAMA)

# 5650. Considerations & Notification for Placement Moves

## Purpose

Children's Administration supports early concurrent planning and the permanent placement of children by minimizing placements moves for children in out of home care, partnering with caregivers to support timely permanency and shared decision making.

## Laws

[RCW 74.13.300](#)

[RCW 74.14A.020](#)

## Policy

- A. CA staff must minimize placement moves for children in out of home care. When determining if a child should be moved, CA staff must consider the safety of the child, the child's permanent plan and the child's best interest.
- B. Caregivers must be notified when the decision is made to move a child. Notification must be at least five (5) days prior to moving a child. When a child must move prior to the five (5) day notice, notice must be given to the caregiver as soon as possible.

## Procedures

NOTE: When a child must move prior to the five (5) day written notice, notice must be given to the family as soon as possible.

1. Prior to requesting a placement change for a child in out of home care, the CA staff must complete the following steps:
  1. Consult with his/her supervisor regarding recommendations to move a child.
  2. Follow procedures in the [Indian Child Welfare Manual](#) if the child is an Indian child
  3. Conduct a Family Team Decision Meeting (FTDM) or Shared Planning Meeting to discuss:
    1. If the placement is in the child's best interest
    2. What supports could be used to sustain the placement so that it can be a permanent placement resource or until the child/youth is placed with a permanent family
    3. How the placement move will support the achievement of the child's permanent plan.
2. CA staff will notify caregivers when a decision is made to move a child. At least five (5) days prior to moving the child, CA staff must provide written notification of the child's proposed move to the current caregiver by completing and sending DSHS 27-082 unless:
  1. The child has resided in the placement for less than 90 days
  2. Safety concerns prevent the child from remaining in the current placement
  3. The child is being returned home
  4. A court order requires an immediate change in placement
  5. The child is residing in a receiving home or a group home.
3. When a caregiver is requesting the immediate removal of a child, CA staff will complete the following steps:
  1. Conduct a Family Team Decision Meeting (FTDM) or Shared Planning Meeting to discuss:
    1. If the placement is in the child's best interest
    2. Possible supports to create a permanent placement resource or until the child/youth is placed with a permanent family
    3. How the placement move will support achievement of the child's permanent plan.
  2. Explore services available to stabilize the child in the current placement, including:
    - a. Respite
    - b. [Therapeutic Intervention](#)
    - c. Other stabilization services and supports.
  3. Review relatives, non-related kin (suitable persons), and siblings' placements as possible placement resources.
4. CA staff will document all child placement decisions and discussions in the electronic case file.

## **Forms and Tools**

[Five Day Notification to Move \(DSHS 27-082\)](#)

# 5700. Adoption Support

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:** 1971

**Revised Date:** January 31, 2016

**Sunset Review:** January 31, 2020

## Purpose

To provide support to adoptive families interested in adopting children with special needs in order to remove the barriers that would prevent adoption.

## Laws

[RCW 74.13A.005](#)

[RCW 74.13A.020\(3\)\(c\)](#)

PL 96-272 Adoption support and Child Welfare Act of 1980

PL 110-351: Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008

42 U.S.C. 673

## Scope

This policy applies to all Children's Administration (CA) adoption caseworkers and adoption support workers.

## Policy

### 1. Determining Adoption Support Eligibility and Special Needs

The adoption support worker will:

1. Determine the child is eligible for adoption support when it is in the child's best interest and the child:
  1. Is younger than age 18 when the department and the adoptive parent sign the adoption support agreement and the adoption is finalized.
  2. Is legally free for adoption or eligible for a customary adoption.
  3. Has a special condition according to [WAC 388-27-0140](#) that creates a barrier to adoption for one or more of the following reasons:
    1. A diagnosis of a physical, mental, developmental, cognitive or emotional disability;



2. Race or ethnicity;
  3. Six years of age or older at the time of adoption;
  4. Being a part of a sibling group (three or more); or if a sibling group of two, at least one sibling has a disability or meets the special needs criteria;
  5. Was previously adopted and eligible for Title IVE reimbursement; or
  6. At risk for a physical, emotional or disabling condition.
4. Is not the biological child of the adopting family whose rights were previously terminated.
2. Determine the child meets one of the following Washington state or federal eligibility criteria:
    1. Is in state-funded foster care or child caring institution, or likely to be placed in out-of-home care; or
    2. Is eligible for federally funded adoption support as defined in Title IVE of the Social Security Act.
  3. Identify reasonable efforts were made to adopt the child without adoption support. Efforts include, but are not limited to:
    1. Registration with Washington Adoption Resource Exchange (WARE) for 90 days or longer without an appropriate family being identified.
    2. Efforts to find adoptive parent able to adopt without adoption support were made.
    3. Determination of the selected adoptive parent inability to adopt without assistance.
    4. Determination that it is against the child's best interest to search for another adoptive parent, i.e., relative of specified degree, etc.
  4. Complete the adoption support negotiation and document in the court's adoptive legal file prior to adoption finalization.
  5. Eligibility for adoption support is determined without regard to income. [WAC 388-27-0155](#)
2. **Reviewing, Negotiating and Implementing the Initial Adoption Support Agreement**
    1. Within 30 calendar days of receiving a completed application packet, the adoption support worker will contact the family.
    2. The adoption caseworker will:
      1. Submit separate applications for each child being adopted.
      2. Complete application packets with the following documentation in paper format. Application materials provided by the adoptive parent include:
        1. Application for Adoption Support Program and/or Reimbursement of Adoption Finalization Costs form DSHS 09-998
        2. Adoption Support Worksheet DSHS 09-997
        3. Federal IRS form 1040
      3. Complete application packets with the following in electronic format, or for non-CA applications, in paper format:

1. Adoption Support Child Registration form DSHS 10-061 completed by the assigned adoption worker,
  2. Adoptive Home Study
  3. Verification of Termination of Parental Rights
  4. Verification of child's birth (Birth Certificate or Department of Health or Department of Social and Health Services)
  5. Verification of child's Social Security number (Social Security Administration) or Automated Client Eligibility System (ACES)
  6. Verification of the child's special needs condition.
  7. Signed Child's Medical and Family Background Report form DSHS 13-041 without attachments [WAC 388-27-0165](#)
3. The adoption support worker will:
1. Negotiate with the adoptive parent to:
    1. Determine the adoption support monthly cash payment through an agreement between the adoptive parent and the agency, considering the family circumstances and needs of the child. [RCW 74.13A.025](#); [WAC 388-27-0230](#); ACYF-PIQ-86-05
    2. Finalize the development of the initial adoption support agreement which includes:
      1. Medicaid
      2. Non-Recurring costs (Reimbursed up to \$1500 for specified adoption related expenses) [RCW 74.13A.060](#)
      3. Pre-Authorized counseling (available upon request of the parent and if the provider meets program requirements)
      4. Monthly cash payment (a negotiated amount that may be available to remove barriers to adoption).
    3. Verify the monthly cash payment does not exceed 80% of the **foster care maintenance expense**. [RCW 74.13A.047](#).
    4. Coordinate with the assigned adoption worker to complete a request for exceptional adoption support if the monthly cash payment request exceeds 80% of the top **foster care rate** for the child's age.
    5. Contact the adoption support program manager if the adoption support worker and the adoptive parent do not agree on the terms of adoption support agreement. The adoption support program manager will assist the adoption support worker in setting the level of support.
    6. Send the adoptive parent a determination notice when there is a disagreement on the adoption support agreement.
    7. Make continuing payments, lump sum payments, or both. [RCW 74.13A.030](#).
    8. Initiate the Medicaid, pre-authorized counseling, non-recurring costs, and/or monthly cash payment after receiving the adoption decree, if applicable.
    9. Continue medical coverage, pre-authorized counseling, and monthly cash payments if the family moves out of state.

10. Notify the prospective adoptive parent in writing if the adoption support application is denied and include information about the adoptive parent rights if he or she disagrees with CA's decision. [RCW 74.13A.055](#); [WAC 388-27-0365](#).

**3. Determining On-Going Eligibility for Adoption Support for a Youth age 18 and Older**

The adoption support worker will only authorize adoption support beyond a child's 18th birthday when the adopted child qualifies for ongoing eligibility. To be eligible, the child must:

1. Be attending a full time instructional program leading to a high school diploma or a General Education Development certificate (G.E.D.)/High School Equivalency Certificate (HSEC) and a request for continued adoption support is made by the adoptive parents prior to the child's 18th birthday, or
2. Been adopted at or after the age 16 and the child meets one of the following criteria for post adoption support:
  1. Attending high school or working on high school equivalency certificate.
  2. Enrolled in college or vocational education program.
  3. Employed at least 80 hours per month.
  4. Participating in a program designed to promote or eliminate barrier to employment.
  5. Unable to participate in the above due to a documented medical condition (as of July 2016). [RCW 74.13.031 \(11\)](#)

**4. Reviewing a Request to Change Existing Adoption Support**

The adoption support worker will:

1. Review the following information to negotiate a change in the adoption support agreement when a request to change the existing agreement is received:
  1. The Adoption Support Agreement Review Form.
  2. Most recent IRS Form 1040 or financial statement.
  3. Documentation of any change in the child's diagnosis or treatment recommendations, or a current diagnosis or treatment recommendations.
  4. Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) or medical and treatment recommendations.
  5. Documentation of mental health, educational, or additional supervision supports.
2. Contact the adoptive parent no later than 30 calendar days after a request to change the existing agreement is received.
3. Sign a new agreement with the adoptive parents if CA agrees to modify the initial adoption support agreement. [RCW 74.13A.030](#).
4. Make changes in the terms of the agreement retroactive to the month in which CA received the written request.
5. Inform the adoptive parent that he or she has a right to an adjudicative proceeding after completing the review and there is no agreement to the modification. [RCW 74.13A.055](#).

**5. Determining Eligibility for Adoption Support After Adoption Finalization**

1. The adoption support worker will conduct the following when an adoptive parent requests adoption support after the adoption has been finalized:
    1. Identify if the child was adopted prior to the adoption support agreement being negotiated and approved.
    2. Determine the child's eligibility for federal funding is based on information in the adoption file.
    3. Determine the child has special needs.
    4. Determine if the child meets Title IVE eligibility.
  2. Deny an adoption support application unless an administrative law judge finds **extenuating circumstances**. These include:
    1. Known information about the child or family was not provided to the family prior to adoption.
    2. Adoption support was denied based on a means test.
    3. The family was denied adoption support based on erroneous information or advice.
    4. The parent was not informed of the availability of adoption support.
- 6. Closing Adoption Support**
- The adoption support worker will:
1. Close adoption support after the child reaches age 18 unless he or she meets eligibility for ongoing support.
  2. Terminate adoption support prior to the child turning age 18 if:
    1. The adoptive parent no longer has legal or financial responsibility for the child.
    2. The child or parent dies.
    3. The child emancipates, or otherwise ceases to need support.
  3. Terminate all adoption support when the child is age 21.

## Forms and Tools

Forms below not linked are located on the CA intranet

### Information for Eligibility

- [IV-E Eligibility Determination for Adoption Support Application form DSHS 14-319](#)

### Completing the Initial Adoption Support Agreement

- Adoption Support Program Checklist DSHS 10-477 located on the CA intranet.
- Agreement form DSHS 10-228 located on the CA
- CA Provider File Action Request form DSHS 06-097
- Exception Request to Exceed Adoption Support Rate Schedule
- IRS 1040
- ICAMA Request form DSHS 15-416 located on the DSHS intranet
- [Adoption Support Child's Registration form DSHS 10-061](#)
- [Application for the Adoption Support Program and/or Reimbursement of Adoption Finalization Costs form DSHS 09-998](#)

- [Adoption Support Worksheet DSHS 09-997](#)
- [Child's Medical and Family Background Report form DSHS 13-041](#)
- [Shared Planning Meeting \(Noting Adoption as Plan\) form DSHS 14-474](#)
- [Waiver of Right to Receive Written Information on Adoption Support Program Limitation form DSHS 27-121](#)

### **Ongoing Adoption Support Age 18 years and older**

- Extended Adoption Agreement DSHS 10-227A
- Letter for 18 Year Old DSHS 15-413
- [Disability Statement at 18 form DSHS 15-412](#)

### **Request to Change Existing Adoption Support**

- Revised Adoption support Agreement DSHS 10-227
- IRS 1040
- [Adoption Support Review form DSHS 10-082](#)

### **Determining Eligibility after Adoption**

- Same forms listed above in Completing the Initial Adoption Support Agreement
- Initial Adoption support Agreement DSHS 10-228

### **Resources**

- **Adoption Support Reconsideration Program** for state-funded adopted youth is not available at this time due to a lack of funding.
- [Post Adoption Questions and Answers Booklet](#)

In FamLink:

- Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) Guides
- FamLink Quick Help Guides
- FamLink User Manual
- Preauthorized Counseling Protocol

## **6000: Operations**

## **6100. Client and Staff Travel**

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Asst. Secretary

**Effective Date:**

**Revised Date:** June 12, 2014

**Sunset Review:** June 2018

**Purpose**

Authorize (in state or out of state) travel in order to know the whereabouts of all children in the care and custody of the Department. Provide fiscal responsibility and consistency in travel payment approval for children/youth, caregivers and employees.

**Laws**

[WAC 388-148-0455](#)

[WAC 388-148-0550](#)

[RCW 74.13.710](#)

[RCW 74.15.030](#)

**Policy**

- A. Travel must comply with court orders, *DSHS 19.10 Travel Policy* & [OFM 10.10 Travel Policy](#).
- B. Travel related to children or youth who are in the care, custody and control of the Department, must be:
  - 1. Documented prior to the travel
  - 2. Approve prior to any travel over 72 hours.
- C. Caregivers have the authority to allow a child in their care to participate in normal childhood activities without the prior approval of the CA worker or the court. Normal childhood activities are based on a reasonable and prudent parent standard.
- D. All children being placed **out of state** through ICPC must be approved by the Regional Administrator and documented prior to travel.
- E. Any travel (in state and out of state) with costs to the State above the amount designated in the Travel Approval Quick Reference Guide (outside of routine bus travel/commuter travel) must be approved by the Regional Administrator or designee regardless of required travel approval level.

**Procedures****A. Child/Client Travel**

CA Staff will:

1. Ask caregivers to notify them of travel and initiate the approval process at least three weeks in advance of travel, when possible. Trips that meet the prudent parent standard and are less than 72 hours in duration do not require CA approval.

**Note:** Notification may be in the form of phone or voicemail message, face to face communication, e-mail or other written communication.

2. Document caregiver's notification of travel in a case note in FamLink **prior** to travel and no later than 10 days after notification.
  3. Follow approval and documentation requirements outlined in the Travel Approval Quick Reference Guide.
  4. Complete, in detail, [DSHS 03-478 CA Travel Authorization Form](#) when required
  5. Notify parent(s) as soon as possible upon receipt of caregiver notification of travel over 72 hours.
  6. Document efforts to notify parent(s) or obtain parent approval on the [DSHS 03-478 CA Travel Authorization Form](#) or in a case note when required.
  7. Scan and upload documents approved by the parents into FamLink. (Excludes legally free children or youth.)
  8. Scan and upload approved [DSHS 03-478 CA Travel Authorization Form](#) into FamLink.
  9. Obtain court order in the following situations:
    - a. For all out of country travel (Travel to the British Columbia (BC) territories of BC Rockies, Thompson/Okanogan and Vancouver Coast and Mountains are considered 'border counties' to Washington State. All territories beyond are considered out of country travel.); or
    - b. When travel is inconsistent with an existing order.
  10. Coordinate out of country travel per [4211 Notification to Foreign Consulate](#) policy if the child is a citizen of another country. (Requirements vary by country)
- B. Employee-Client Related Travel (out of state) must align with DSHS 19.10 Travel Policy & [OFM 10.10 Travel Policy](#) and must be:
1. Directly work related;
  2. Obtained at the most economical price;
  3. Critical and necessary for state business;
  4. Pre-approved.

## Forms and Tools

- [Travel Approval Quick Reference Guide](#)
- [Children's Administration Travel Authorization form \(DSHS 03-478\)](#)
- [Children's Administration Caregiver Authorization form \(DSHS 10-454\)](#)
- [Travel Case Scenarios](#)
- [Guidelines for Foster Child Activities](#)

## Resources

- DSHS 19.10 Travel Policy
- [OFM 10.10 Travel Policy](#)

# 6201. Developing Contracts

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Effective Date:** February 15, 1998

**Revised Date:** July 31, 2015

**Sunset Review:** July 31, 2018

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## Purpose

The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) requires written contracts before beginning any work by a contractor.

## Scope

This policy applies to all caseworkers and DCFS contract managers.

## Laws

RCW Chapters [39.26](#), [39.30](#)

[RCW 39.26.110](#)

[RCW 42.52.080](#)

RCW Chapter [43.19](#)

[RCW 43.43.832](#), [RCW 43.43.834](#)

[RCW 49.60.030](#)

## Policy

1. Children's Administration (CA) develops contract(s) when service(s):
  1. Are not provided by CA.
  2. Fulfill a resource gap.
  3. Are not covered by medical insurance.
  4. Are court ordered.
2. Services must be consistent with CA mission and values, add value to the client's case plan, meet CA management approval, and must be in compliance with DSHS Administrative Policies. To locate DSHS Administrative policies see Resources below.



3. CA staff can only pay for services when a contract is established and signed by both parties. Verbal agreements are prohibited. An [After the Fact Justification DSHS 15-472](#) must be completed in those rare instances in which a provider begins work before a contract is in place.
4. CA must not furnish contractors with workspace or any state resource, i.e., computer, identification badge, phone, fax machine, copier, etc., unless it is an agreed upon contract term.
5. Contract formats include:
  1. Client Service Contract
  2. Data Share Agreement
  3. Indian Nation Intergovernmental Agreement
  4. Interlocal Agreement
  5. Personal Service Contract
  6. Purchase Service Contracts
6. CA staff must follow DSHS Administrative Policy 13.10 for:
  1. Contract development
  2. Staff training on managing and monitoring contracts
  3. Agency Contract Database (ACD) access
  4. Signing Authority
7. Agencies under contract with CA must ensure clients have equal access to:
  1. Interpretation Services
  2. Translation Services
  3. Accommodation Services
  4. Culturally Relevant Services
8. CA staff must follow DSHS Administrative Policy 5.01 when safeguarding confidential client information.
9. CA staff must follow DSHS Administrative Policy No. 13.12 for contract procurements

## **Procedures**

1. **Initiating Contract Services**
  1. If services are needed, the caseworker must review FamLink and other contract resources to determine if an active contract exists.
  2. If no contract exists, the caseworker or regional program manager will find and speak with a potentially qualified provider about whether they wish to contract with the state and submit a completed [Contract Request/Approval Form DSHS 15-471](#) to the Regional Contract Unit.
  3. The caseworker may also contact the HQ or regional contract/program manager to look for services.
2. **Approving Contracts**
  1. The Regional contract manager (RCM) sends the completed Contract Request form to the regional operations manager (ROM) for approval.
  2. The ROM verifies available funds for contracted services, identifies account coding and reviews for approval. If approved, the ROM sends the approved contract request to the RCM.

3. The RCM sends the [Contract Request/Approval Form DSHS 15-471](#) to the CA HQ Contracts Unit (CU) for final approval(s).
  4. Regional and HQ contract managers will complete an [After the Fact Justification DSHS 15-472](#) if services begin before a contract is in place.
3. **Developing Contracts**
1. The HQ contract manager will develop and update contract templates on the Agency Contracts Database (ACD).
  2. The regional and headquarter (HQ) program manager will acquire necessary contract documents from his or her assigned contractor.
  3. RCMs will collect, review and maintain all necessary documents which may include, but are not limited to, the following:
    1. Contractor intake form
    2. Contractor update form
    3. Staff list/board of directors
    4. 501c IRS non-profit letter (if applicable)
    5. Certificate of Insurance (See DSHS Administrative Policy 13.13)
    6. Licenses, i.e., Department of Health, etc.
    7. Certifications, i.e., mental health counseling, training, etc.
    8. Resume, degrees, and required qualifications
    9. Photo identification, i.e., driver's license or ID card, etc.
  4. Regional and headquarters (HQ) contract managers will input or verify contractor information is entered into the ACD and FamLink.
  5. Regional contract managers will prepare and sign pre-approved client service contracts for new contractors and for contract renewals.
  6. Regional and HQ contract managers, working with regional and HQ program managers, will negotiate and develop custom contracts as needed with the assistance and approval from the Key Contract Coordinator.

## Forms and Tools

- [Contract Request/Approval Form DSHS 15-471](#)
- [After the Fact Justification 15-472](#)

## Resources

To locate DSHS Administrative policies, go to the DSHS Intranet titled Inside DSHS, Click Resources, Other Employee Resources and Administrative Policies and Rules.

# 6202. Monitoring Contracts Policy

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Asst. Secretary

**Original Date:** February 15, 1998

**Revised Date:** July 31, 2015

## **Purpose**

Establish requirements for monitoring Children's Administration (CA) contracted provider on the delivery of goods and services so that:

1. Delivery of goods and services meet the scope of the work, identified outcomes and other relevant terms and conditions.
2. Funds are allocated as defined in the contract.
3. Fiscal and program risk is identified early and reduced.

## **Scope**

This applies to Children's Administration staff.

## **Laws**

[RCW 39.26](#)

[RCW 39.34](#)

## **Policy**

Regional and headquarter (HQ) contract managers will:

1. Monitor contracts according to Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) Administrative Policy No. 13.11 located on the DSHS Intranet called Inside DSHS. See Resource section below.
2. Perform annual monitoring using agency tools including:
  1. [DSHS CA Contracts Risk assessment and Analysis DSHS 15-466](#)
  2. A monitoring plan
  3. An on-site review or a desk review if applicable
3. Issue a [Compliance Agreement DSHS 15-467](#) as necessary to correct issues identified in the review or at other times deemed necessary, such as when there frequent intakes, critical incidents or newly identified concerns.
4. Submit their monitoring plan to HQ each fiscal year.
5. Contract supervisors must submit to HQ a monitoring report summarizing all monitoring activities conducted during the previous fiscal year.
6. HQ must submit a summary of all statewide monitoring activities during the previous fiscal year to [Central Contract and Legal Services](#).

## **Procedures**

**1. Developing the Monitoring Plan:**

1. The HQ program manager must complete the *Service Level Core Risk Factors* on the [DSHS CA Contracts Risk assessment and Analysis DSHS 15-466](#) at the time of contract renewal for his or her program(s).
2. When the Service Level Core Risk Factors are completed, the regional and HQ contract manager must:
  1. Follow DSHS Administrative Policy No. 13.11 located on the DSHS Intranet called Inside DSHS. See Resource section below.
  2. Complete a contract risk assessment using the [DSHS CA Contracts Risk assessment and Analysis DSHS 15-466](#).
3. The contract supervisor in each region will facilitate a yearly meeting with the monitoring team to develop an annual monitoring plan. The team includes but is not limited to all of the following:
  1. Regional program managers
  2. Regional contract managers
  3. Fiduciary staff
  4. HQ program managers with program expertise
4. Each regional annual monitoring plan must include a review of a minimum of 10% of all assigned active contracts and:
  1. A brief description of the type of services for which the agency has contracted.
  2. Risk Factors regarding the contract or contractor.
  3. Specific monitoring activities.
5. The regional and HQ contract/program manager must submit the annual monitoring plan to the HQ contract monitoring program manager no later than September 30 each year.

**2. Conducting Monitoring Activities:**

**1. On Site Review**

The regional contract manager, regional program manager (if applicable) and the HQ program manager must:

1. Notify the contracted provider four to six weeks prior to the site review and include the following information:
  1. Date, time and location.
  2. Questions about his or her program strengths, challenges and any technical assistance needed.
  3. Documents or items to be reviewed.
  4. Copies of the forms/tools to be used during the on-site visit.
2. Facilitate a planning meeting held prior to the on-site visit. The review team must attend and:
  1. Identify specific objectives of the review.
  2. Review the tools and instructions for use.
  3. Identify individual task for completion.
  4. Discuss concerns.
3. Facilitate an on-site meeting with the agency director and other agency staff at the start of the review to discuss:
  1. Purpose of the review.

2. Monitoring review process.
3. Location where the files will be reviewed.
4. Discuss relevant contract issues.
4. Select and review contractor records according to the following:
  1. A minimum of 10% of all active cases, with no fewer than six client files being reviewed.
  2. A minimum of 10% of all active cases, with no fewer than six personnel files being reviewed.
  3. 100% review of all active cases, if the contracted provider has fewer than six clients or personnel.
5. Conduct the monitoring review with the team that includes (as applicable), but is not limited to, a review of the following:
  1. Program review
  2. Client review
  3. Personnel review
  4. Interviews
  5. Questionnaires
  6. Incident reports
6. Facilitate a staff debriefing at the conclusion of the site visit to:
  1. Ensure all monitoring tools are complete.
  2. Discuss strengths, concerns, and patterns that will be shared with the agency director during the exit interview.
7. Facilitate an exit interview with the agency director and other agency staff to:
  1. Discuss any health and safety, and programming concerns.
  2. Complete an [Immediate Action Plan Compliance Agreement Contracts DSHS 15-468](#) if there is an immediate contract violation and give to the contract provider to implement within 24 hours.
8. Complete a [Monitoring Review Report - On-Site Visit DSHS 15-462](#) and [Compliance Agreement DSHS 15-467](#) (as applicable) with the review team, and send to the agency director within 30 days following the on-site review.

## 2. Desk Review

The Regional contract manager, regional program manager (if applicable) and the HQ program manager must:

1. Select and review contractor records according to the following:
  1. A minimum of 10% of all active cases, with no fewer than six client files being reviewed.
  2. A minimum of 10% of all active cases, with no fewer than six personnel files being reviewed.
  3. 100% review of all active cases, if the contracted provider has fewer than six clients or personnel.
2. Complete a desk review that includes (as applicable), but is not limited to the following:
  1. Billing and payment history

2. Contractor invoices and supporting documentation
3. Reports
4. Prior compliance agreements
5. Subcontractor request forms
6. Staff List
7. Updated background checks
8. Required contractor forms
  1. W-9's
  2. Certificate of Insurance
  3. Licenses
  4. Subcontractor self-assessment
3. Complete a [Monitoring Review Report - Desk Review DSHS 15-461](#) and [Compliance Agreement DSHS 15-467](#) (as applicable) and send to the agency director within 30 days following the desk review.

**3. On-site Review Without Notice**

When the regional contract manager, regional program manager (if applicable) and the HQ program manager receive information about a child safety concern or an intake alleging child abuse or neglect on the contracted provider, the following must be completed:

1. An on-site review
2. A review of the case and contracted provider information as applicable:
  1. Identify specific objectives of the review.
  2. Intakes attached to the contracted provider.
  3. Address all potential violations.
  4. Incident reports and any past compliance agreements.
3. An on-site meeting with the agency director and other agency staff at the start of the review to discuss:
  1. Purpose of the review.
  2. Allegations in the intake.
  3. Investigation process and timelines.
  4. Discuss relevant contract issues.
4. An [Immediate Action Plan Compliance Agreement Contracts DSHS 15-468](#) for immediate contract violation and give to the contract provider to implement within 24 hours.
5. A [Monitoring Review Report - On-Site Visit DSHS 15-462](#) or [Monitoring Review Report - Desk Review DSHS 15-461](#) and [Compliance Agreement DSHS 15-467](#) and send to the agency director within 30 days following the review.

**3. Completing the Compliance Agreement**

The regional and HQ contract/program manager must:

1. Submit a [Compliance Agreement DSHS 15-467](#) to the contractor within 30 days of the monitoring review, the compliance agreement includes:
  1. Actions the contractor must take to comply with the contract terms and conditions
  2. Specific timeframes to correct the identified deficiencies

2. Provide specific timeframes to correct the identified deficiencies in the review no more than 30 days from the date the compliance agreement was established.
  3. Send the [Compliance Agreement DSHS 15-467](#) to the contract provider to review, sign and return to the regional contract manager.
  4. Verify the returned Compliance Agreement is signed by the contracted provider.
  5. Send [Compliance Agreement On-Site Review Final Report DSHS 15-464](#) or [Compliance Agreement Desk Review Final Report DSHS 15-463](#) to contracted provider resolving deficiencies.
  6. Send notification if contracted provider fails to correct deficiencies. This may be grounds for termination of the contract.
  7. Follow up with the contracted provider in 6 months to verify no further issues have been identified.
4. **End of Fiscal Year Reporting**
- The Regional and HQ contract/program manager must submit a monitoring report summarizing all monitoring activities conducted during the previous fiscal year to the HQ contract monitoring program manager no later than September 30 each year.
1. The Monitoring Report is a summary of completed monitoring activities and must include, but is not limited to the following:
    1. Monitoring narrative reviews
    2. Compliance agreements
    3. [Immediate Action Plan Compliance Agreement Contracts DSHS 15-468](#) (if applicable)
  2. HQ must submit a summary of all statewide monitoring activities conducted during the previous fiscal year to [Central Contract and Legal Services](#) by October 31 of each year.

## Forms

- [Compliance Agreement DSHS 15-467](#)
- [Compliance Agreement Desk Review Final Report DSHS 15-463](#)
- [Compliance Agreement On-Site Review Final Report DSHS 15-464](#)
- [Immediate Action Plan Compliance Agreement Contracts DSHS 15-468](#)
- [Monitoring Report for Compliance Action Notification DSHS 15-465](#)
- [Monitoring Review Report - Desk Review DSHS 15-461](#)
- [Monitoring Review Report - On-Site Visit DSHS 15-462](#)
- [Contract Risk Assessment and Analysis Monitoring Plan DSHS 15-466](#)

## Resources

CA staff should report contract violations, late reports, and any other problems with a contractor through the Contract Complaint Tool located on the CA intranet.

To locate the following policies, go to the DSHS Intranet titled Inside DSHS, Click Resources, Other Employee Resources and Administrative Policies and Rules.

- DSHS Administrative Policy 13.10, Central Contract and Legal Services (CCLS)
- DSHS Administrative Policy 13.13, Insurance Requirements for Contracts
- DSHS Administrative Policy 13.16, Performance-Based Contracting
- DSHS Administrative Policy 19.50.30, Subrecipient Monitoring, Fiscal Process

## 6300. Mobile Technology

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:** July 1, 2016

**Policy Review:** July 1, 2020

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### Purpose

Mobile devices are an essential tool for Children’s Administration (CA) staff to securely access and record information, contact emergency services, and improve communication wherever state business is conducted. This policy sets forth requirements for the assignment, maintenance, use and monitoring of state-issued mobile devices including:

- Cell phones
- Smartphones
- Air cards
- Tablets
- Netbooks
- Similar electronic devices

### Scope

This policy applies to CA staff using a state-issued mobile device.

### Laws

Directive by the Governor 11-18

[RCW 42.52](#) Ethics in Public Services

[RCW 42.56.100](#) Protection of public records – public access

[RCW 42.56.420](#) Security

[RCW 42.56.590](#) Notice of Security Breaches



[RCW 46.61.667](#) & [46.61.668](#) Use of Wireless Communication Device While Driving

[WAC 292-110-010](#) Use of State Resources

## Policy

1. Issuing, Managing, Using and Returning Mobile Devices
  1. The DSHS assistant secretary or designee will implement the requirements of this policy for staff per Administrative Policy 15.10.
  2. CA staff will:
    1. Review Administrative policies 05.05, 15.15 and 18.64, and IT Security Policy 5.2.5 when assigned a mobile device and complete the following trainings on the DSHS Learning Management System (LMS):
      1. Mobile device training
      2. DSHS – IT Security Online Training course
    2. Use a mobile device only during regularly scheduled work hours or approved overtime hours. Refer to Administrative policies 18.80 Teleworking (if applicable), and 18-28 Compensation.
    3. Use a mobile device only to conduct state business that is related to official state duties (emails, texts, taking photos, applications (apps), etc). Follow DSHS Administrative Policies No. 15.15 Use of Electronic Messaging and the Internet and No. 18.64 Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees.
    4. Mobile devices may be used in a public place but must be kept secure at all times. Devices must not be left unattended in the view of the public. Follow Administrative Policy No. 14.22 Use of State-Issued Mobile Devices.
    5. Connect a state-issued phone only to another state-issued device.
    6. WiFi Access:
      1. Use the state-issued device hotspot only with a state-issued device.
      2. Connect state-issued devices **only** to DSHS email systems or accounts. Accessing non-DSHS sites for entertainment or personal use is strictly prohibited.
      3. Staff may access any available WiFi with the exception of WiFi available through a client or caregiver.
    7. When a mobile device is known or suspected to be lost or stolen, complete all of the following:
      1. First, immediately notify the Children’s Administration Technology Services (CATS) [HELP300@DSHS.WA.GOV](mailto:HELP300@DSHS.WA.GOV).
      2. Complete a Loss of Public Funds, Assets, or Illegal Activity Report Form DSHS 17-169 located on the CA intranet forms site to his or her supervisor and the [HELP300@DSHS.WA.GOV](mailto:HELP300@DSHS.WA.GOV).
      3. Complete an Administrative Incident Reporting System (AIRS) report when any client information is lost or a mobile device is

lost or stolen and its value is estimated to be in excess of \$750.00.

3. The CA supervisor will:
  1. Review Administrative policies 05.05, 15.15 and 18.64, and IT Security Policy 5.2.5 with new CA staff who have access to electronic messaging systems or the internet, and ensure he or she received the mobile device training on the DSHS Learning Management System (LMS) and the DSHS – IT Security Online Training course.
  2. Obtain the signed Remote Access Request and Agreement form DSHS 03-443 for any staff needing remote access, and annually thereafter.
  3. When a mobile device is stolen, ensure a law enforcement report is made and a copy of the law enforcement report is sent to [HELP300@DSHS.WA.GOV](mailto:HELP300@DSHS.WA.GOV).
  4. Report all unauthorized use of mobile devices to his or her appointing authority.
4. CATS staff will:
  1. Follow Administrative Policies No. 14.22 Use of State-Issued Mobile Devices for issuing, managing, and returning mobile devices and No. 14.07 Control of Capital Assets.
  2. Assign, secure and monitor mobile devices, and provide user education and support.
  3. Authorize applications known as “apps” on mobile devices.
  4. Manage the device functionality, security, applications and software.
  5. Monitor the data including but not limited to internet use, email, messaging, documents, image files and videos, application use, geolocations, device system data and the meta-data associated with files and applications.
  6. Encrypt devices with DSHS compliance standards.
  7. Immediately send the Loss of Public Funds, Assets, or Illegal Activity Report form DSHS 17-169 report when a device is lost, stolen or damaged to Operations Review and Consultation (ORC). Follow Office of the Chief Information Officer 143 Security Incident Communication, Administrative Policy No. 16.10 Reporting the Loss of Public Assets to the State Auditor’s Office and Administrative Policy No. 14.07 Control of Capital Assets.
2. Inputting, Storing and Managing Information on a Mobile Device
  1. Text messages sent or received must be brief, and related to state business.
  2. Safeguard and retain case-related information, and maintain confidentiality per Administrative Policy Chapter 5 DSHS Records and Privacy, DSHS IT Security Policy, and [Case Services Manual 4120. Confidentiality](#). Text messages with case-related information must **not** be deleted before transferred or saved to FamLink.
  3. Transfer to FamLink any case-related information, including text messages created, sent, received or stored on a mobile device, within seven calendar days. For help, contact [HELP300@DSHS.WA.GOV](mailto:HELP300@DSHS.WA.GOV).
  4. Follow Administrative Policy No. 14.22 Use of State-Issued Mobile Devices.

5. Delete all client related information from the mobile device AFTER confirming it is transferred to FamLink.
6. Take photographs **only** for business-related purposes. Photographs taken for investigations of child abuse or neglect must not be edited or cropped, and must be transferred to FamLink within seven calendar days.
7. Use CA network equipment only to print or transfer client information or photographs.

## Procedures

1. Issuing, Managing, Using and Returning Mobile Devices
  1. Issuance
    1. To request an iPhone, CA staff will complete the DSHS Mobile Device Request and Approval form DSHS 17-212, and provide the form to his or her supervisor.
    2. CA supervisor will:
      1. Submit the completed DSHS Mobile Device Request and Approval form DSHS 17-212 to the regional operations manager.
      2. Submit the completed Remote Access Request and Agreement form DSHS 03-443 to [HELP300@DSHS.WA.GOV](mailto:HELP300@DSHS.WA.GOV).
    3. Regional operations manager will:
      1. Ensure fiscal and CATS director signatures are obtained and submit request to the Regional Business Center (RBC) for procurement.
      2. Coordinate with CATS to deliver and set-up device.
      3. Document asset tag number and serial number into Asset Management System (TRACKS).
    4. CATS will verify set-up is complete and staff is trained on use.
  2. Return
    1. CA staff will return the device to his or her supervisor.
    2. CA supervisor will return the device to the regional operations manager.
    3. Regional operations manager will notify the RBC of returned device.
2. Inputting, Storing and Managing Information on a Mobile Device
 

Transfer texts one of the following ways:

  1. Transfer to the caseworker's business email address and paste in an email attachment into a FamLink case note.
  2. Save in a .pdf format and upload to the FamLink case record.

## Forms

- Remote Access Request and Agreement form DSHS 03-443
- DSHS Mobile Device Request and Approval form DSHS 17-212

## Resources

- [HELP300@DSHS.WA.GOV](mailto:HELP300@DSHS.WA.GOV)
- DSHS Communications
- [CAMOBILE@DSHS.WA.GOV](mailto:CAMOBILE@DSHS.WA.GOV)
- [Office of the Chief Information Officer Washington State](#)
- [DSHS Information Security Manual](#)
- [Executive Ethics Board website](#)
- Mobile Device Training and the DSHS Security Training located in the Learning Management System (LMS)

## 6301. Child Fatality/Near-Fatality Reviews

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant secretary

**Original Date:**

**Revised Date:** October 31, 2016

**Sunset Review:** October 31, 2019

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### **Purpose**

Child fatality or near-fatality reviews are used to examine cases involving a fatality and near-fatality of a child and meet specific criteria to:

1. Increase our understanding of the circumstances surrounding the child's death or near fatal injury.
2. Examine existing CA policies and procedures to determine the need for policy development or revision, or recommend legislative change.
3. Evaluate CA services and community response to the identified needs of the family and to identify areas for education and training.
4. Build community alliances, expertise and commitments for program improvements, policy, and procedural changes, and improved multi-disciplinary collaboration.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to CA staff.

### **Laws**

[RCW 74.13.640](#)

## Policy

1. A Child fatality or [near-fatality](#) review is required for a child under age 18 and the following conditions apply:
  1. The cause of the child's death or near-fatality is believed to be abuse or neglect.
  2. There is an open case on the family or CA was providing services to the deceased or injured child within 12 months prior to the fatality or near fatal injury. Adoption support or Tribal Payment Only cases do not meet these criteria, unless there has been another active service provided to the child during the 12 months preceding the death or near-fatality.
2. The critical incident practice consultant or critical incident review specialist (CIRS) must consult with the Office of the Family and Children's Ombuds (OFCO) to determine if a child fatality or near-fatality review should be conducted in any case when it is unknown if the death or fatal injury is a result of child abuse or neglect.
3. The child fatality or near-fatality review process is not a personnel investigation, and the report must not include the name of the employee.
4. When conducting a child fatality or near-fatality review, the CIRS must:
  1. Organize and facilitate a multidisciplinary Child Fatality or Near-fatality Review Team unless the assistant secretary requests facilitation by an impartial professional.
  2. Consult with the Assistant Attorney General's office prior to each review when there are legal questions or complex legal issues.
  3. Consult with the CA legislative liaison and the CA assistant secretary when a legislator participates in the review.
  4. Consult with the CA assistant secretary and Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) Communications Director when a media representative participates in the review.
  5. Consult with the regional administrator (RA) when a CA staff member requests to observe a child fatality or near-fatality review.
  6. Invite committee members who:
    1. Have no prior or direct involvement with the case.
    2. Have professional expertise relevant to the specific issues of the case such as service providers, foster parent representatives, child advocates, medical professionals, law enforcement, and CA staff.
    3. Represent a child's ethnic or cultural heritage.
  7. Require all review team members, consultants and observers to sign a Child Fatality Case Review Confidentiality Agreement Form DSHS 27-128 or Child Near-fatality Case Review Confidentiality Agreement DSHS Form 27-129 before reviewing CA records or documents.
  8. Request case information from the assigned caseworker, supervisor or area administrator prior to the review.
  9. Arrange interviews with CA caseworkers or any persons involved with the family or the deceased or injured child as appropriate for the review.
  10. Ensure observers do not participate in review discussions.
5. The critical incident practice consultant must:

1. Track the progress and completion of the review in coordination with the Field Operations Division.
2. Collaborate with the headquarters statewide quality assurance unit manager to track completion of all review recommendations requiring implementation.
3. Document the completed review in the Administrative Incident Response System (AIRS) under the same incident number identified in the initial AIRS report.
6. The CIRS must ensure the child fatality review or near-fatality review report includes:
  1. The committee's discussion and findings addressing policy and case practice or individual employee actions and decisions in the specific case under review.
  2. The committee's recommendations (if applicable).
7. The CIRS must ensure the child fatality review report is completed and posted on the public website within 180 calendar days of a child's death.
8. When a Child Fatality Review report cannot be completed within the timeframe, CA must request an extension from the Governor. The CIRS will document the request for an extension in the follow-up section in the AIRS report.
9. The CIRS or designee:
  1. Sends all fatality and near-fatality reports to the DSHS secretary and CA assistant secretary, and CA division directors and regional administrators, as applicable.
  2. Makes fatality and near-fatality reports available to all CA staff.
  3. Provides a copy of all fatality and near-fatality reports to OFCO.
  4. Provides a copy of all redacted child fatality reports to legislative committees and the public through posting on the DSHS internet.
  5. Prepares and distributes the quarterly report findings to the legislature.
10. The RA or designee collaborates with the CA Headquarters Quality Assurance staff to review the recommendations, and track implementation status and outcomes in response to policy, legislative or training recommendations. The statewide portion of the action plan will include a timeline and monitoring for progress and completion.
11. All requests for information and documentation about the child fatality report, near-fatality report, or related documents must be forwarded to the CA public disclosure unit.

## Forms

- [Child Fatality Case Review Confidentiality Agreement Form DSHS 27-128](#)
- [Child Near-fatality Case Review Confidentiality Agreement Form DSHS 27-129](#)

## Resources

[Office of the Family and Children's Ombuds](#)

# 6302. Administrative Incident Reporting

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:**

**Revised Date:** July 1, 2016

**Sunset Review:** July 1, 2020

## **Purpose**

Establish requirements for the timely notification, documentation and management of administrative incidents. Administrative incidents are serious and emergent situations involving Children's Administration (CA) clients, staff and providers, and include:

- Critical incidents (Near-Fatality or Fatality of a Child)
- Client related incidents
- Provider related incidents
- Staff safety
- Theft, vandalism or property damage

Documentation of these incidents in the Administrative Incident Reporting System (AIRS) is used to identify issues, patterns and trends, and determine needed actions to address the safety of children, clients, and staff.

## **Scope**

This policy applies to CA staff.

## **Laws**

[Executive Order 96-01](#)

[RCW 74.13.500](#) Disclosure of child welfare records

[RCW 74.14A.020](#) Services for emotionally disturbed and mentally ill children, potentially dependent children, and families-in-conflict

[RCW 74.14A.025](#) Services for emotionally disturbed and mentally ill children, potentially dependent children, and families-in-conflict

[RCW 26.44.020](#) Definitions

[WAC 388-06A-0170](#) Will a criminal conviction permanently prohibit me from being licensed, contracted, certified, or authorized to have unsupervised access to children?

[WAC 388-06A-0180](#) Are there other criminal convictions that will prohibit me from being licensed, contracted, certified, or authorized to have unsupervised access to children or from working with children

[WAC 388-70-095](#) Foster care for Indian children — Serious injury, death, abandonment, child abuse, neglect, incarceration.

## Policy

1. CA staff will immediately notify his or her supervisor when learning of an [Administrative Incident](#) .
2. The supervisor will immediately notify law enforcement when there is reason to believe an Administrative Incident involves a crime.
3. Employee Misconduct (Not documented in AIRS)
  1. CA staff will:
    1. Immediately notify his or her supervisor when learning of allegations of employee misconduct or criminal conduct.
    2. Refer to Administrative 18.62 and 18.64 policies located on the DSHS intranet.
  2. The supervisor will immediately notify his or her chain of command up to the regional administrator (RA) or Division of Licensed Resources (DLR) administrator.
  3. The RA or designee or DLR administrator or designee, will notify the director of Field Operations or designee of the alleged misconduct within 48 hours; the director will notify the assistant secretary.
4. **Critical Incidents**
  1. Critical incidents include
    1. Child fatalities or near-fatalities
      1. That occurred on an open case at the time of the fatality or near-fatality or there was CA history on the family within 12 months of the fatality or near-fatality, including intakes screened out for investigation.
      2. That occurred in a CA or Department of Early Learning (DEL) licensed, certified, or state operated facility.
    2. High Profile incidents that may generate significant interest by the media, the legislature or the Governor's Office.
  2. The regional designee will document critical incidents in AIRS within **one hour** of being notified of the incident. If one hour is not possible, the designee must notify his or her chain of command up to the director of Field Operations or designee.
  3. CA staff will notify intake to create a new intake when:
    1. A child fatality or near-fatality is suspicious for child abuse or neglect.
    2. A child dies and there is an open case on that child or while placed in a CA licensed or state operated facility.
  4. The intake or unit supervisor will update AIRS and document in a case note if a near-fatality becomes a fatality due to the circumstances described in the original intake. A new intake is not required.
  5. CA intake will inform an Indian child's tribe when there is a fatality or near-fatality within 24 hours of learning of the incident.
5. **Other Administrative Incidents**



1. The supervisor will document all other administrative incidents in AIRS within 24 hours of receiving notification. Other administrative incidents include:
  1. **Client Related Incidents** serious injury of a child client on an open case requiring professional medical treatment (beyond first aid treatment) alleged to be the result of:
    1. A serious injury of a child client on an open case requiring professional medical treatment (beyond first aid treatment) alleged to be the result of:
      1. Physical abuse
      2. Sexual abuse
      3. Neglect
      4. Unexplained injury
      5. Injury that is not consistent with parent or caregiver(s) explanation.
    2. Allegations of molestation or rape by an adult caregiver of a child client who is in the care and supervision of CA.
    3. A suicide, suicide attempt or a near-fatal injury of a child client.
    4. Placement of a child in any of the following:
      1. DSHS office due to no placement resource available.
      2. Detention facilities for children in CA care and custody.
      3. Apartments or hotels
    5. Placement is not allowed in an institution not designed for children, such as adult mental hospitals and detoxification facilities, or institutions or homes with caregivers who don't have the specialized training required to care for a child with sexually aggressive or physically assaultive behaviors per [4536. Sexually Aggressive Youth](#), [45362. Physically Aggressive Youth](#) and [4413. Placement Services](#) policies.
    6. Any other client-related incident that does not fall into one of the previously identified categories believed to require administrative notification or attention.
  2. **Provider-Related Misconduct Incidents** occurring in a facility licensed or subject to licensing by DSHS or DEL or other facilities certified by DSHS. Misconduct includes:
    1. Alleged criminal activity
    2. A conviction disqualifying a licensed provider from providing care to children. [WAC 388-06A-0170 & 388-06A-0180](#)
    3. Any arrest or pending arrest for:
      1. Child abuse or neglect
      2. Spousal abuse (domestic violence)
      3. A crime against a child
      4. A crime involving violence (including rape, sexual assault, or homicide but not including other physical assault or battery)
      5. Felony physical assault or battery offense
    4. Felony drug-related crimes including:

1. The Imitation Controlled Substances Act. RCW Chapter [69.52](#)
2. Illegal sale and distribution of prescription drugs. RCW Chapter [69.41](#)
3. Selling, transferring, or otherwise furnishing to any person substances used in making controlled substances. RCW Chapter [69.43](#)
4. Illegal drugs or substances use. RCW chapter [69.50](#)
5. Unlawfully manufacturing, delivering or possessing a controlled substance with intent to deliver.
5. Incidents involving multiple victims or patterns of molestation or rape between child clients placed by CA.
6. A pattern of high-risk child abuse or neglect referrals.
3. **Safety Incidents** involving CA staff, licensed caregivers and contracted providers. Follow [Operations Manual 8600. Employee Safety](#)  
Incidents include:
  1. An assault, safety threat or a perceived safety threat to staff, a licensed caregiver or contracted provider by a child client, parent or individual related to the case.
  2. Staff involvement in a traffic accident while on the job, in a personal or state-owned vehicle when any of the following apply:
    1. A child client was a passenger.
    2. The staff or child client was injured and required medical treatment.
    3. The staff was at fault for the accident.
4. **Property Damage or Loss of Client Information**
  1. A theft, or incident involving vandalism or damage to state property estimated to be in excess of \$750.00.
  2. Incidents resulting in any loss of client information, e.g., loss of case file, printed case documents or on thumb drives, etc.
6. Additional AIRS Documentation Requirements
  1. The supervisor of the assigned caseworker will ensure documentation about a client related placement exception includes:
    1. Detailed attempts to locate a more permanent placement for the child.
    2. Reason for placement.
    3. Approving authority.
    4. CA staff providing care of the child if applicable.
  2. The supervisor will include the following information about a safety incident:
    1. Identification of the subject of an AIRS report by job title and office (not by name) when he or she is a CA staff.
    2. The jurisdiction and police report case number in the AIRS "Community" section.
    3. Information about an incident resulting in a serious injury requiring professional medical treatment (if applicable).

3. The intake or DLR area administrator or designee will document alleged misconduct in a facility or foster home and complete the Facility-Foster Home section.

## Resources

- DSHS Administrative policy 18.62 and 18.64 are located on the DSHS Intranet titled Inside DSHS, Click Resources, Other Employee Resources, and Administrative Policies and Rules.
- AIRS Companion Guide located under Computer Help tab on the CA intranet.
- Critical Incident Protocol located under the Supervisor tab on the CA intranet.
- [Washington State Patrol Protocol and DSHS Interagency Agreement](#)

# 6400. Adverse or Negative Action on a Domestic Violence Perpetrator Treatment

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:** August 1, 2016

**Review Date:** August 1, 2020

## Purpose

Establish a timeline by which an administrative hearing can be requested after Children's Administration (CA) issues an adverse or negative action to a domestic violence perpetrator treatment (DVPT) program.

## Scope

This policy applies to CA staff who manage certification of DVPT programs.

## Laws

[RCW 26.50.150](#)

## Policy

1. CA has jurisdiction over all Washington state DVPT programs that request certification/recertification. [WAC 388-60-0035](#).
2. CA has jurisdiction over complaints alleging a certified DVPT program has acted in a way that places victims at risk; or (b) failed to follow the standards in [WAC 388-60](#). [WAC 388-0625](#); [388-60-0645](#).

3. If a DVPT program does not meet the standards for certification or recertification, CA must provide the program with notice of the right to an administrative hearing if certification is denied. [WAC 388-60-0485](#).
4. If CA revokes or suspends a DVPT program's certification, issues a written warning, or imposes corrective action, CA must provide the program with notice of the right to an administrative hearing. [WAC 388-60-0725](#).
5. If CA takes adverse or negative action on a DVPT program, CA must notify the program that it has 30 calendar days from the date the notice is received or personally served on the program to request a hearing from the Office of Administrative Hearings. The notice shall include the filing process and timeframes. [WAC 388-02](#).

## Procedures

1. If CA takes adverse or negative action on a DVPT program, CA will send written notification by certified restricted mail/return receipt requested.
2. If service by certified mail is unsuccessful, CA will attempt personal service of the notification, and document on a Declaration of Personal Service. The DVPT program has 30 calendar days from the certified mail return receipt or personal service date, to request an administrative hearing. The first day of the 30-day count begins the day after the service date and ends on the 30th day thereafter.

# 6500. Photograph Documentation

**Approval:** Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary

**Original Date:** September 16, 1995

**Revised Date:** April 27, 2017

**Policy Review:** April 30, 2022

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## Purpose

To ensure effective documentation of a child's physical condition or surroundings when responding to allegations of child abuse or neglect (CA/N) or when a child is in the care and custody of Children's Administration (CA).

## Scope

This policy applies to CA staff.

## Laws

[RCW 13.50.010](#) Definitions - Conditions when filing petition or information - Duties to maintain accurate records and access—Confidential child welfare records.

[RCW 26.44.050](#) Abuse or neglect of child - Duty of law enforcement agency or department of social and health services - Taking child into custody without court order, when.

[RCW 71A.10.020](#) Developmental Disabilities - Definitions

[RCW 74.13.283](#) Washington State Identicards - Foster youth.

## **Policy**

1. CA staff may take photographs for evidentiary and case management purposes only. Not all cases will require photographic documentation.
2. When taking photographs, only use a state issued device with standard settings, and do not alter, enhance or filter the photographs in any way.
3. CA staff must follow the County Child Abuse, Fatality and Criminal Neglect Investigation Protocol, located on the CA Intranet, prior to taking any photographs when documenting a child's physical condition related to CA/N. Protocols may authorize photographs of the child by law enforcement, a child advocacy center, another agency or forensic interviewer.
4. When the case does not meet the County Child Abuse, Fatality and Criminal Neglect Investigation Protocol, complete the following to document a child's physical condition related CA/N:
  1. Prior to taking any photographs, request parent or caregiver permission in a Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and Division of Licensed Resources (DLR) child protective services (CPS) investigation case if the parent is present and has care and custody of the child.
  2. Prior to taking any photographs, request permission from the child who has the capacity to understand what giving permission means.
  3. Obtain parental permission if photographs are needed in a [Family Assessment Response \(FAR\)](#) case.
  4. Document the caseworker's request to photograph a child and the child or parent's answer in FamLink.
  5. Photograph the child when the alleged subject is not present whenever possible.
  6. Take one full-length photograph of the child that includes his or her face.
  7. Photograph the injury that show the shape, size and location of the injury. Include photographs taken from a distance and close-up with a standard measurement (such as a ruler) to demonstrate size.
  8. If an alleged injury is located under clothing, caseworkers may ask a child to remove outerwear, roll-up sleeves, or pant legs, lift up shirt to expose back or lower torso. Removal of clothing will be based on the child's age and development.
  9. Photographing a child may not be possible or appropriate due to, but not limited to, the following:

1. The child is unable to communicate verbally due to a developmental disability as defined in [RCW 71A.10.020](#).
2. The child demonstrates emotional distress or discomfort about being photographed.
3. The parent or child does not give permission.
4. When a photograph of a child cannot be taken:
  1. The caseworker must ask the parent and child, if present, for permission to observe the injury.
  2. If the observation is permitted, document the following information on the [Child's Physical Description form DSHS 15-359](#) or in a case note and staff with supervisor:
    1. Child's name and date of birth
    2. Case number
    3. Location, date, and time of contact with the child.
    4. Caseworker name, office and phone number
    5. Name of any other adult present for the face-to-face with the child.
    6. When applicable, facility name, type of license and address
    7. Description of the child's physical condition that may include injuries (location, shape, size, color)
    8. When applicable, the name, date, and contact information of any other professionals who viewed the injury.
  3. If observation of the injury is not permitted:
    1. Assess if [present danger](#) exists during contact with the child;
    2. If [present danger](#) does not exist, request the parent take the child to his or her primary care physician or urgent care provider.
  4. If the parent will not or does not access medical care for the child:
    1. Staff with your supervisor; and
    2. Notify law enforcement.
5. When taking photographs of the child's surroundings, the DCFS/CPS caseworker and DLR/CPS investigator must:
  1. Request permission from the parent or caregiver.
  2. Photograph the room or area at a distance to identify place and overall condition.
  3. Take photographs of health and safety hazards that are outside of the house and the hazards are in public view.
  4. Take close-up photographs of items that present health and safety risks.
  5. Take photographs with and without an item of standard measurement to demonstrate size.
  6. Take photographs to demonstrate progress when identified health and safety risks have been eliminated.

7. Document the following in a case note:
  1. Caseworker's request for permission and the caregiver's response in FamLink.
  2. When a photograph of a child's surroundings cannot be taken or permission from the caregiver is not given:
    1. Name of any other individuals who were present at the time of the observations.
    2. Description of the environment as it relates to the child's health and safety.
6. DLR workers must document conditions of a home or facility as necessary by doing the following:
  1. Obtain caregiver permission to photograph items inside and the condition of the home or facility.
  2. Photograph the room or area at a distance to identify place and overall condition.
  3. Take close-up photographs of items that present any health and safety risks.
  4. Take photographs to demonstrate progress when identified health and safety risks have been eliminated.
  5. Document the worker's request and caregiver's response in FamLink.
7. The CA caseworker must:
  1. Photograph and document a child's height and weight within five business days of placement in out-of-home care per [2421. Emergency Planning for Children in Out-of-Home Care](#) policy.
  2. Photograph and update the height and weight information of the child:
    1. When there are significant changes in the child, e.g. change in appearance, major weight loss or gain, etc.
    2. Every six months for a child younger than six years.
    3. Annually for a child age six years and older
  3. Follow [43103. Washington State Identocard, Instruction Permit and Personal Driver License for Foster Youth](#) policy when photographing a youth to obtain a state issued photo identification card prior to his or her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday
  4. Include a clear photograph of the child when referring to the Washington Adoption Resource Exchange (WARE) per [45406. Family Selection and Recruitment](#) policy.
8. CA staff must upload every photograph taken of the child or child's surroundings, except those taken for Identocard purposes, into File Upload in FamLink in their unaltered state within seven calendar days. This includes photographs that are not clear or taken in error. CA staff must not delete photographs from the device until uploaded into FamLink. Uploaded photographs must include the following information:
  1. Date and time of the photograph.
  2. Location where the photograph was taken.
  3. A brief description of what is in the photograph.
  4. First and last name of the photographer.
  5. Title, workplace and contact information of the photographer.

9. CA staff must assess for [present danger](#) and report to intake when any child which there is an open case is believed to be at imminent risk of serious harm or there is a new allegation of child abuse or neglect.
10. CA staff must upload every photograph received from any individual or entity, such as law enforcement or providers, into FamLink. Maintain all hard copies of photographs in the hard-copy file. Document the following in a case note when a photograph is received:
  1. Date the photograph was received.
  2. Name of the person who provided the photograph.
  3. Name and contact information of the person who took the photograph, if available.
  4. Description of what the photograph depicts
  5. Any additional information specific to the pictures.

## Forms

- [Child's Physical Description DSHS 15-359](#)
- Request for "Washington State Identicard" DSHS 11-077

## Resources

- CPS Guide
- FamLink File Upload Quick Help Guide (CA Intranet)
- Storing Multiple Images in FamLink (CA Intranet)
- Digital Photo Quick Help (CA Intranet)
- How to Attach an Image to a Case [Image Upload](#) (CA Intranet)
- [Areas of Suspicious Bruising](#)
- [Ten-4 Bruising Rule](#)
- [Normal vs. Suspicious Bruising](#)

# Appendix A: Definitions

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

**"ADMINISTRATIVE INCIDENTS"** are serious and emergent incidents involving CA clients, staff and providers.

**"ADOPTION SUPPORT AGREEMENT"** means a written contract between the adoptive parent(s) and the department that identifies the specific support available to the adoptive parent(s) and other terms and conditions of the agreement.

**"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.



**“AGE OR DEVELOPMENTALLY-APPROPRIATE”** means activities or items that are generally accepted as suitable for children of the same chronological age or level of maturity or that are determined to be developmentally-appropriate for a child, based on the development of cognitive, emotional, physical, and behavioral capacities that are typical for an age or age group; and in the case of a specific child, activities or items that are suitable for the child based on the developmental stages attained by the child with respect to the cognitive, emotional, physical, and behavioral capacities of the child.

**"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

**“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.”

**“BORROWED FOSTER HOME”** means the placement and supervision by an agency of child(ren) in a foster family home licensed or certified by another agency, with the permission of that agency.

**"Caregiver"** means an adult living in the home permanently or semi-permanently and has routine responsibility for childcare. This may be the other legally responsible adult, another adult relative or a live-in partner. It may also be any other adult with regular ongoing time in the home and has routine responsibility for childcare.

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

**“CERTIFICATION FOR ADOPTION”** means a person or persons constituting a household have submitted an application for adoption to the department or a child placing agency, have had a satisfactory home study completed, and have been determined suitable as adoptive parent or parents.

**"CHILD," "JUVENILE,"** and **"YOUTH"** mean any unemancipated individual who is under the chronological age of 18 years. RCW 13.32A.030

**"CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT"**

CPS WAC Definitions of CA/N

Child abuse or neglect means the injury, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, negligent treatment, or maltreatment of a child under circumstances which indicate that the child's health, welfare, and safety is harmed. An abused child is a child who has been subjected to child abuse or neglect as defined in this section.

- A. Physical abuse means the non-accidental infliction of physical injury or physical mistreatment on a child. Physical abuse includes, but is not limited to, such actions as:
  - 1. Throwing, kicking, burning, or cutting a child;
  - 2. Striking a child with a closed fist;
  - 3. Shaking a child under age three;
  - 4. Interfering with a child's breathing;
  - 5. Threatening a child with a deadly weapon;
  - 6. Doing any other act that is likely to cause and which does cause bodily harm greater than transient pain or minor temporary marks or which is injurious to the child's health, welfare and safety.
- B. Physical discipline of a child, including the reasonable use of corporal punishment, is not considered abuse when it is reasonable and moderate and is inflicted by a parent or guardian for the purposes of restraining or correcting the child.
  - 1. The age, size, and condition of the child, and the location of any inflicted injury shall be considered in determining whether the bodily harm is reasonable or moderate.
  - 2. Other factors may include the developmental level of the child and the nature of the child's misconduct.
  - 3. A parent's belief that it is necessary to punish a child does not justify or permit the use of excessive, immoderate or unreasonable force against the child.
- C. Sexual abuse means committing or allowing to be committed any sexual offense against a child as defined in the criminal code.
  - 1. The intentional touching, either directly or through the clothing, of the sexual or other intimate parts of a child or allowing, permitting, compelling, encouraging, aiding, or otherwise causing a child to engage in touching the sexual or other intimate parts of another for the purpose of gratifying the sexual desire of the person touching the child, the child, or a third party.
  - 2. A parent or guardian of a child, a person authorized by the parent or guardian to provide childcare for the child, or a person providing medically recognized services for the child, may touch a child in the sexual or other intimate parts for the purposes of providing hygiene, child care, and medical treatment or diagnosis.
- D. Sexual exploitation includes, but is not limited to, such actions as allowing, permitting, compelling, encouraging, aiding, or otherwise causing a child to engage in:
  - 1. Prostitution;
  - 2. Sexually explicit, obscene or pornographic activity to be photographed, filmed, or electronically reproduced or transmitted; or
  - 3. Sexually explicit, obscene or pornographic activity as part of a live performance, or for the benefit or sexual gratification of another person.
- E. Negligent treatment or maltreatment means an act or a failure to act on the part of a child's parent, legal custodian, guardian, or caregiver that shows a serious disregard of

the consequences to the child of such magnitude that it creates a clear and present danger to the child's health, welfare, and safety. A child does not have to suffer actual damage or physical or emotional harm to be in circumstances which create a clear and present danger to the child's health, welfare, and safety. Negligent treatment or maltreatment includes, but is not limited, to:

1. Failure to provide adequate food, shelter, clothing, supervision, or health care necessary for a child's health, welfare, and safety. Poverty and/or homelessness do not constitute negligent treatment or maltreatment in and of themselves;
  2. Actions, failures to act, or omissions that result in injury to or which create a substantial risk of injury to the physical, emotional, and/or cognitive development of a child; or
  3. The cumulative effects of consistent inaction or behavior by a parent or guardian in providing for the physical, emotional and developmental needs of a child's, or the effects of chronic failure on the part of a parent or guardian to perform basic parental functions, obligations, and duties, when the result is to cause injury or create a substantial risk of injury to the physical, emotional, and/or cognitive development of a child.
- F. A Parent or guardian abandons a child when the parent or guardian is responsible for the care, education, or support of a child and:
1. Deserts the child in any manner whatever with the intent to abandon the child;
  2. Leaves a child without the means or ability to obtain one or more of the basic necessities of life such as food, water, shelter, clothing, hygiene, and medically necessary health care; or
  3. Forgoes for an extended period of time parental rights, functions, duties and obligations despite an ability to exercise such rights, duties, and obligations.
- G. Abandonment of a child by a parent may be established by conduct on the part of a parent or guardian that demonstrates a substantial lack of regard for the rights, duties, and obligations of the parent or guardian or for the health, welfare, and safety of the child. Criminal activity or incarceration of a parent or guardian does not constitute abandonment in and of themselves, but a pattern of criminal activity or repeated or long term incarceration may constitute abandonment of a child.

**"CHILD ACTION PLAN"** means the services and tasks that are provided to the child and placement provider as necessary to support the placement and meet the needs of the child while in out-of-home care. The Child Action Plan includes objectives and tasks pertaining to the following:

- Educational needs
- Medical needs
- Social needs
- Psychological needs
- Cultural needs
- Independent living needs

**"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

**"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

**"CHILD PLACING AGENCY"** means an agency which places a child or children for temporary care, continued care, or for adoption.

**"CLIENT"** means, for the purposes of defining a child client is a child (or youth up to age 21) in the care, custody, and/or supervision of the Children's Administration and/or the Department of Social and Health Services as it relates to services CA provides.

**"COMMERCIALLY SEXUALLY EXPLOITED CHILD"** (see also SEX TRAFFICKING VICTIM) means a child who has not attained 18 years of age who is induced to perform any sex act on account of which anything of value is given to or received by any person.

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

**"COMPELLING REASON"** means, for purposes of the Adoption and Safe Families Act and RCW, a factor in case planning that presents an unusual circumstance that makes necessary a decision which would not normally be made for a child or family. "Compelling Reason" includes, but is not necessary limited to:

- 1. Circumstances in which a child:
  - 1. Is over age 14 and is opposed, following a discussion with the caseworker of the alternatives, to adoption as a permanent plan;
  - 2. Has significant ties to the child's family which are positive and expected to be on-going and would be disrupted by termination of parental rights;

3. Is in placement for reasons other than abuse, neglect, abandonment, or no parent able or willing to care for the child (e, g., children in care due to the risk they pose to others, due to behavioral management issues, etc.);
  4. Does not have a permanent placement resource identified and for whom there is significant risk that an adoptive resource will not be found; or
  5. Has other unique situations described in the court report by the caseworker that constitute compelling reasons not to file a petition to terminate parental rights.
2. The supervising agency is required to recruit, identify, and process a permanency placement resource for a child when a permanent plan other than reunification is identified for the child. In unusual circumstances, it may be appropriate to leave a child in a temporary placement setting until the court decision-making process is completed or in order to meet the treatment needs of the child.
  3. The court or CA has determined that:
    1. A birth parent is considering relinquishment within a reasonable time to free the child for adoption.
    2. A non-offending parent is pursuing an alternate permanent plan.
    3. A professional assessment of the child has determined the child is unable to remain within a family setting.
  4. The parent is incarcerated and:
    1. The incarceration is the only reason for filing the TPR; and
    2. The court has determined the parent maintains a meaningful role in the child's life.
  5. The child's Tribe is opposed to adoption and has identified another acceptable permanency plan for the child per RCW 13.38.150.

**"COMPLIANCE AGREEMENT"** means a written plan approved by DSHS which identifies deficiencies in Contractor's performance, describes the steps a contractor must take to correct the deficiencies, and sets forth timeframes the contractor must meet in order to return to compliance within the terms of the contract.

**"CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT"** is the complete process of identifying, describing and analyzing strengths and problems and then testing, implementing, learning from and revising solutions; the ongoing process by which the agency makes decisions and evaluates its progress.

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

**"CONTRACT"** is a legally binding written agreement between DSHS and another public or private entity for the provision of goods or services. Terms such as Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or Service Level Agreement (SLA) may also be used to refer to contracts falling within the scope of the Contracts policy.

**"CONTRACT FORMAT"** means an electronic or hard copy contract template developed or approved by Central Contracts Legal Service. A contract format includes but is not limited to: data elements, general terms and conditions, and special terms and conditions. All approved contract formats are available in the Agency Contract Database for use by authorized staff.

**"CONTRACT RESOURCES"** means the Regional and Statewide Contract Directories on the Intranet/Internet, as well as the Regional Contract/Program Managers.

**"CONTRACTED AND/OR LICENSED PROVIDER"**:The individuals or entity performing services pursuant to contracting with Children's Administration.

**"CRITICAL INCIDENT"** is an event that requires an immediate and thorough response, notification, information gathering and communication. All critical incidents are reported through the Administrative Incident Reporting System (AIRS) and in some high profile situations may require an initial phone call alert to headquarters staff. Critical incidents include:

- Fatality or near fatality of a child with an open case.
- Fatality or near fatality of a child which services were provided to the family within 12 months preceding the child's death or near fatality, including information only referrals.
- High profile event receiving media coverage and involves an individual or family for whom we have provided services.

**"CULTURAL COMPETENCE"** means a set of behaviors and attitudes that enables individuals working with a child or family to learn about or recognize the cultural context of a situation and to integrate that knowledge into an action.

**"CULTURAL CONSULTANTS"** means 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"** means the distinguishable differences in life styles, values, traditions, religions, etc.

**"CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE"** means 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"** means 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

**"DESK REVIEW"** means a monitoring activity comprised of reviewing information including but not limited to the contractor's payment and billing system, and reports to verify contract compliance.

**"DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES"** means:

- 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.
- D. Infant - a child from birth until one year of age.
- E. Toddler - a child age one but less than six years.

**"DLR COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW"**: The Comprehensive Review is a thorough review of the BRS contractor or other contracted and/or licensed provider's ability to meet licensing, contracts, and programming requirements. It includes an onsite review, completion of approved forms and tools, and a final report.

**"DOCUMENTED MEDICAL CONDITION"** is any physical or mental health condition documented by a licensed health care provider that may be temporary or permanent, including but not limited to, a physical injury or a physical or behavioral health condition.

A "documented medical condition" may include physiological, mental, or psychological conditions or disorders, including but not limited to, orthopedic, visual, speech, and hearing impairments.

**"ETHNIC"** means a group designated by customs, characteristics, language, common history and/or racial affiliation.

**"ETHNOGRAPHIC INTERVIEWING"** means communication with a member of another culture to identify the:

- A. Key cultural differences.
- B. 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

**"EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES"** (in relation to adoption support) means a finding by an administrative law judge or a review judge that one or more certain qualifying conditions or events prevented an otherwise eligible child from being placed on the adoption support program prior to adoption.

**"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.

- 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

**“FOSTER CARE”** means placement of a child by the department or a licensed child placing agency in a home or facility licensed pursuant to chapter 74.15 RCW or in a home or facility that is not required to be licensed pursuant to chapter 74.15 RCW.

**“FOSTER FAMILY CARE”** means 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”** means 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; 13.34.030

**“HEALTH & EDUCATION RECORD”** means the entire array of data entry screens in the electronic data system, including the provider, education, behavior, counseling, and daily routine information entered by CA staff.

**“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.010 RCW

**“IMMINENT RISK OF SERIOUS HARM”** (Used in Risk Only Intakes and coordination with law enforcement)

Imminent - Having the potential to occur at any moment, or there is substantial likelihood that harm will be experienced.

Risk of Serious Harm - A high likelihood of a child being abused or experiencing negligent treatment or maltreatment that could result in one or more of the following outcomes:

- Death



- Life endangering illness
- Injury requiring medical attention
- Substantial risk of injury to the physical, emotional, or cognitive development

**"IMPENDING DANGER"** means parenting behavior that is harmful and destructive to a child's cognitive, social, emotional or physical development that is likely to occur in the immediate or near future that could result in one of more of the following outcomes:

- Death
- Life endangering illness
- Injury requiring medical attention
- Serious or severe harm

**"INDIAN CHILD"** means any unmarried person under the age of 18 who is:

- A. A member of or eligible for membership in a federal recognized Indian Tribe, or who is Eskimo, Aleut, or other Alaska Native, or a member of an Alaskan Native regional corporation or Alaska Native Village;
- B. Determined or eligible to be found to be Indian by the Secretary of the Interior, including through issuance of a certificate of Degree of Indian Blood or by the Indian Health Service;
- C. Considered to be Indian by a federally recognized or non-federally recognized Indian Tribe or off-reservation Indian/Alaska Native community organization; or
- D. A member or entitled to be a member of a Canadian Tribe or Band, Metis community, or non-status Indian community from Canada.

**"INFORMED CONSENT"** means the process by which the treating health care provider discloses appropriate information to a competent patient or their caregiver so that a decision can be made to accept or refuse treatment; including medications. It originates from the legal and ethical right the patient has to direct what happens to their body and from the ethical duty of the physician to involve the patient in their health care.

**"IN-HOME SERVICES"** means services provided in the child's home in lieu of out-of-home placement equivalent to the level of service intensity required to maintain the child in residential care.

**"IN LOCO PARENTIS"** A person who acts in the position of a parent of a child and who has assumed on an on-going basis a parent's rights, duties and responsibilities towards the child. A person living in the home and participating in the day-to-day parenting decisions in one or more of the following:

- Financial
- Supervision
- Decisions on where the child sleeps within the home
- Discipline
- Attending medical appointments

- Attending school conferences

**"INQUIRY ONLY CALLS"** occur when someone contacts Children's Administration for the sole purpose of obtaining information and not for purposes of alleging CA/N or requesting services specific to CA.

**"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

**LEGALLY FREE** -A child is legally free for adoption if the child has no legal parent, either because the parent has died or because parental rights have been terminated (through relinquishment or involuntary termination) by a court order.

**"LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY"** means persons are limited in their ability to read, write or speak English or have a limited ability to speak or read English well enough to understand and communicate effectively.

**"MEDICAL HISTORY"** means health information on the child contained in the child's case record, as required by the *CA Practices and Procedures Guide*, chapter 4000, section 43092, Health and Education Record.

**"MEDICAL NECESSITYFOR INPATIENT MENTAL HEALTH CARE"** means a requested service which is reasonably calculated to: (a) diagnose, correct, cure, or alleviate a mental disorder; or (b) prevent the worsening of mental conditions that endanger life or cause suffering and pain, or result in illness or infirmity or threaten to cause or aggravate a handicap, or cause physical deformity or malfunction, and there is no adequate less restrictive alternative available. RCW 71.34.020

**"MISSING CHILD"** means any child under the care and authority of CA and the child's whereabouts are unknown and/or the child has left care without the permission of the child's caregiver or CA. This does not include children in dependency guardianship

**"MONITORING"** includes any activity that reviews and evaluates contractor performance and compliance with the terms, conditions, and requirements of a contract.

**"MONITORING PLAN"** means a written proposal for monitoring contractor(s) compliance with the contract requirements and obligations. The plan is based on the assessment of risk to the department and its clients as well as the performance of services by the contractor.

**"NEAR FATALITY"** means an act that, as certified by a physician, places the child in serious or critical condition. RCW 74.13.500

**"NEWBORN"** or **"NEONATE"** means a child up to age 1 month (4 weeks old).

**"ON-SITE REVIEW"** is a contract monitoring activity that reviews and evaluates contractor performance and compliance with the terms, conditions, and requirements of a contract at the contractor's place of business.

**"ORIGINAL PLACEMENT DATE"** or **"ORIGINAL FOSTER CARE PLACEMENT"**, for the purposes of the Social Security Act and federal regulations, means the date of the child's most recent removal from the child's home and placement into foster care under the care and responsibility of the state agency. 45 CFR 1356.21(k)

This definition applies both to children placed in foster care under a voluntary agreement and to those children under the state's responsibility through court order. Therefore, the original date of placement, for purposes of Title IV-E and section 422 of Title IV-B, would be when the child is in foster care and the state has been given responsibility for care either through a voluntary placement agreement or a court adjudication. PIQ 83-06

**"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

**"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

**"PARENTING STATUS"** means:

- 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:
  4. **Legal** - a current court order designating a parent's right to the child's custody that may include:
    - a. Joint custody.
    - b. Parenting plans.
    - c. Shared custody.
    - d. Sole custody to one parent.
  5. **Physical** - the parent(s) with whom the child resides or is found.
- D. **Stepparent** - 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.

**"PERIOD OF PURPLE CRYING"** is a phrase used to describe the time in a baby's life when they cry more than any other time:

1. The word "PURPLE" is an acronym that describes the characteristics of infant crying:
  1. Peak of Crying - Crying peaks during the second month, decreasing after that
  2. Unexpected - Crying comes and goes unexpectedly, for no apparent reason
  3. Resists Soothing - Crying may continue despite all soothing efforts by caregivers
    1. Encouragement of soothing has been shown to help in up to 50% of cases
  4. Pain-like Face - Infants look like they are in pain, even when they are not
  5. Long Lasting - Crying can go on for 30-40 minutes at a time, and often for much longer up to 5 hours in some cases
  6. Evening Crying - Crying occurs more in the late afternoon and evening
2. The word "Period" informs caregivers that the crying is a temporary event.

**"PLACEMENT DECISION"** means 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

**"PRESENT DANGER"** means immediate, significant, and clearly observable severe harm or threat of severe harm occurring in the present.

**"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

**"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

**"PRN"** stands for *pro re nata* and means "As needed."

**"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

**"PROTECTIVE ACTION"** means an immediate short term response to control present danger observed at first contact with a family. Or at any time present danger is identified to manage the immediate threats to a child.

**"PSYCHOTROPIC MEDICATION"** means medication, the prescribed intent of which is to affect or alter thought processes, mood, sleep, or behavior, including, but not limited to, anti-psychotic, antidepressant, and anxiolytic medications. The classification of a medication depends

on its stated, intended effect when prescribed because it may have many different effects. Examples of some such medications are:

- Amitriptyline/Elavil
- Desipramine/Norpramine
- Amoxapine/Asendin
- Imipramine/Tofranil
- Trimipramine/Surmontil
- Fluoxetine/Prozac
- Sertraline/Zoloft
- Phenzine/Nardil
- Isocarboxazid/Marplan
- Burpropion/Wellbutrin
- Carbamazepine/Tegretol
- Lithium/Eskalith or Lithobid
- Chlordiazepoxide/Librium
- Diazepam/Valium
- Lorazepam/Ativan
- Propranolol/Inderal
- Chlorpromazine/Thorazine
- Haloperidol/Haldol
- Trifluoperazine/Stelazine
- Thioridazine/Mellaril
- Methylphenidate/Ritalin
- Pemoline/Cylert
- Amphetamine Sulfate/Amphetamine

"**QUALITY ASSURANCE**" measures compliance against standards and informs continuous quality improvement.

**REASONABLE AND PRUDENT PARENTING STANDARD** means the standard characterized by careful and sensible parental decisions that maintain the health, safety, and best interests of a child while at the same time encouraging the emotional and developmental growth of the child, that a caregiver or designated official for a child care institution shall use when determining whether to allow a child in foster care to participate in extracurricular, enrichment, cultural, and social activities. (See [Caregiver Guidelines For Foster Childhood Activities](#)).

The term 'age or developmentally-appropriate' means:

1. Activities or items that are generally accepted as suitable for children of the same chronological age or level of maturity or that are determined to be developmentally-appropriate for a child, based on the development of cognitive, emotional, physical, and behavioral capacities that are typical for an age or age group; and
2. In the case of a specific child, activities or items that are suitable for the child based on the developmental stages attained by the child with respect to the cognitive, emotional, physical, and behavioral capacities of the child.

**"RELATIVE"** From 74.15.010 (2) (a) (i-vi): Persons related to the child, expectant mother, or person with developmental disability in the following ways:

1. Any blood relative, including those of half-blood, and including first cousins, second cousins, nephews or nieces, and persons of preceding generations as denoted by prefixes of grand, great, or great-great;
2. Stepfather, stepmother, stepbrother, and stepsister;
3. A person who legally adopts a child or the child's parent as well as the natural and other legally adopted children of such persons, and other relatives of the adoptive parents in accordance with state law;
4. Spouses of any persons named in 1, 2 or 3 above, even after the marriage is terminated;
5. Relatives, as named in 1, 2, 3 or 4 or of any half sibling of the child, or
6. Extended family members, as defined by the law or custom of the Indian child's tribe or, in the absence of such law or custom, a person who has reached the age of eighteen and who is the Indian child's grandparent, aunt or uncle, brother or sister, brother-in-law or sister-in-law, niece or nephew, first or second cousin, or stepparent who provides care in the family abode on a twenty-four-hour basis to an Indian child as defined in 25 U.S.C. Sec. 1903(4).

**"RESIDENTIAL CARE"** is 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."

**"RUNAWAY"** is a juvenile who leaves and remains away from home without parental permission. (This definition is taken from "The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act".) **"SAFE"** child means children are considered safe when there is no present danger or impending danger threats or the caregiver's protective capacities control all known safety threats.

**"SAFE HAVEN (Safety of Newborn Children Act)"** Allows a parent to transfer (abandon) a newborn anonymously and without criminal liability at a hospital emergency room, fire station or federally designated rural health clinic if open and personnel are present to accept the child.

**"SAFETY THRESHOLD"** means the criteria that must be met in the family's situation to determine that a vulnerable child is unsafe. Criteria include threats to safety that 1) are observable and specific, 2) immediate or near future, 3) out of control, 4) have the potential for severe impacts, there is a vulnerable child 5) there is a vulnerable child.

**"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

**"SERIOUS INJURY"** of a child client is an injury requiring professional and medical treatment (beyond first aid).

**"SERVICE AGREEMENT"** means 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.

**"SEX TRAFFICKING"** means the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining, patronizing, or soliciting of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act.

**"SEX TRAFFICKING VICTIM"** (Commercially Sexually Exploited Child) means any child or youth over whom the State/Tribal agency has responsibility for placement, care, or supervision and who the agency has reasonable cause to believe is, or is at risk of being, a sex trafficking victim (including children for whom an agency has an open case file but who have not been removed from the home, children who have run away from foster care and who have not attained 18 years of age or such older age as the State has elected under section 475(8) of this the Act, and youth who are not in foster care but are receiving services under this section.

**"SEXUALLY EXPLOITED YOUTH"** means any person under the age of eighteen who is a victim of one of the following crimes:

- Commercial sexual abuse of a minor (RCW 9.68A.100),
- Promoting commercial sexual abuse of a minor (RCW 9.68A.101) or
- Promoting travel for commercial sexual abuse of a minor (RCW 9.68A.102)

**"SPECIAL NEEDS"** means the specific factors or conditions that apply to the child and that may prevent the child from being adopted unless the department provides adoption support services.

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

**"SUBSTANCE-AFFECTED NEWBORN"** means a newborn child who has withdrawal symptoms resulting from prenatal substance exposure and/or demonstrates physical or behavioral signs that can be attributed to prenatal exposure to substances.

**"SUBSTANCE-EXPOSED NEWBORN"** means a newborn child who tests positive for substance(s) at birth, or the mother tests positive for substance(s) at the time of delivery or the newborn is identified by a medical practitioner as having been prenatally exposed to substance(s).

**"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

**"TREATMENT FOSTER CARE"** means 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.

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

**"UNFOUNDED"** means available information indicates that, more likely than not, child abuse or neglect did not occur. Chapter 26.44.020

**"UNSAFE"** child means children are considered unsafe when they are vulnerable to present or impending danger and caregiver(s) is unable or unwilling to provide protection.

## Appendix C

[Click here to open the pdf: \*Caregiver Guidelines For Foster Childhood Activities To Assist In Caregiver Decision Making\*](#)

[Click here to open the pdf: \*DLR Shared Decision Making Policy Matrix\*](#)