

	<b>STATE OFFICE for SERVICES to CHILDREN and FAMILIES</b>  <b>CLIENT SERVICES MANUAL I</b>  ISSUED BY: Program Operations EFFECTIVE DATE: January 15, 2001	<b>NUMBER:</b> I-E.3
		<b>SECTION:</b> E. Substitute Care
		<b>SUBSECTION:</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b> 3. Placement Expectations - SOSCF Policy		

Responsible Manager: Manager,  
Foster Care and Family  
Based Services Unit

Approval: \_\_\_\_\_  
Assistant Administrator,  
Program Operations

Interpretation: Manager,  
Foster Care and Family Based Services Unit

**REFERENCES:** CF 304, Service Application  
CF 261, Placement Information  
I-B.1.1, Authority for Providing Services  
I-B.2.2.3, Assessment of Abuse Allegations in Family Foster Care,  
Family Group Homes and Family Shelter Homes  
I-B.2.3.3, Substitute Care Eligibility  
I-B.3.1, Service Plans: Service Agreement or Letter of  
Expectations  
I-B.3.2.1, Substitute Care Placement Reviews  
I-E.3.1 Placement Matching  
I-E.3.6.1, Permanent Foster/Kinship Care  
I-E.5.3, Funeral and Burial Expenses  
ORS 97.130 through 97.170  
Public Law 105-89, Adoption and Safe Families Act  
1999 Oregon Laws, Chapter 859

## 1. PURPOSE

The Placement Expectations Policy sets out the minimum requirements for the care and treatment of children who are in the legal custody of the State Office for Services to Children and Families (SOSCF) and placed in substitute care, or who are being served in their own homes to prevent removal, or have been returned home to their families.

## 2. VALUE

Child safety is the paramount concern guiding the minimum requirements for SOSCF's care, services and treatment of children placed in SOSCF's custody. Required face-to-face contacts are one of the most important ways the SOSCF administration can best ensure safety and the timely implementation of case plans for children placed in its custody.

## 3. DEFINITIONS

**(a) "Alternate Plan":** The term used in statutes to refer to what SOSCF previously called the "Concurrent Permanency Plan" that means a plan established as an alternate or backup permanency plan when the goal of the permanency plan is placement with parent(s). If placement with parent(s) is not possible, SOSCF shall first consider placement with relatives as an alternate plan for the child. Although the alternate permanency plan may change as more information becomes available, the goal is to develop a safe and permanent resource with the parent(s), relatives or other people who will assume legal responsibility for the child during the remaining years of dependency and be accessible and supportive to the child in adulthood. The child's important attachments will be considered and maintained when in the best interest of the child.

**(b) "Child's Caseworker":** The term used to indicate the caseworker who has been assigned responsibility for meeting with and assessing the safety of the child, in the child's own home or substitute placement, in addition to implementing and continually assessing the service plan for the child. Depending upon how a branch organizes its work, the child's caseworker may change at the time the case goes into the period of more than 60 days following court-ordered SOSCF custody.

#### **4. PROCEDURES FOR ALL CASES WHEN A CHILD IS PLACED IN COURT-ORDERED SOSCF CUSTODY**

**(a) Casework Practice Expectations.** Good casework practice, Oregon Statutes and Title IV-E define the following expectations which govern the use of substitute care:

**(A) Maintain Child in Home.** The State Office for Services to Children and Families (SOSCF) shall use agency and community resources where these can avert the need for substitute care. In each child's record, the service plan shall outline the specific goals to assure the child's safety and timelines that will be met, as agreed to by the child's parent(s) or guardian(s), SOSCF and the child (when the child is old enough to understand and participate in the plan);

**(B) Least Intervention.** With the child's safety issues addressed, placements shall provide the least intervention in the child's lifestyle appropriate to the child's needs, including placement with a relative, friend or in a family foster home when in the best interest of the child and family;

**(C) Proximity to Parents.** The child shall be placed in close proximity to the parents whenever feasible;

**(D) Reuniting with the Family.** Returning the child home safely is

a primary objective of using substitute care. Every effort shall be made whenever possible to work with a child's family and the child towards early return to parent(s). When returning the child to his/her home is in the best interest of the child, SOSCF should be able to assure that the child's family is prepared and has demonstrated an ability to meet the needs of the child, and specifically those needs identified at the time of removal;

**(E) Visitation Privileges of Parents.** Assure visits occur between parents and child and make these purposeful and meaningful events in the treatment process. Encourage parents to participate in the child's activities whenever appropriate and to improve their relationship with the child. Parents shall be notified of any change in the child's placement and may visit the child, unless there is a valid reason to deny parental visits which has been approved by the court;

**(F) Permanency Planning.** Permanency planning shall be carried out aggressively for all children in substitute care. Activities to achieve permanency with birth parents, relatives or through adoption should be commenced from the time the child is placed in substitute care;

**(G) Responsive Casework.** There shall be no diminution of casework efforts to return a child home or make plans because a child has been placed in substitute care.

**(i)** Arrangements will be made for the provision of both supportive and treatment services to alleviate the barriers that keep the child from returning home. Services available with SOSCF (e.g., parent training, homemakers, therapeutic day care) as well as other Department of Human Services (DHS) divisions, and community resources are to be used as appropriate to the individual case situation;

**(ii)** When children are removed from their home and placed by SOSCF in substitute care because of abuse by their parent(s), every possible action must be taken to assure the child's safety and prevent a re-occurrence of abuse;

**(iii)** If such services do not alleviate the barriers that keep the child from returning home, the case will be reviewed for permanency planning or, if the child is old enough, for emancipation. Permanent foster and permanent relative care approved by the juvenile court is to be considered only as a last resort (refer to SOSCF Policy I-E.3.6.1, Permanent Foster/Kinship Care).

**(H) Case Review.** There must be comprehensive reviews made at six month intervals for every child in substitute care.

**(b) Response to Placement Referrals:**

**(A)** Referrals of children determined to be in imminent danger are to be acted upon within the same working day, and the child shall be immediately placed in a temporary alternative living situation if the child's own home cannot be made safe;

**(B)** Referrals of children that are not of an emergent nature are to be acted on within seven calendar days.

**(c) Reasonable Efforts to Prevent Placement.** No placement shall be made until all efforts have been exhausted to keep the child's own family intact. This includes the application of treatment and supportive resources available within the agency and community and assessment of the feasibility of placement with an absent parent.

**(d) Placement Approval.** Every child that is placed in substitute care must be approved for placement by the Substitute Care Review Committee prior to placement unless an emergency, i.e., a child's safety warrants an immediate placement. (See policy I-B.3.2.1, Substitute Care Placement Review.)

**(e) Resource Selection:**

**(A)** All efforts shall be made to select the resource that best meets the needs of the child (see SOSCF Policy I-E.3.1, Placement Matching.);

**(B)** Unless the child's condition or situation is such to jeopardize the child's immediate welfare, the child shall remain at home pending placement in the preferred resource.

**(f) Legal Basis for Removal.** There shall be a current legal basis for removal before any placement is made.

**(g) Notice to Parents.** See SOSCF Policy I-B.1.1, (2) (b), Authority for Providing Service.

**(h) Parent's Rights.** The rights of parents shall be discussed with the parent(s) at the time of placement. Voluntary client(s) must sign a "Service Application" Form CF 304 to give SOSCF authorization to provide voluntary services (refer to PAM 1531). Parents shall be notified and involved in the placement or subsequent placement(s) of their child unless they cannot be located, refuse to participate, or such participation would be a threat to the child or provider.

**(i) Share Information with the Selected Provider:**

**(A) Family Foster Care.** Case workers must share written information with foster parents about each child prior to, or at the time a child is placed. This is in accordance with the contract between the foster parents and SOSCF, signed at the time of certification. Case workers are to:

**(i)** Give foster parent, pre-adoptive parent, or relative who is actively providing care for a child, notice of any hearing concerning the child. The court shall give the caregiver(s) an opportunity to be heard. (ORS 419B.115 (4))

**(ii)** Provide foster parents with a supply of "Placement Information" forms, CF 261, at the time of placement of a child or upon request.

**(iii)** Complete, or help the foster parents complete, the CF 261 at time of placement. Both the worker and the foster parent sign and date the "Placement Information" form. The original will be given to the foster parent and the duplicate filed in the child's case record;

**(iv)** Furnish available placement information on the next working day, or as soon after as possible, when a child in SOSCF's custody has been placed by a police officer or juvenile court counselor;

**(v)** Be knowledgeable about SOSCF's discipline policy and current child abuse laws. Appropriate discipline techniques shall be discussed with foster parents prior to placements;

**(vi)** Confirm that the foster parents know the child's legal name and understand the importance of using the correct name for all official records.

**(B) Residential Care and Treatment.** Case workers shall share information on each child with the residential care and treatment provider regarding:

(i) Negotiating the details of the placement with the designated provider;

(ii) Making any special preparations that may be required by the provider with whom a residential care placement has been negotiated;

(iii) Delivering the child to the provider's facility;

(iv) Developing within 30 days after admission to the program, a written treatment plan, jointly developed by the SOSCF case worker and the provider, the child and parent(s). The provider shall furnish a copy of the treatment plan to the SOSCF case worker;

(v) Giving the provider an after-hours emergency phone number;

(vi) Discussing the child's clothing, medical and other special needs and developing plans to meet these needs.

**(j) Face-to-Face Contact.** The child's caseworker is required to have face-to-face meetings on a monthly basis with the child. In some types of placements the face-to-face meetings may be held less often; specific requirements are outlined in section (E) below.

**(A) Child's Caseworker Responsibility.** Face-to-face contact is critical and it is the caseworker assigned to the child that must meet with the child. Caseworkers who are assigned to children are the SOSCF staff who are trained to review the child's safety and are responsible for the safety of those children placed in SOSCF custody.

**(B) Expectations of Face-to-face Meetings.** During these meetings in addition to reviewing child safety, it is expected that the child's caseworker will further develop a good working relationship with the child in order to plan for the best interests of the child. According to the observations and information gained from these meetings, the case worker will activate, monitor and adjust the service plan for the child.

**(C) Documentation.** Face-to-face meetings must be documented

in the case records. Document each face-to-face meeting in either hard copy case notes, or in the electronic case file (FACIS) in the "Case Notes" section. When staff document a meeting in FACIS, they should select "Face-to-Face Contact" as the case note category, and select the children in the "members" section. Staff should record the date of the meeting as the date of the case note. Text may be added in the Case Note field. The specific face-to-face meetings must be summarized in FACIS 147 series form when it is updated every six months.

**(D) Caseworker Back-Up.** The supervisor, manager, consultant and education trainers (CETs), or another child's caseworker may conduct a face-to-face meeting in the absence of the assigned caseworker. The back-up staff person is responsible for the required documentation.

**(E) Face-to-face meeting requirements:** Listed below is a summary of the minimum requirements for face-to-face meetings with each child, based upon the specific type of placement. The requirements apply to both relative and non-relative placements:

**(i) Following court ordered SOSCF custody and while services are being provided to a child being served in their own home to prevent removal:** the child's caseworker is required to have a face-to-face meeting with the child once a month. Based upon the particular needs and circumstances of the individual child, the caseworker may need to meet with the child more frequently.

**(ii) Within the first sixty days following placement of a child in substitute care:** the child's caseworker is required to have a face-to-face meeting with the child once a month. Based upon the particular needs and circumstances of the individual child, the caseworker may need to meet with the child more frequently.

**(iii) On-going services (after the first sixty days following placement of a child in substitute care):** the child's caseworker is required to have a face-to-face meeting with the child once a month. Based upon the particular needs and circumstances of the individual child, the caseworker may need to meet with the child more frequently.

**(iv) Children who are returned home and remain in SOSCF custody:** the child's caseworker is required to continue monthly face-to-face meetings with the child as long as the child remains in SOSCF custody.

**(v) Children placed in court ordered permanent foster**

**care with a relative or non-relative:** the child's caseworker is required to meet face-to-face with the child a minimum of once every 90 days.

**(vi) Children placed in residential treatment (including Behavior Rehabilitation Services programs or Community Mental Health Programs):** the child's caseworker is required to meet face-to-face with the child a minimum of once every 90 days. The child's caseworker is required to participate in scheduled 30 day treatment planning review meetings by telephone, if not in person.

**(vii) Children in an adoptive placement:** the child's caseworker is required to meet face-to-face with the child as outlined in SOSCF Policy I-G.1.10, Supervision of an Adoptive Placement.

**(I)** At least monthly face-to-face visits with the child and the adoptive parent/s for the first six months of adoptive placement or until finalization.

**(II)** After six months of supervision, with agreement of the supervising worker, supervisor and adoptive parents, bi-monthly face-to-face visits with the child and adoptive parent/s shall occur until finalization.

**(III)** In the case of a current caretaker adoptive placement where the child/ren has resided in the current caretaker home consecutively for six months, with the agreement of the supervising worker, supervisor of the supervising worker, and adoptive parents, bi-monthly instead of monthly face-to-face visits with the child and adoptive parents may occur until finalization.

**(viii) Children placed under an Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children:** the child's caseworker is required to monitor that face-to-face meetings occur between the receiving state's caseworker and the child, as outlined in the ICPC agreement.

**(ix) Children placed under courtesy supervision:** the caseworkers of the placing branch and the supervising branch shall agree on which of the child's caseworkers will meet face-to-face with the child every 30 days. The name of the responsible caseworker must be documented by the supervising caseworker in the Case Notes.

**(x) Children who are placed with SOSCF as voluntary clients (Policy I-B.3.1):** the child's caseworker is required to meet face-to-face with the child as outlined above in the Face-to-Face Meeting Requirements based upon specific type of placement.

**(xi) Until cases are closed:** As long as a child remains under court-ordered SOSCF custody and until the child's caseworker has closed the case as ordered by the court, the child's caseworker is required to continue face-to-face meetings with the child as required for their specific type of placement.

**(F) Exceptions: authority, responsibility, criteria and procedures for exceptions to face-to-face contact requirements:** the branch manager has the authority to make a planful exception on an individual basis to the requirements for a child's caseworker to have face-to-face contact with the child. The branch manager is responsible for documenting an explanation for the exception including the criteria for making an exception. The exception must be timely documented in the client's case file. The criteria for authorizing an exception include:

**(i)** unavailability of the child: such as a child on vacation with foster or adoptive family out-of-state; or the child is in runaway status; however, if a child is ill they should be considered available and a child's caseworker is expected to see the child.

**(ii)** unavailability of the caseworker or inconvenience for the caseworker are not acceptable criteria for an exception.

**5. REQUIREMENTS FOR THE ACTIVITIES THAT OCCUR IN THE FIRST 60 DAYS OF COURT ORDERED SOSCF CUSTODY (First 60 days).** During the first 60 days after placement of a child the case worker must:

**(a) Parental Visits.** Arrange for parental visits with parent(s) and provider;

**(b) SOSCF Forms.** Complete appropriate SOSCF forms relating to placement within three working days of placement;

**(c) Notification to Juvenile Court.** Prepare notification of the placement

to the juvenile court of jurisdiction as required;

**(d) Medical and Dental.** Insure that medical and dental needs of the child have been recorded in IIS and will be provided as needed. Document medical eligibility in IIS. Issue medical identification card to provider at time of actual placement of child;

**(e) Supportive Services.** Provide intensive supportive services to the child during the potentially difficult period of initial adjustment to a new living arrangement;

**(f) Foster Care/Relative Care Support.** Provide support and interpretation to the foster care or relative care providers during this adjustment period and involve them in planning for the child;

**(g) Services to Birth Parents.** Provide services to the birth parent(s) as appropriate for eventual return to the family or other disposition as identified in the case plan;

**(h) Supervisor Case Review.** Review the case every 30 days with supervisor, and make recommended adjustments that seem warranted by circumstances;

**(i) Individualized Service Plans.** Prepare an individualized service plan for the child;

**(j) Alternate Plans.** Prepare an alternate plan;

**(k) Multiethnic Placements.** Complete the steps referred to in OAR 413-070-0040 (2) (SOSCF Policy I-E.2, Multiethnic Placements)

**(l) Placement of Indian Children.** Complete appropriate steps referred to in OAR 413-070-0100 through 413-070-0260, (SOSCF Policy I-E.2.1, Placement of Indian Children).

## **6. REQUIREMENT FOR SERVICES DURING THE PERIOD FOLLOWING THE FIRST 60 DAYS (ONGOING SERVICES):**

**(a) Service Goals.** All services shall be goal-oriented toward returning the child home as outlined in the written service plan. This plan must reflect services and activities directly related to the reason(s) the child(ren) came into care. When it is determined that there are substantial parental barriers which must be overcome before returning the child to the birth parent(s), where feasible, permanent planning services shall begin;

**(b) Supervisor Review.** The child's case worker and supervisor shall assess the developments which have occurred in the placement in a comprehensive manner relative to the service plan at least every 90 days;

**(c) Service Plans.** The child's case worker shall provide counseling, supportive and other services in accordance with the written service plan. Such services shall be directed toward the goal of early return of the child to the birth parent(s) where possible;

**(d) Protective Service Reports.** Service staff shall report any indication of child abuse in a foster home or residential care and treatment facility to a protective service worker/screener. See the foster home certification policies for required follow-up on validated abuse reports (SOSCF policy I-B.2.2.3, Assessment of Abuse Allegations in Family Foster Care, Family Group Homes and Family Shelter Homes);

**(e) Parent Visitations.** The child's case worker shall arrange for and facilitate visits between the child and parents as agreed upon by the parent(s) and worker;

**(f) Clothing, Medical, Dental and Other Special Needs.** The case worker shall discuss clothing, medical, dental and other special needs of the child with the foster parents or residential care and treatment program staff and develop plans to meet these needs;

**(g) Reports for Administrative Reviews and Permanency Hearings.** The case worker shall prepare reports for the Administrative Review and permanency hearings (see Policy I-B.3.2.1, Substitute Care Placement Review for procedure.);

**(h) Reports to Juvenile Court.** The case worker shall report to the juvenile court of jurisdiction for children committed to SOSCF and arrange for SOSCF appearance in court as required;

**(i) Return of Children.** Prior to the return of the child, conditions from which the child was originally removed must be considered, including the extent and likelihood of the reoccurrence of physical abuse, neglect or sexual abuse.

**7. EMANCIPATION.** Adolescents in substitute care are to be prepared for assuming adult responsibilities through the development of an emancipation plan. A plan shall be developed for each youth not later than his or her 17th birthday.

**8. TRANSFER OF YOUTH WITH DISABILITY.** Youth who are 16 years of age and older and have serious physical, mental or emotional disabilities which will preclude emancipation, should be referred to the appropriate DHS division for planning for adult services. These include the following:

- (a)** Physically disabled - Senior and Disabled Services Division;
- (b)** Mentally Retarded/Developmentally Disabled (MR/DD) - MR/DD case manager, local community Mental Health program;
- (c)** Mentally Emotionally Disturbed (MED) - Intake/Exit Unit for the local state hospital catchment area (i.e., Oregon State Hospital and Eastern Oregon).

#### **9. DEATH OF A CHILD (ORS 97.130 -170):**

**(a)** When a child in substitute care dies, the legal parent or guardian of that child must be immediately notified. The agency's authority over a child in the temporary custody of SOSCF is subordinate to a legal parent or guardian's authority at the death. Parent(s) (or the guardian) have the right to determine the funeral and burial arrangements;

**(b)** The child's legal family should assume total responsibility for the funeral and burial expenses. When the family cannot assume the cost, or the child is in the permanent custody of SOSCF, the agency shall pay for these expenses (see SOSCF Policy I-E.5.3, Funeral and Burial Expenses);

**(c)** When a child dies under suspicious circumstances, the medical examiner or the district attorney shall be asked to investigate and to order an autopsy (ORS 146.117);

**(d)** Occasionally a child in SOSCF's permanent custody or without a family to claim the body, dies from a physical ailment or disease. If the attending physician or hospital requests an autopsy for research purposes, SOSCF does not have the authority to give such consent. The Demonstrator of Anatomy has that authority and can be notified of the physician's request if SOSCF concurs that the body should be used for research purposes.