ORANGE COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES AGENCY
CFS OPERATIONS MANUAL

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Out-of-Home Placement

Purpose

To provide guidelines for placing and supporting a child in out-of-home care. **Note:** For guidelines on placement of non-minor dependents, see CFS P&P Non-Minor Dependent (NMD) Placements (J-0102).

Approved

This policy was approved by Gary Taylor, CFS Director, on March 26, 2014. *Signature on file*.

Most Recent Revision

This revision of the Policy and Procedure (P&P) incorporates:

- Information from Assembly Bill (AB) 2209 (2012) and AB 74 (2013) which amended and added sections within the Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) regarding the placement of foster children outside the United States as well as in group care
- Guidelines for use of a needs and services plan and statement of known or suspected dangerous behaviors previously contained in CFS P&Ps Needs and Services Plan (K-0202) and Statement of Behaviors with Potential Risk and/or Safety Concerns (K-0213), which are rendered obsolete
- CFS policy requiring Deputy Director (DD) approval prior to placement in a home with a known inconclusive sexual abuse allegation

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Background

Federal and State legislation mandates efforts to prevent lengthy placements of children in foster care, to place siblings together, and to expedite establishment of legal permanency. Additionally, children will be placed in the least restrictive and most appropriate setting best suited to meet their needs and promote educational stability with familial and other important relationships supported.

Legal mandates also address record maintenance, information provided to caregivers, and when a child may be placed in another county, state, or country.

Within Children and Family Services (CFS), only specified social workers (referred to as Placing social workers) in select programs place children in out-of-home care. The programs which place children include:

- Placement Coordination Services (PCS)
  - Diversion
  - Relative Assessment Unit (RAU)
  - Foster Home (FH) Placement
- Permanency Services Program (PSP)
- Specialized Family Services (SFS)/Medical Placement
- Adoptions/Concurrent Planning (CP)

Definitions

None.

POLICY

Placement Selection Factors

In accordance with Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) Section (§) 16013, out-of-home caregivers and providers will be considered regardless of actual or perceived race, ethnic group identification, ancestry, national origin, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, mental or physical disability, or Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) status.

In addition, per the Multiethnic Placement Act (MEPA) of 1994 and Family Code (FAM) § 7950, a placement will not be selected, delayed, or denied solely on the basis of the race, color, or national origin of the child or caregiver. MEPA does not extend to placements covered by the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) of 1978. For placement of children with Native American heritage, see CFS P&P Indian Child Welfare Act (G-0309).

Per WIC § 16501.1(c), California Department of Social Services (CDSS) Manual of Policy and Procedures (MPP), Division 31-420, and All County Letter (ACL) 07-28, the placement selected for a child will be based on, yet not limited to, the following factors:

- Caregiver's ability to meet the health, safety, and well-being needs of the child
- Safest, least restrictive, most family-like environment that serves the day-to-day needs of the child
- Environment that permits the child to engage in reasonable, age appropriate day-to-day activities that promote the most family-like environment for the child
- Most appropriate setting that is available and in close proximity to the parent's home and child's school
- Child's age, sex, and cultural background, including racial or ethnic and religious identification
- Planned parent/guardian-child contacts during the separation, and the specific actions to be taken by the parent/guardian which will facilitate reunification
- Caregiver's willingness and ability to meet specific needs of the child, facilitate Family Reunification (FR), and provide the child's permanency alternative, if necessary
- Child's health and emotional factors
- Anticipated special needs of the child, including but not limited to transportation, diet, medical and/or psychological care, clothing, recreation, and special education
- Most appropriate placement selection

Placement Order

As indicated in CDSS MPP, Division 31-420 and WIC § 16501.1(c), placement options will be considered in order from least restrictive to most restrictive, as follows:

A. Non-custodial parent
B. Preferential relatives (i.e., adult grandparent, aunt/uncle, sibling)
C. Relatives to the fifth degree
D. Non-Relative Extended Family Members (NREFMs)
E. Licensed Foster Family Home (FFH)
F. Foster Family Agency (FFA) certified home
G. Group Home (GH)

Temporary/ Emergency Placements

As indicated in CDSS MPP Division 31-410, temporary, emergency placements may be used when a child has been removed from his/her home or foster placement and cannot be promptly returned.

When selecting a temporary, emergency placement, CFS staff will consider, yet not be limited, to the following factors:

- Least restrictive, most family-like environment
- Child's age and sex
- Child's health and any special medical or psychological care
- Need for access to, or protection from, the child's parents
- Protective needs of the community

Temporary, emergency placements may include:

A. A relative/NREFM approved on an emergency basis. See CFS P&P Relative/NREFM Placement Assessments P&P (K-0105).

B. An emergency shelter home (ESH), which is a licensed FFH or FFA certified home (i.e., FFA-ST), that contracts or agrees to provide short-term care, a maximum of 30 calendar days.

   Per CDSS MPP Division 31-415, extensions beyond 30 days require Program Manager (PM) approval and may be considered when:

   - Emergency shelter care is necessary to meet the continuing protective needs of the child, and there is no other location wherein these protective needs can be met
   - The child has special needs which render placement extremely difficult, and no other location is available wherein the child's special needs can be met

   Staff within PCS initiate, process, and approve requests for ESH extensions through the use of *Administrative Approval—Emergency Shelter Care Beyond 30 Days (F063-28-135)*. Instructions for routing timelines, review, and approval responsibilities are provided on form.

C. Temporary/Transitional Shelter Home (TSH): A licensed group home designated for short-term stays of up to 90 days while awaiting a placement appropriate to meet the child's needs.

TSHs available to CFS may include Orangewood Children and Family Center (OCFC), Court Replacement Facility (CRF), Sibling Assessment Facility (SAF), and contracted organizations operating specified cottages at Tustin Family Campus (TFC).

Children Aged 12 Years and Under Exception: Per WIC §§ 319.2 and 319.3, children aged 12 years and under in temporary custody may be placed in a TSH/group home only when Court finds that placement is necessary to secure a complete and adequate evaluation, including placement planning and transition time. Further, the placement period may not exceed 60 days unless:

- A case plan has been developed and the need for additional time is documented in the case plan
- The need for additional time is approved by a Deputy Director (DD) or DD on Duty (DDOD)

If a child aged 12 years or under requires placement in a TSH beyond 60 days, the assigned Senior Social Worker (SSW) will seek DD/DDOD approval via completion and submittal of *DD/DDOD Approval for Group Home Placement Extension (F063-25-743)* within 10 days prior to the 60th day of placement (i.e., by the 50th day in TSH). Instructions for completion, review/approval responsibilities, and routing distribution are provided on form.

OCFC Exception: Pursuant to Title 22, Chapter 5, Subchapter 2, § 84200(c), OCFC is unable to accommodate children under six years of age beyond 30 days; therefore, no exceptions beyond 30 days at OCFC will be allowed for children under six years of age.

Placement Options and Referral Process

A search for an appropriate placement will be initiated upon the designated program receiving a referral. Referrals are submitted when:

- A child is taken into protective custody
- A child is held at First Step Assessment Center at OCFC
- An out-of-home caregiver provides notice for removal from placement
- A temporary placement is needed on an emergency basis

At times, multiple placement programs (e.g., both a CP worker and FH Placement worker) are assigned to locate the most appropriate placement for a child. Therefore, it is vital that Placing social workers communicate with one another as well as with the assigned SSW to exchange critical child information and to minimize confusion.

Within CFS, the continuum of out-of-home placements include:

A. **Approved Relative/NREFM:**
A relative or NREFM home that is approved as meeting the same standards as licensed FFHs as set forth in CCR, Title 22, Division 6, Chapter 9.5, Article 3. See CFS P&P Relative/NREFM Placement Assessments (K-0105).

Diversion: Completes assessments of relative/NREFM homes and places children in approved homes when selected for placement.

RAU: Completes assessments of approved relative/NREFM homes when the caregiver changes residence, the home is being considered for placement of an additional child, or there is a change in the home's structure (e.g., remodel, new swimming pool, etc.) or household composition (i.e., adult moves in or out).

Referral process: Complete *Relative/NREFM Clearance and Assessment Referral (F063-04-815A)* and submit as directed on form.

B. **Foster Family Home (FFH):**
An individual, licensed by CFS Licensing, who provides 24-hour care and supervision for foster children in their home.

FH Placement: Places children in FFHs when no known or suitable relative/NREFM resource is available. In addition, may place children who require more than a standard level of medical care (i.e., Levels 1 and 2) but do not require medical equipment in a small family home.

SFS/Special Medical Placement: Places children with specialized health care needs or prescribed medical equipment (i.e., Levels 3 and 4) when no known or suitable relative/NREFM resource is available.

Referral process: Complete and submit *Placement Referral (F063-28-120)* to Placement Services In-Box. For children with specialized health care needs, consult with the SFS Special Medical Placement worker pursuant to CFS P&P Special Medical Placements (K-0801).

C. **Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care (MTFC):**
A specialized FFH trained and supported in providing evidenced-based treatment interventions to a child as an alternative to group home care. For placement criteria and referral process, see CFS P&P Wraparound Referral and Services (D-0511).

D. **Concurrent Planning Home:**
An approved or licensed home with an approved adoption home study that accepts a foster child with the intention of adoption, if reunification efforts are unsuccessful.

Adoptions/CP: Strive to place children in CP homes prior to the Dispositional Hearing. Diversion may place a child in an ESH/TSH while a CP home is sought.

Referral Process: Diversion and/or assigned SSW inform Adoptions of children who may be appropriate for placement in a CP home. See CFS P&P Concurrent Planning (D-0202).

E. **FFA certified home:**
A family residence certified and approved by a licensed FFA as meeting licensing standards. FFAs are nonprofit organizations licensed by the CDSS Community Care Licensing (CCL) Division to recruit, train, certify, and provide professional support to foster parents. FFA homes serve as an additional placement resource for children requiring treatment needs not available through FFHs and as an alternative to group home care. FFAs may also be licensed adoption agencies, which are a resource for CP placements.

FH Placement: Places children in FFA homes when no suitable relative/NREFM or FFH is available.

Referral process: Complete and submit *Placement Referral (F063-28-120)* to Placement Services In-Box.

F. **Transitional Housing Placement Program (THPP)**:
An organization licensed by CDSS CCL and contracted by the

county to provide supervised transitional housing and independent living support for foster youth aged 16 through 18 years of age with a permanent plan of Long Term Foster Care (LTFC) with the goal of a successful transition to adulthood.

Transitional Planning Services Program (TPSP): Supports the assigned SSW with THPP referrals and placements.

Referral process: The youth, with assigned SSW support, completes and submits *Application for Transitional Housing (F063-25-623)*.

G. **Group Home (GH):**

A facility, licensed by CDSS CCL, in which a group of children reside under the continuous supervision of adult staff members. Congregate care is intended to be used as a short-term, high-quality intervention tailored to meet the needs of the individual child. Placement in a GH may be appropriate for a child who requires a therapeutic environment or level of supervision beyond that which can be provided in a traditional family-like setting. **Note:** Additional mandates, including administrative approval, regarding the placement of children aged 0–12 years into a GH is addressed in Policy section "Group Home Placement Aged 12 Years and Under" below.

Per CFS Policy, the decision to place a child in a GH is determined at a PSP/FC Meeting. The PSP/FC Meeting is a staffing lead by the PCS PM to discuss and explore placement options and generally includes:

- Assigned SSW
- FH Placement Senior Social Services Supervisor (SSSS)
- Placing Social Worker
- PSP SSSS
- Wraparound SSSS

At a PSP/FC Meeting, the assigned SSW will provide information regarding:

- The child's strengths
- Current issues and behaviors that are a barrier to relative or foster placement
- Family, NREFMs, or other important persons who could be a connection and remain involved with the child, or be a potential placement resource if Wraparound and/or other services were utilized

- Efforts made to locate relatives and other significant people in the child's life
- Where the child wants to live
- The child's prior placements, including length and reasons for ending
- Services that have been implemented to place or maintain the child in a foster home

PSP: Placing social workers within PSP place children in group homes if determined at a PSP/FC Meeting that such a placement is the most appropriate for the child.

Referral Process: Submit an email requesting assessment for group home placement to FH Placement SSSS who will respond by providing the date of the next scheduled PSP/FC Meeting and instruction for presentation of the child's needs. If a decision is made that GH placement is needed, complete and submit *Placement Referral (F063-28-120)* to Placement Services In-Box.

H. **For-Profit Group Home:**

A licensed GH operated as a private, for-profit organization and approved as a vendor of the Regional Center. For-profit GHs may be utilized when a determination has been made that the child is an appropriate candidate for GH placement and the following additional criteria are met:

- The child has extraordinary special behavioral or medical needs that make placement difficult, which may include but not be limited to:
  - Being medically fragile
  - Being a brittle diabetic
  - Having severe head injuries
  - Having a dual-diagnosis
- The child has a developmental disability and is eligible to receive Regional Center services
- The child's case plan or court report reflects the placement is appropriate and necessary

Note: Administrative approval is required when the above criteria are not met and/or county funds will be utilized to fund the placement. See CFS P&P County Funds Requests (H-0119).

PSP and SFS: May utilize for-profit GHs if there is no alternative private, nonprofit placement in the State which is willing and capable of meeting the child's special needs.

Referral Process: Submit an email requesting assessment for GH placement to the PCS FH Placement SSSS who will respond by providing the date of the next scheduled PSP/FC Meeting and instruction for presentation of the child's needs. If a decision is made that GH placement is needed, complete and submit *Placement Referral (F063-28-120)* to Placement Services In-Box. For children with specialized health care needs, consult with SFS Special Medical Placement worker.

I. **Regional Center:**
Intended for children who are Regional Center consumers and in need of services, supervision, and/or assistance essential for self-protection or sustaining activities of daily living.

Placing Programs: May seek Regional Center placements, (which could include FFHs, FFAs, and GHs) as is appropriate for the child's needs.

Referral Process: Consult with a Regional Center Service Coordinator regarding the child's eligibility for placement. See CFS P&P Foster Care Rates (H-0112).

Group Home Placement Aged 12 Years and Under

Pursuant to WIC § 361.2 (e)(8)(9), CFS will only place dependent children 12 years of age and under in a GH when the case plan and/or court report:

- Indicates placement is for the purposes of providing short term, specialized, and intensive treatment to the child
- Specifies the need for, nature of, and anticipated duration of the treatment
- Is approved by the DD/DDOD via submittal of *DD/DDOD Approval for 1st Step/OCFC/Group Home Admission Request (F063-25-738)* (instructions for completion, review/approval responsibilities, and routing distribution are provided on form)

The GH placement period will not exceed 120 days for children under six years of age, or 180 days for children aged 6–12 years, unless:

- Progress has been made, or is actively working, toward implementation of the case plan and transition of the child to a family setting
- Circumstances beyond the Social Services Agency's (SSAs) control prevented SSA from obtaining services or supports within the timeframe specified in the case plan/court report
- The need for additional time is documented in the case plan/court report
- DD/DDOD approval is obtained via submittal of *DD/DDOD Approval for Group Home Placement Extension (F063-25-743)* and documented in the child's case record no less frequently than every 60 days

Note: Extension requests will be submitted 10 calendar days prior to the 120th/180th day of placement and, if needed, every 50 days thereafter for subsequent extension requests.

Additional Provision for Dependents Under Six Years of Age:
As indicated in WIC § 361.2(e)(8)(B), a child under six years of age may be placed in a GH when the placement:

- Is for purposes of providing FR services
- Offers FR services that meet the needs of the child and family
- Permits parents reasonable access to their child 24 hours a day
- Encourages parent involvement in meeting child's daily needs
- Employs staff trained to provide FR services

And, one of the following conditions exist:

- Child's parent is a ward of the court and resides in the facility
- Child's parent is in a treatment program affiliated with the facility and placement of the child in the GH facilitates FR services
- The placement is the only alternative that allows 24-hour parental access to the child in accordance with the case plan

Pre-Placement

A. **Interpretive Services:**
Pursuant to CDSS MPP Division 21 and ACL 08-65, provisions will be made for CFS clients, including prospective caregivers, who are non-English speaking. CFS staff will assess the need for and document the use of interpretive services as outlined in CFS P&P Client Rights (B-0105).

B. **Team Decision Making (TDM) Meetings:**
When appropriate, a Placing social worker will attend TDM meetings held on behalf of a child who requires placement pursuant to CFS P&P Team Decision Making (D-0308).

C. **Pre-Placement Visits:**
When possible, pursuant to CDSS MPP Division 31-405, a pre-placement visit for the child and prospective caregiver may be facilitated upon making the decision to place. Pre-placement visits may occur for the length of time necessary to accommodate the child's transition into placement.

When accepting a child for a pre-placement visit, the Placing social worker will, at a minimum, provide the caregiver with:

- *Authorization for Medical Care (F063-28-13)*
- *Statement of Known or Suspected Dangerous Behaviors (F063-25-86)*
- Prescribed or over-the-counter medications (in original containers) child may be taking
- Copy of *Standing Medication Order for Over-the-Counter Medications (F063-12-191)* signed by child's physician

D. **Icebreakers:**
Per best practice guidelines, the Placing social worker and/or assigned SSW may facilitate an icebreaker between the child's parents and caregiver as outlined in Attachment 1—Icebreakers Protocol.

Locating Placement

Per CDSS MPP Division 31-401 and 31-420, input from the child and the child's parents will be considered when locating placement, particularly placement with relatives or NREFMs.

Through activities such as meeting with the child, consultation with assigned social worker, consultation with current caregiver, and review of the child's Permanent Record, information regarding the child will be gathered, including the child's:

- Physical, social, and emotional development
- Academic performance and needs
- Medical history, current medical issues, and prescribed medications
- Interests and talents
- Concerns or fears
- Dietary needs and food preferences/aversions

- Relationship and contact with siblings and parents
- Other familial and significant relationships
- Cultural background, including language, and religion
- Placement history

In addition, Placing social workers will assess the prospective caregiver's ability to:

- Establish a positive relationship with the child
- Accept the child's background
- Help the child cope with his or her past
- Accept the child's behavior and personality, including sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression
- Promote the child's growth and development
- Meet the emotional, medical, dental, educational, safety, and well-being needs of the child
- Support implementation of the child's case plan
- Respect and support the child's personal rights

Further, Placing social workers will verify if a placement hold status exists pursuant to CFS P&P Placement Holds (K-0119). Per CFS policy, staff will not place a child in a home with a known inconclusive allegation of sexual abuse without prior DD approval.

Provision of Information to Caregiver

In accordance with WIC §§16010.4 and 16010.5, caregivers will be provided information about a child placed in their care. Child information that caregiver's are entitled to receive includes:

- Name, telephone number, and mailing address of the child's assigned social worker and social worker's supervisor, child's attorney, and as applicable, court appointed special advocate (CASA)
- Case number assigned to the child's juvenile court case
- Copy of child's birth certificate, passport, or other identifying documentation of age
- Child's Medi-cal number or health insurance plan number
- Medications or treatments in effect for the child and instructions for use
- Plan outlining the child's needs and services, and information of family and sibling visitation
- Notice of review and permanency hearings held on behalf of the child during the placement, and their right to submit information to court
- Advisement of, and referrals to, existing services

Placing social workers will provide known and available information to caregivers through review and/or distribution of the contents of CFS-assembled placement packets which may include placement agreement, informed consents, medical authorizations, educational and health information, resources, etc. Some forms require caregiver's signature acknowledging receipt of specific information. See Attachment 2—Placement Packets and Attachment 3—Suggested Procedural Guidelines for Placing a Child.

A. **Placement Agreements:**
Pursuant to WIC §16503.5, an agency-caregiver placement agreement will be reviewed with and signed by the caregiver at the time of the child's placement. Placement agreements outline what responsibilities the agency and the caregiver each agree to perform. CFS utilizes CDSS designated agreements for each type of placement. See Attachment 2—Placement Packets.

B. **Medical and Educational Information:**
Per WIC §16010, Placing social workers will provide caregivers a completed Health and Education Passport (HEP). See CFS P&P Health and Education Passport (I-0403). In addition, per CDSS MPP Division 31-405, caregiver's will be informed of the Child Health and Disability Prevention (CHDP) Program and Foster Youth District Liaisons (also referred to as AB 490 District Liaisons). See CFS P&Ps:

- Child Health and Disability Prevention Program (CHDP) (I-0203)
- School Placement and Transfers (I-0102)

C. **Court Protocols:**
Caregivers will be informed of the court review process including timelines for hearings, circumstances in which an Ex Parte Application and Order may be required (e.g., anesthesia, an invasive medical procedure, and certain blood tests, in the absence of parental consent, travel outside the contiguous United States, etc.) and psychotropic medical consent pursuant to CFS P&P Psychotropic Medication—Dependent Child (I-0306).

D. **Caregiver Notifications to Child's Assigned SSW:**
As indicated in Title 22, Division 6, Chapter 9.5, § 89361, Placing social workers will inform caregivers of their obligation to report to the child's assigned SSW when serious incidents involving the child occur, such as but not limited to:

- Death
- Injury/illness resulting in medical treatment or hospitalization
- Threats to harm self or others, suspected child abuse or neglect
- Destruction to self, others, or absence of the child
- Poisonings
- Change in the child's residence (physical location or household composition)

Further, caregivers will be informed of their obligation to provide advanced notification to the child's assigned SSW of any travel outside California, within the contiguous United States, any travel within California that is for a weekend or longer, or the use of substitute care as described in CFS P&P Substitute Supervision (D-0408).

E. **Maintaining Child's Records and Confidentiality:**
Placing social workers will advise caregiver's of their responsibility to maintain a separate, complete, and current record or file in the home for the child, including yet not limited to:

- A current agency-caregiver placement agreement
- Needs and services plan developed for child
- An *Authorization for Medical Care (F063-28-13)*
- HEP and immunization records
- Itemized inventory of child's cash resources, personal property, and valuables
- Photographs of the child
- Report cards and other keepsake mementos

Information and records obtained from or regarding children will be kept confidential except as otherwise authorized by law. See CFS P&P Confidentiality—CFS Client Records (F-0105).

Statement of Dangerous Behaviors

CDSS MPP Division 31-405 entitles caregivers to information about known or suspected dangerous behaviors of a child. At the time of placement, Placing social workers, with information obtained from the assigned SSW, will complete *Statement of Known or Suspected Dangerous Behaviors (F063-25-86)* and distribute as indicated on form. Any behaviors identified will be discussed with the caregiver/facility to determine if the child can be maintained in the placement.

Assigned SSWs will discuss and update *Statement of Known or Suspected Dangerous Behaviors (F063-25-86)* with caregivers annually (if the child remains in the same placement) and any time a new behavior that poses concern is identified.

Note: CFS staff will provide *Statement of Known or Suspected Dangerous Behaviors (F063-25-86)* to respite providers as outlined in CFS P&P Respite Care (K-0212).

The discussion of behaviors with caregivers as well as the signed form will be recorded in CWS/CMS. See Attachment 4—Suggested Procedural Guidelines for Statement of Dangerous Behaviors and Needs and Services Plan.

Child's Personal Rights

Pursuant to ACL 08-51, Placing social workers will inform children placed in out-of-home care of their personal rights specified in WIC § 16001.9 in an age and developmentally appropriate manner. *Personal Rights (LIC 613B)* may be utilized with a copy provided to the child as well as the caregiver.

Needs and Services Plan

Per CDSS MPP Division 31-405, caregivers will be provided a written, time-limited, goal-oriented plan that identifies the specific needs of the child and the services required to address those needs. This plan assists the caregiver in determining their ability to meet the child's needs and as applicable, if the child would be compatible with their household, including other children in the home.

CDSS CCL Title 22 regulations require that each placement type develop a plan at initial placement and update the plan regularly to enhance the caregiver's ability to provide effective care of the child as follows:

A. **Relatives/NREFMs and FFHs (Chapter 9.5 § 89370):** Placing social workers will complete *Appraisal/Needs and Services Plan (F063-28-286 and F063-28-287)* at the time of placement.

Assigned SSWs will update *Appraisal/Needs and Services Plan (F063-28-286 and F063-28-287)* at least annually (if the child remains in the same placement) and any time a significant change in the child's needs or functioning is identified.

B. **FFAs, GHs, THPPs (Chapter 8.8 §§ 88068.2, 88068.3, Chapter 5 §§ 84068.2, 84068.3, and Chapter 7 §§ 86068.2, 86068.3):**
These placement types create their own needs and services plans (title of plan may vary). Information about the child provided to the facility by the Placing and/or assigned SSW may be used to develop the plan. The facility is responsible for providing a copy of the completed plan to the child's assigned SSW:

- Within 30 calendar days of an initial placement, and
- An updated plan at least every six months

Completed or received needs and services plans will be recorded in CWS/CMS. See Attachment 4—Suggested Procedural Guidelines for Statement of Dangerous Behaviors and Needs and Services Plan.

Notice of Placement

The following notifications will be provided when a child changes placement:

A. **Child's Assigned SSW:** The Placing social worker will notify the child's assigned SSW within two hours of the placement.

B. **Child's Parents:** The child's assigned SSW will immediately notify a child's parents of their child's placement. It is best practice to speak directly with the parents to provide the placement information. When efforts to contact the parents by telephone have been exhausted, a letter may be sent to the parent's last known address to notice of the placement.

Prior to a Dispositional Hearing, per WIC § 308, a caregiver's address is to remain confidential unless disclosure is authorized by the caregiver. Parents will be provided the

caregiver's first name and telephone number if a caregiver has not authorized disclosure of their address. The child's assigned SSW will provide parents with the caregiver's address if ordered by the Court at the Dispositional Hearing.

Notification provided to parents will be documented in a CWS/CMS case contact.

C. **Child's and Child's Sibling's Counsel:** Pursuant to WIC § 16010.6, the assigned SSW will fax completed *Attorney Notice of Placement Change (F063-25-572)* to inform the child's attorney, and if applicable the child's sibling's attorney, of a change in the child's placement, the intent to commence a trial visit with a parent, and if the placement change or return to parent will result in separation of siblings placed together.

The notification will be submitted in the following timeframes:

1. Emergency placement change: As soon as possible yet no later than the close of the first business day following the placement.

2. Planned placement change: As soon as possible after CFS makes a decision to move a child to a new placement yet no less than the close of the following business day. **Note:** For child's sibling's attorney, as soon as possible yet no less than 10 calendar days prior to the planned move.

3. Trial visit: As soon as possible following approval to initiate a trial visit, and at least 24 hours in advance of the planned visit. If Court ordered advance notice on a different timeframe, the assigned SSW will adhere to that Court order.

4. Seven day notice: By the close of the next business day after receipt of the seven day notice from the caregiver.

Per CFS policy, assigned SSWs will follow the faxed notification with a verbal notification or voicemail message and document said follow-up notification in a CWS/CMS case contact.

D. **Educational Attorney:** If applicable to the child's case, the assigned SSW will notify the educational attorney of a child's

placement as soon as possible after CFS makes a decision to place a child and no more than one business day of the placement. Submitting copy of completed *Notification of Transfer of Foster Youth (F063-25-286)* may be used. Notification will be recorded in a CWS/CMS case contact.

Out-of-County Placement

According to WIC § 361.2(g), at the time of an initial out-of-home placement, in order to facilitate reunification of the family, a child will be placed in the parent's or legal guardian's county of residence unless:

- The child is placed with relatives
- There is no appropriate placement available in the parent's or legal guardian's community of residence

Note: If out-of-county placement is needed, a county adjacent to the parent's or guardian's community of residence is preferred.

As indicated in CDSS MPP Division 31-505, when a child is placed out-of-county, the assigned SSW will:

- Provide direct supervision and services or arrange for the provision of supervision and services by the receiving county. See CFS P&P Courtesy Supervision (K-0501)
- Specify in the case plan how the service needs of the child, including social worker visitation/contact requirements, will be met
- Provide services and case plan updates to the child's parent or legal guardian

A. **Notification of Placement Change:** As outlined in WIC § 361.2(h), if a subsequent change in a child's placement is needed, and the change will result in the child being placed out-of-county (including when a child is already placed out-of-county and the new placement is in a different county), the assigned SSW will provide the parent or legal guardian written notice at least 14 days prior to the placement change through completion of *Notice of Proposed Placement (F063-28-236)*.

Prior notice is not required when the child's health or well-being is endangered by delaying the action (i.e., emergency placement) or would be endangered if prior notice were given. However, best practice guidelines suggest efforts be made to provide notice before the change occurs.

B. **Parent/Legal Guardian Objection:** WIC § 361.2(h) provides a parent or legal guardian may object to a proposed out-of-county placement no later than seven days after receipt of the written notice. If an objection is made, the assigned SSW will:

- Note the parental objection in a CWS/CMS case contact
- File a *Request to Change Court Order (JV 180)*. **Note:** Court may hold a hearing no later than five days after the objection and prior to the placement
- Write court report for hearing calendared on the *JV 180* petition including rationale for placement out-of-county and parental objection (e.g., identify prospective caregiver, outline how child's needs will be met, services that will facilitate visitation and FR support, etc.)

C. **Medical Coverage:** Children in out-of-county placements are eligible for the CHDP Program. Placing social workers will complete *CalOptima Notice of Out-of-County Placement (F063-28-265)* on behalf of children placed out-of-county as outlined in CFS P&P Child Health and Disability Prevention Program (I-0203). See Attachment 3—Suggested Guidelines for Placing a Child.

Out-of-State Placement

When considering an out-of-state placement, CFS staff will follow guidelines set forth in CFS P&P Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) (K-0502).

Out-of-Country Placement

Pursuant to WIC § 361.2(f), CFS will not place a dependent child outside the United States prior to Court finding that by clear and convincing evidence, the placement is in the best interest of the child (except as required by federal law or treaty), and issuance of a court order authorizing out-of-country placement. **Note:** This does not apply to the placement of a dependent child with a parent or within lands of any federally recognized American Indian tribe or Alaskan Natives.

If requesting out-of-country placement for a dependent child, the child's assigned SSW will provide information to the court to aid in determining the best interests of a child, which may include yet is not limited to the following factors:

- Prospective caregiver is a relative
- Placement would result in siblings residing together
- Amount and nature of any contact between the child and the prospective caregiver

- Child's physical, medical, psychological, and emotional needs
- Child's social, cultural, and educational needs
- Specific desires of the child if aged 12 years or older

Other Placement Circumstances

A. **Extension of Hospitalization:**
Placing social workers will attempt to facilitate prompt placement of a child upon obtaining hospital clearance for discharge. If there is no placement available to meet the child's medical needs, a request to extend hospitalization may be considered. The Placing social worker will consult with their SSSS and PM if there are extenuating circumstances that may preclude immediate placement. **Note:** Hospitals have the discretion to accommodate such a request and CFS assumes financial responsibility for each day of additional hospitalization.

If requesting extension of hospitalization, Placing social workers will:

- Complete *Hospital Extension Request (F063-28-238)*, Section A
- Obtain SSSS signature
- Document circumstances necessitating extension in a CWS/CMS case contact

Upon placing the child, the placing social worker will:

- Complete *Hospital Extension Request (F063-28-238)*, Section B and forward to SFS Special Medical Placement SSSS
- Document the date of placement and brief caregiver information in a CWS/CMS case contact

Accurate and timely documentation is vital for verification purposes if there is a discrepancy regarding hospital billing.

B. **ICWA:**
When determining placement options for an Indian child, CFS staff will adhere to CFS P&P Indian Child Welfare Act (G-0309).

C. **Voluntary Placements:**
A non-dependent child may be temporarily placed into out-of-home care on a voluntary basis when the parent or guardian requests assistance and signs a voluntary placement agreement pursuant to CFS P&P Voluntary Placements (K-0901).

Notice of Removal—Intent to Remove

Pursuant to CDSS MPP Division 31-440, assigned SSWs will provide caregivers with at least seven calendar days advance written notice of intent to remove a child and the right to request a grievance review via *Intent to Remove a Child/Grievance Review Request (F063-28-124).* See CFS P&P Placement Grievance Review (K-0206).

Advance notice of removal is not required if:

- The child is in imminent danger
- The caregiver signed a waiver of notice per Division 31-440.11
- A court has ordered the child's removal
- Adverse licensing or approval actions have occurred that prohibit the caregiver from continuing to provide services
- The child is removed from an emergency placement

Note: If a child will be removed from the home of a prospective adoptive parent, see CFS P&P Adoptive Placement (C-0702).

Placement Information Change (PIC) Notification

In accordance with CFS P&P Placement Change Notification (K-0209), social work staff will complete *Placement Information Change (PIC) Notice (F063-28-301)* and if applicable, *Placement Information Change Supplemental (PIC Supp) (F063-25-566)* to notify unit clerks and Eligibility Technicians (ETs) of a change in placement or placement circumstances (e.g., temporary absence due to hospitalization, runaway, respite, trial visit, etc.).

The PIC notice indicates the status of a placement for the purpose of funding as well as child's location for emergency preparedness and disaster needs (e.g., earthquake, fire, flood, etc.).

REFERENCES

Attachments and CWS/CMS Data Entry Standards

Hyperlinks are provided below to access attachments to this P&P and any CWS/CMS Data Entry Standards that are referenced.

- Attachment 1—Icebreakers Protocol
- Attachment 2—Placement Packets
- Attachment 3—Suggested Procedural Guidelines for Placing a Child
- Attachment 4—Suggested Procedural Guidelines for Statement of Dangerous Behaviors and Needs and Services Plan
- CWS/CMS Data Entry Standards—Non Foster Care Placements
- CWS/CMS Data Entry Standards—Creating a New Placement Home
- CWS/CMS Data Entry Standards—Placement Home Change of Address and/or Facility Type
- CWS/CMS Data Entry Standards—Ending Foster and Non-Foster Care Placements/Placement Episodes
- CWS/CMS Data Entry Standards—Temporary Leaves

Hyperlinks

Users accessing this document by computer may create a direct connection to the following references by clicking on them.

- CFS P&P Client Rights (B-0105)
- CFS P&P Concurrent Planning (D-0202)
- CFS P&P Substitute Supervision (D-0408)
- CFS P&P Confidentiality—CFS Client Records (F-0105)
- CFS P&P Indian Child Welfare Act (G-0309)
- CFS P&P Child Health and Disability Prevention (CHDP) Program (I-0203)
- CFS P&P School Placement and Transfers (I-0102)
- CFS P&P Foster Care Rates (H-0112)
- CFS P&P County Funds Request (H-0119)
- CFS P&P Psychotropic Medication: Dependent Child (I-0306)
- CFS P&P Health and Education Passport (I-0403)
- CFS P&P Relative/NREFM Placement Assessments (K-0105)
- CFS P&P Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children (ICPC) (K-0502)
- CFS P&P Respite Care (K-0212)
- CFS P&P Special Medical Placements (K-0801)
- CFS P&P Adoptive Placement (C-0702)

- CFS P&P Placement Holds (K-0119)
- CFS P&P Placement Change Notification (K-0209)
- CFS P&P Courtesy Supervision (K-0501)
- CFS P&P Placement Grievance Review (K-0206)
- CFS P&P Team Decision Making (D-0308)
- CFS P&P Wraparound Referral and Services (D-0511)
- CFS P&P Voluntary Placements (K-0901)

Other Sources

Other printed references include the following:

None.

REQUIRED FORMS

Online Forms

Forms listed below may be printed out and completed, or completed online, and may be accessed by clicking on the link provided.

Form Name	Form Number
Standing Medication Order for Over-the-Counter Medications	F063-12-191
Notification of Transfer of Foster Youth	F063-25-286
Health and Education Passport Letter	F063-28-314
Health and Education Passport Letter (Spanish)	F063-28-314Sp
Statement of Known or Suspected Dangerous Behaviors	F063-25-86
Attorney Notice of Placement Change	F063-25-572
Verification of Non-Relative Extended Family Member	F063-04-75C
Hospital Extension Request	F063-28-238
Administrative Approval-Emergency Shelter Care Beyond 30 Days	F063-28-135
Appraisal/Needs and Services Plan (Page 1–F063-28-286; Page 2–F063-28-287)	F063-28-286 and F063-28-287
Periodic Medical/Dental Exam Report (HEP Encounter Form)	F063-28-336
Request to Change Court Order	JV-180
DD/DDOD Approval for Group Home Placement Extension	F063-25-743
DD/DDOD Approval for 1st Step/OCFC/Group Home Admission Request	F063-25-738
Application for Transitional Housing	F063-25-623

Hard Copy Forms

Forms that may be completed in hard copy (including multi-copy NCR forms) are listed below. ***For reference purposes only,*** links are provided to view these hard copy forms, where available.

Form Name	Form Number
Informed Consent	F346-301.5
Agency-Group Home Agreement	SOC 154
Agency-Foster Family Agency Agreement	SOC 154A
Agency-Foster Parent Agreement	SOC 156
Extracurricular, Enrichment, and Social Activities Caregiver Information	F063-25-466
Extracurricular, Enrichment, and Social Activities Caregiver Information (Spanish)	F063-25-466Sp
Extracurricular, Enrichment, and Social Activities Caregiver Information (Vietnamese)	F063-25-466VN
Child Care Funding Program	F063-25-489
Authorization for Medical Care	F063-28-13
Foster Home Visitation Agreement	F063-28-32
Notice of Intent to Remove a Child/Grievance Review Request	F063-28-124
Notice of Intent to Remove a Child/Grievance Review Request (Spanish)	F063-28-124Sp
Notice of Proposed Placement	F063-28-236
Notice of Proposed Placement (Spanish)	F063-28-236Sp
CalOptima Notice of Out-of-County Placement	F063-28-265
Placement Information Checklist	F063-28-329
Coordination of Care Guidelines	F063-28-348
Coordination of Care Guidelines (Spanish)	F063-28-348Sp
Direct Deposit Sign Up Form	F063-30-405
Parental Contact Record	F0912-25-173
Identification and Emergency Information	LIC 601
Physician's Report for Community Care Facilities	LIC 602
Personal Rights-Children's Residential Facilities	LIC 613B
Centrally Stored Medication and Destruction Record	LIC 622
CHDP Referral	PM 357

CWS/CMS Forms

Forms that may **only** be obtained in CWS/CMS are listed below. ***For reference purposes only,*** links are provided to view these CWS/CMS forms, where available.

Form Name	Form Number
Relative/NREFM Clearance and Assessment Referral	F063-04-815A
Placement Referral	F063-28-120
Placement Information Change	F063-28-301
Placement Information Change Supplemental	F063-25-566
Foster Care Application Information (FCAAP)	F063-28-307

Brochures

Brochures to distribute in conjunction with this policy may include:

Brochure Name	Brochure Number
Children's Records	F063-28-284
Blood/Bodily Fluid Exposure	F063-28-332
Blood/Bodily Fluid Exposure (Spanish)	F063-28-332Sp
Placement Grievance Review Procedure Guide for Parents and Out-of-Home Caregivers	F063-25-634
Placement Grievance Review Procedure Guide for Parents and Out-of-Home Caregivers (Spanish)	F063-25-634SP
Your Rights Under California Welfare Programs (Various languages available)	PUB 13

LEGAL MANDATES

California Department of Social Services (CDSS) Manual of Policies and Procedures (MPP), Division 21-116, and CDSS All County Letter (ACL) 08-65, outline the obligation to provide non-discriminatory services, inquire into the need for interpretive services, and document when such services have been offered or provided on behalf of clients.

CDSS MPP, Division 31-405 lists social worker responsibilities when arranging placement including options to consider, facilitation of pre-placement visits, and information to provide the caregiver.

CDSS MPP, Division 31-420, Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) Section (§) 16501.1(c), and CDSS ACL 07-28 outline factors to consider when placing a child in out-of-home care and prioritize the order in which placement types are to be utilized.

CDSS MPP, Division 31-410 and 31-415 outline conditions regarding the use of emergency shelter care.

CDSS MPP, Division 31-440 mandates caregivers receive advance notice of intent to remove a child from placement and right to request a grievance review.

CDSS MPP, Division 31-505 and WIC § 361.2 (g–h) outline the guidelines for out-of-county placement.

WIC § 308 mandates that when a child is taken into temporary custody, a telephone number in which to contact the child be given to a parent or responsible relative, and the address of any licensed foster home in which the child has been placed be confidential until the dispositional hearing.

WIC §§ 319.2 and 319.3 outline the criteria in which children in temporary custody aged 12 and under may be placed in a group home or temporary shelter care facility.

WIC § 361.2(e) outline the requirements under which dependents aged 12 and under may be placed in a group home.

WIC 361.2(f) prohibits placement of a dependent child outside the United States prior to a judicial finding that the placement is in the best interest of the child.

WIC § 16503.5 mandates a caregiver be provided a written placement agreement at the time of placement and outlines the minimum core elements required in an agreement.

WIC § 11402.6 outlines the conditions under which a dependent child, who has extraordinary special behavioral or medical needs, and a developmental disability, may be placed in a for-profit group home, making them eligible for AFDC-FC funds.

WIC § 16000 describes legislative intent to preserve and strengthen a child's family ties when removed from parental custody, that preferential consideration be given to placement with relatives, and that placement be in a safe setting that is the least restrictive or most family-like.

WIC § 16002 conveys Legislative intent that siblings be placed together and defines sibling as "a child related to another person by blood, adoption, or affinity through a common legal or biological parent."

WIC § 16010.6(a)(c) mandates notification to a child's attorney upon the decision to make or change a placement, and as applicable, the child's sibling's attorney if the change would result in the separation of siblings currently placed together.

WIC §16507.5(b) declares placement decisions are based on the child's needs and best interests.

WIC § 16010 mandates caregivers receive a child's current health and education summary as soon as possible, yet no later than 30 days after initial placement and 48 hours after any subsequent placements.

WIC § 16001.9 delineates the rights of children in foster care.

WIC §§ 16010.4 and 16010.5 outline the type of information caregivers are authorized to receive in order to provide effective service delivery and care of a child.

WIC § 16013 prohibits discrimination in the foster care system on the basis of actual or perceived race, ethnic group identification, ancestry, national origin, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, mental or physical disability or Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) status.

Family Code (FAM) § 7950 prohibits the denial of an individual from becoming a foster parent as well as the delay or denial of a placement based on the race, color, or national origin of the person or child involved.

Community Care Licensing (CCL), California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 22, Division 6, Chapter 9.5, Article 3 provides core requirements for the placement and personal rights of children in licensed or approved homes.

CCL, CCR, Title 22, Division 6, Chapter 8.8 provides regulations for placement and personal rights of children in foster family agency (FFA) certified homes.

CCL, CCR, Title 22, Division 6, Chapter 5, provides regulations for placement and personal rights of children in group homes.

CCL, CCR, Title 22, Division 6, Chapter 7, provides regulations for placement and personal rights of children placed in a transitional housing placement facility.