

### Handbook

For RFA program staff in the child welfare agency, the County Welfare Director's Association (CWDA) has established a Statewide Intercounty Protocol to provide consistency and agreement with how to assess families who live out of county. This protocol may be found on the [CWDA website](http://www.cwda.org/childrens-services-0) at <http://www.cwda.org/childrens-services-0> and on the [CDSS RFA website](http://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/Resource-Family-Approval-Program) at <http://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/Resource-Family-Approval-Program>.

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- (b) A County that approves a Resource Family, or a County that agrees to be responsible for the approval and monitoring of a Resource Family pursuant to paragraph (3) of subsection (a), shall comply with the requirements applicable to a County as specified in the Written Directives.

### **SECTION 4-08: Placement Prior to Approval – Emergency Placement**

- (a) A County welfare agency may place a child or nonminor dependent with a relative or NREFM on an emergency basis, pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code section 309 or 361.45.
- (b) Prior to the emergency placement of a child or nonminor dependent with a relative or NREFM, a County shall follow the process described in Welfare and Institutions Code section 361.4.
- (c) Within 10 calendar days following the criminal records check conducted through the CLETS, or five business days after a child or nonminor dependent is placed with a relative or NREFM pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code section 309 or 361.45, whichever is sooner, a County shall:
  - (1) Ensure the relative or NREFM completes form RFA-01(A): Resource Family Application and RFA-01(B): Resource Family Criminal Records Statement.
  - (2) Initiate a Home Environment Assessment, including a background check, as specified in Sections 6-02 and 6-03A.
    - (A) A County shall document the date on which the health and safety assessment of the home and grounds, outdoor activity space, and storage areas of the home is conducted by using form RFA-03: Resource Family Home Health and Safety Assessment Checklist.
  - (3) Discuss funding available to a relative or NREFM prior to approval as a Resource Family.
- (d) Unless subsection (e) applies, a County shall complete a Comprehensive Assessment of an applicant, as specified in Section 6-01, and prepare a Written Report, as specified in Section 6-07, within 90 calendar days of the date a child or nonminor dependent was placed with the relative or NREFM.

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- (1) If a County is unable to complete the Comprehensive Assessment within 90 days, the County shall document the reasons for the delay, if the delay was due to a good cause reason, and generate a timeframe for completion.
  - (A) A good cause reason for delay is created when the circumstances for the delay are outside the direct control of the county.
- (e) Notwithstanding subsection (d), if a Resource Family's approval is to care for a specific child or nonminor dependent pursuant to Section 6-07(e), then a County shall initiate an approval update, as specified in Section 9-02(b)(4), within five business days of the emergency placement of another child or nonminor dependent pursuant to this section.
- (f) A relative or NREFM is not eligible to receive an Aid to Families with Dependent Children-Foster Care payment on behalf of a child or nonminor dependent until the applicant receives Resource Family Approval and the child or nonminor dependent meets all other eligibility criteria.
  - (1) A relative or NREFM shall receive emergency caregiver funding effective the date of placement pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code section 11461.36.
- (g) The emergency placement of a child or nonminor dependent with a relative or NREFM pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code section 309 or 361.45 does not ensure approval as a Resource Family.

### **SECTION 4-09: Placement Prior to Approval – Compelling Reason**

- (a) A County may place a child or nonminor dependent with an applicant prior to Resource Family Approval based on a compelling reason, pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code section 16519.5(e).
  - (1) A compelling reason may include, but is not limited to the following:
    - (A) The unique needs of a child or nonminor dependent.
    - (B) The best interest of a child or nonminor dependent to maintain his or her family or family-like connections with an applicant.
- (b) Prior to placing a child or nonminor dependent with an applicant for a compelling reason, a County shall:
  - (1) Verify that a health and safety assessment of the home and grounds, outdoor activity space, and storage areas of the home has been completed and documented on form RFA-03: Resource Family Home Health and Safety Assessment Checklist, and that a capacity determination has been completed, as specified in Section 6-02.
  - (2) Verify that a background check of the applicant and all adults residing or regularly present in the home has been completed as specified in Section 6-03A, and if necessary, any criminal record exemptions have been approved pursuant to Section 6-03B.
- (c) Unless Subsection (d) applies, a County shall conduct a Permanency Assessment of an applicant, as specified in Section 6-04, and prepare a Written Report, as specified in

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Section 6-07, within 90 calendar days of the date a child or nonminor dependent was placed pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code section 309 or 361.45 unless good cause exists.

- (1) If good cause exists, a County shall document the reasons for the delay and generate a timeframe for completion.
- (d) Notwithstanding subsection (c), if a Resource Family's approval is to care for a specific child or nonminor dependent pursuant to Section 6-07(e), then a County shall initiate an approval update, as specified in Section 9-02(b)(4) within five business days of the placement of another child or nonminor dependent pursuant to this section.
- (e) An applicant is not eligible to receive an Aid to Families with Dependent Children-Foster Care payment on behalf of a child or nonminor dependent until the applicant receives Resource Family Approval and the child or nonminor dependent meets all other eligibility criteria.
  - (1) A relative or NREFM shall receive emergency caregiver funding effective the date of placement pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code section 11461.36"
- (f) The placement of a child or nonminor dependent with an applicant pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code section 16519.5(e) does not ensure approval as a Resource Family.

### ARTICLE 5: RESOURCE FAMILY APPLICATION PROCESS

#### **SECTION 5-01: Nondiscrimination of Applicants**

- (a) Any adult shall be permitted to apply for Resource Family Approval regardless of age, sex, race, religion, color, political affiliation, national origin, disability, marital status, gender identity, gender expression, actual or perceived sexual orientation, medical condition, genetic information, citizenship, primary language, immigration status, or ancestry.

#### **SECTION 5-02: Applicant Qualifications**

- (a) An applicant shall be at least 18 years of age.
- (b) An applicant shall be in good physical and mental health.
  - (1) Verification of good physical health of each applicant shall include form RFA 07: Health Questionnaire, or a health screening by a health professional that was issued not more than one year prior to the date of application.
  - (2) Good mental health may include, but not be limited to, information that shows the applicant has not engaged in conduct that poses a risk or threat to the health and safety, protection, or well-being of a child, nonminor dependent, or other individual.

#### **SECTION 5-03A: Application Requirements-Applicant**

- (a) An applicant shall comply with the requirements specified in this section and the following requirements: