

	Department of Human Services CHILDREN, ADULTS & FAMILIES	NUMBER: I-E.3
	CLIENT SERVICES INDEX	SECTION: E. Substitute Care
	ISSUED BY: Office of Safety and Permanency for Children FINAL: 3-01-04	SUBSECTION:
SUBJECT: 3. Placement Expectations – Policy		

REFERENCES:

I-B.1.1 Authority for Providing Services
 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.2.1 Placement of Indian Children
 I-E.3.1 Placement Matching
 I-E.3.6.1 Permanent Foster/Kinship Care
 I-C.4.1 Medical Services Provided Through the Oregon Health Plan
 I-E.3.5 Visitation/Child-Family Contact
 ORS 97.130 through 97.170
 Public Law 105-89, Adoption and Safe Families Act
 1999 Oregon Laws, Chapter 859
 Public Law 105-89, Adoption and Safe Families Act

FORMS

CF 304, Service Application
 CF 261, Placement Information

I. PURPOSE

(1) The purpose of Placement Expectation policy is to provide guidance and direction to department staff who are serving children in *Substitute Care* settings or for children who have returned home after *Substitute Care*.

(2) This policy either states the requirements or serves as a reference to other rules or policy that contain the minimum requirements for a particular issue.

II. VALUES

Child safety is the paramount concern guiding the requirements for the department's care, services and treatment of children. The needs of children being served by the department are varied and complex. To successfully meet these needs, a teamwork

approach between the caseworker, families, and *caregivers* is essential - each bringing a broad range of knowledge and skills to the helping process.

III. DEFINITIONS

- (1) "147 Series" means the documentation that is recorded in standardized agency micro-computer formats. This includes narration for children and families who are receiving services.
- (2) "Caregiver" means the person providing foster, adoptive or relative care for a child or the residential treatment program in which a child is placed.
- (3) "FACIS" means the Family and Child Information System used by the department child welfare program.
- (4) "ICPC" means Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children. This includes state and federal laws, regarding the moving or placing of children across state lines.
- (5) "Substitute care" means a child in the legal or physical custody and care of the department and who is in an out-of-home placement with someone other than their birth parent, legal parent, or legal guardian.
- (6) "Team Decision Meeting (TDM)" means meetings held for the purpose of making placement related decisions for children as required by Child Safety Assessment and Child Safety Planning policy, I-AB.5, OAR 413-015-0500 thru 0510.

IV. RESPONSIVE CASEWORK

- (1) **Maintain Child in Home and Reasonable Efforts to Prevent Placement.** The department will make reasonable efforts to prevent or eliminate the need for removal of the child and to alleviate the barriers that keep the child from returning home. This includes an assessment of appropriate treatment and supportive services and providing such services when available through the department or by referral to other community resources.
- (2) **Legal Basis for Removal.** There must be a current legal basis for removal before any *substitute care* placement is made. (*Authority for Providing Service I-B.1.1*)(3)
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 of the family, or in a family foster home when in the best interest of the child and family.
- (4) **Placement Approval** A Team Decision Making meeting should be held prior to the decision to make an out-of-home placement. (*Child Safety Assessment and Child Safety Planning I-AB.5*)

(5) Substitute Care Placement No child under department legal authority may be placed in a *substitute care* setting that has not received a certificate of approval for meeting *Safety Standards for Foster Care, Relative Care, and Adoptive Families (II-B.1)* or has received a License as a Child-Caring Agency (*II-E.1*). This standard must be met regardless of whether a payment is issued for this service.

(6) Sibling Placements Efforts will be made to place siblings in the same *substitute care* placement when it is in the best interest of the children and whenever possible. Early separation of siblings in *substitute care* can impact their long term relationship with one another. Therefore, when siblings are separated in *substitute care*, efforts will be made to reunite them in placement as soon as possible.

(a) The child's caseworker should review and document in the case file all attempts to reunite siblings and the reasons why the attempts were not successful.

(b) If siblings are not placed together in *substitute care*, efforts will be made to ensure that the children have the opportunity for continuing contact through visitation plans, phone calls, letters, etc.

(c) Sibling placement and planning decisions will be a regular area of case consultation and supervision between the caseworker and their supervisor.

(7) Proximity to Parents. The child shall be placed in close proximity to the parents, with the child's siblings, or with approved relatives whenever feasible. (*Placement Matching, I-E.3.1*)

(8) Reunification Returning the child home safely is one of the primary objectives of using *substitute care*. Unless otherwise directed as a result of aggravated circumstances or extreme conduct sections of the law. Efforts are to be made whenever possible to work with a child's family and the child towards return to parent(s). When returning the child to his or her home is in the best interest of the child, the department must 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.

(9) Visitation of Parents Assure visits occur between parents and child and make these purposeful and meaningful events in the treatment process. (*Visitation and Child-Family Contact, I-E.3.5*)

(10) 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 must be commenced from the time the child is placed in

substitute care. (Refer to OAR 413-070-0500 thru 0517, DHS Child Welfare Policy I-E.3.6, *Achieving Permanency.*)

(11) Case Review There must be an administrative (CRB) or judicial review for every child in *substitute care* per policy. (*Substitute Care Placement Reviews, I-B.3.2.1*)

V. CASEWORK SUPPORT OF PLACEMENT

(1) Active and ongoing sharing of information with the *caregiver* and obtaining information from the *caregiver* is necessary in caring for the child. Caseworkers will share verbal and written information with the child's *caregiver* about each child prior to, or at the time a child is placed, and on an ongoing basis throughout the time the child is placed with the *caregiver*.

(2) Written information will be provided to the *caregiver* in a mutually agreed upon standard for the local office. Options that may be considered are; CF261 Placement Information form, Child's Book (Department Publication PAM9604), Residential Care Referral, or other form as consistent with providing at a minimum the following information:

(a) Child's legal name, date of birth, name of child's parent(s), reason why the child is being placed into *substitute care*, legal status of child, religious and cultural preferences. Who may have contact with child, the visitation and family contact plan. This includes any known medical needs, medications and allergies; any mental health concerns or needs; immunization records; health insurance information; and family physician, if known.

(b) Educational information for the child, current school, grade, teacher(s) name. Information that may contribute or prevent the child from attending the same school or re-enroll in a neighborhood school.

(c) Case plan for the child and anticipated timeline for providing the *substitute care* service.

(d) The assigned caseworker's name and telephone number, and an after-hours emergency phone number.

(3) Caregiver Support Provide support to the *caregiver* during transition and adjustment periods for the child's placement by involving the *caregiver* in case planning for the child. Notify the *caregiver* of Court Hearings and Citizen Review Hearings.

(4) Children in Residential Services The caseworker shall participate in treatment planning for children according to *Residential Service policy I-E.4.3.*

(5) Out-of-County Placement When the child is placed or residing in a county other than the county maintaining legal custody, the staff responsible for the child will review and follow the Out-of-County Placement Policy I-B.3.4.3.

VI. REFERENCE FOR CASE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

(1) Adolescent Services Youth in department foster care may be considered for Independent Living Services beginning at the age of 14, (*Independent Living Programs I-B.2.3.5*)

(2) Concurrent Plans Prepare and work to implement a concurrent plan. (*Achieving Permanency I-E.3.6.*)

(3) Court Reports Notification to Juvenile Court. (*Court Reports. I-1.3*)

(4) Death of a Child (*Funeral and Burial, I-E.5.3*)

(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 the department is subordinate to a legal parent or guardian's authority at the death. Parents or the guardians have the right to determine the funeral and burial arrangements.

(b) 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)*

(5) Documentation Refer to DHS Child Welfare Policy I-I.1, Service Reporting - Case Files and IIS; DHS Child Welfare Policy I-I.2, Narrative Recording; DHS Child Welfare Policy I-I.3, Court Reports; and DHS Child Welfare Policy I-I.4, Treatment Referrals.

(6) Medical and Dental Medical insurance information shall be provided to the caregiver for the child on date of placement. Medical and dental needs of the child are to be addressed. *(Medical Services Provided through the Oregon Health Plan and I-C.4.1 and Special Medical Services Provided by DHS I-C.4.2)*

(7) Multiethnic Placements Every child needs and deserves a safe, nurturing and permanent home. Practices which delay permanency for any child are to be avoided. *(Multi-ethnic Placements I-E.2)*

(8) Notice to Parents A legal basis for providing service shall be established prior to services being given. The client's case record must contain proof that a legal basis for providing service was established. A written application from an adult member of the family documents the legal basis for voluntary services. *(Authority for Providing Service I-B.1.1)*

(9) Parental Visits Arrange for parental visits with parents and caregivers. *(Visitation and Child-Family Contact, I-E.3.5)*

(10) Parent's Rights The rights of parents shall be discussed with the parents at the time of placement. 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. *(Rights of Clients I-A.1)*

(11) Placement of Indian Children Decision making and case planning for Indian children must be in compliance with rules listed. *(Placement of Indian Children I-E.2.1)*

(12) Protective Service Reports Child welfare staff shall report any indication of child abuse in a foster, relative or adoptive home or residential care and treatment facility to a protective service worker/screener. *(Assessment of Abuse Allegations in Family Foster Care, Family Group Homes and Family Shelter Homes I-B.2.2.3)*

(13) Services to Parents Provide services to the parents as appropriate for eventual return of the child to the family, or toward other disposition, as identified

in the case plan. (*Service Plans: Service Agreement or Letter of Expectations and Family Decision Meetings I-B.3.1*)

(14) Supervisor Case Review The caseworker reviews the case with the supervisor, and makes recommended adjustments as necessary. (*Service Plans: Service Agreement or Letter of Expectations and Family Decision Meetings, I-B.3.1*)

(15) Supportive Services Provide support to the child during the potentially difficult period of initial adjustment to a new living arrangement or during the transition between placements or on a return home.

(16) Voluntary Services Client(s) must sign a "Service Application" Form CF 304 to give the department authorization to provide voluntary services. (*Authority for Providing Service I-B.1.1*)

(17) Youth with Disabilities Youth who are 16 years of age and older and have serious physical, mental or emotional disabilities should be assessed for services through Vocational Rehabilitation, Senior and People with Disabilities, and Health Services of the department.

(18) Working with Relatives Work with relatives toward placement of children, as outlined in *Working with Relatives I-E.1.1*.