

Resource Family Approval Written Directives



VERSION 8

EFFECTIVE DATE: 11/01/2022

Prepared by:

California Department of Social Services



RESOURCE FAMILY APPROVAL PROGRAM

Single-underlined text with yellow highlights – Reflect changes made to the Written Directives in Version 8.

SECTION 4-08: Placement Prior to Approval

- (a) Following the emergency placement of a child or nonminor dependent with a relative or nonrelative extended family member (NREFM), or an extended family member in the case of an Indian child, as described in Welfare and Institutions Code sections 309, 361.45 or 727.05, a county welfare agency or probation department shall do the following:
- (1) In the case of an ICWA eligible child, consult with the Tribe and determine if the relative, NREFM, or extended family member, will initiate the TAH process, as described in Section 1-04(a), or, within five business days, initiate the Resource Family Approval process as described in paragraph (2) & (3).
 - (2) Ensure the relative, NREFM, or extended family member in the case of an Indian child, completes form RFA-01(A): Resource Family Application and RFA-01(B): Resource Family Criminal Records Statement.
 - (A) All adults residing or regularly present in the home shall also complete the RFA-01(B).
 - (3) Initiate a Home Environment Assessment, including a background check, as specified in Sections 6-02 and 6-03A.
 - (A) Ensure the relative, NREFM, or extended family member in the case of an Indian child, and any other required individuals as described in Section 6-03A shall initiate the criminal background fingerprint clearance within five business days of the emergency placement or within 10 calendar days of when the County or probation department conducted a criminal records check through the California Legal Enforcement Telecommunication System (CLETS).
 - (B) 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.
 - (4) Discuss funding available to a relative or NREFM prior to approval as a Resource Family.
- (b) 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.
- (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.
- (c) A relative, NREFM, or extended family member in the case of an Indian child, 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, NREFM, or extended family member in the case of an Indian child, shall receive emergency caregiver funding effective the date of placement pursuant to

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Welfare and Institutions Code section 11461.36.

- (d) The emergency placement of a child or nonminor dependent with a relative, NREFM, or extended family member in the case of an Indian child, pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code section 309, 361.45, or 727.05 does not ensure approval as a Resource Family.

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

- (a) A county welfare agency or probation department may place a child or nonminor dependent with an applicant of a county RFA program or Foster Family Agency 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 their family or family-like connections with an applicant.
 - (C) In the case of an Indian child, complying with placement preferences set forth in Welfare and Institutions Code section 361.31 and the federal Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978 (25 U.S.C. Sec. 1901 et seq).
- (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 10-04.
- (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) A County shall conduct a Permanency Assessment of an applicant, as specified in Section 6-04, 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 pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code section 16519.5(e) 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) 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) An applicant with a child placed in their home based on a compelling reason shall receive emergency caregiver funding effective the date of placement pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code section 11461.36.

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- (e) 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:
 - (1) Submit a completed application on form RFA 01A: Resource Family Application.
 - (2) Consent to release all requested evaluative reports and records, including physical and mental health reports and records.
 - (A) Confidential information and documents containing confidential information may be shared by a County or the Department pursuant to Section 4-04 (e).
 - (3) Allow a home health and safety assessment pursuant to Section 6-02, to determine whether there are conditions in the home that affect the health, safety, and well-being of a child or nonminor dependent.
 - (4) Provide the names and contact information of two individuals who can attest to the applicant's character and ability to provide a safe environment for a child or nonminor dependent.
 - (A) If an applicant is unable to provide two references, the applicant shall document the reasons.
 - (5) Consent for a County to conduct a background check pursuant to Section 6-03A, including submitting a completed form RFA 01B: Resource Family Criminal Record Statement, and if applicable, form LIC 198B: Out-of-State Child Abuse/Neglect Report Request or an equivalent form from a responding State if that State will not complete the LIC198B.