



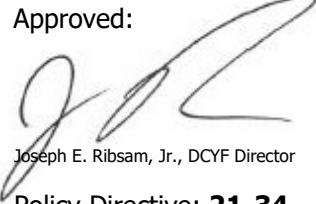
New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth and Families Policy Manual

1600 PLACEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Chapter: **Out-of-Home Placements**

Section: **Finding a Placement**

Approved:


Joseph E. Ribsam, Jr., DCYF Director

Policy Directive: **21-34**

Effective Date: **October 2021**

References Of Note

Federal Authority: [42 USC 671](#), and [42 USC 675](#)

Statutes: [RSA 169-B](#), [RSA 169-C](#), [RSA 169-D](#),
[RSA 170-G](#), and [RSA 170-H](#)

Administrative Rules: [He-C 6350](#), [He-C 6355](#), and [He-C 6446](#)

Case Law:

This policy defines how to determine the most appropriate, least restrictive placement for children placed by DCYF through a NH court.

Required Practices

Any deviations to the following information must be documented with Supervisory Approval.

- I. DCYF must consider the appropriateness of a non-custodial parent (as applicable) assuming custody of their child prior to seeking a court order for placement. A change in custody between parents is not placement.
- II. Children must be placed in the most appropriate, least restrictive environment available to meet their needs. Placement consideration must:
 - A. Take into account the child's safety, permanency, and well-being needs, as determined by formal assessment, the professional expertise of the CPSW/JPPD, and the family's wishes; and
 - B. Include sustained attention to ensure that the placement aligns with the child's permanency plan as outlined in policy 1625 Permanency Planning.
- III. Siblings must be placed together (as applicable) in accordance with policy 1503 Maintaining Connections.
- IV. Children will be placed with appropriate relatives or another child-specific placement (Fictive Kin) unless there are mitigating circumstances.
 - A. If relatives or other child-specific placements are not identified at the onset of placement, there must be ongoing effort to identify appropriate relatives and other child-specific placements until permanency is achieved.
 - B. Relatives and other child-specific placements initially ruled out for placement must be re-assessed during Roadmaps to Reunification meetings and Permanency Planning Team (PPT) meetings.

- V. Placement of any child who is or may be a member of a federally recognized Indian tribe must comply with policy 1510 Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Compliance.
- VI. Placements must be planned with the parents, child, and placement provider as circumstances allow.
 - A. When circumstances warrant an unplanned placement, decisions will be based on the information readily available at the time, but reviewed within 30 days to ensure the most appropriate placement.
 - B. When circumstances warrant hospitalization, detention, or commitment, a plan for placement must be made before discharge for children who cannot return to their parents when they leave the specified program.
- VII. Relatives and other connections identified as potential placement by the family must be engaged in conversation about their ability to provide care.
- VIII. Children may not be placed in an unlicensed home (relatives and fictive kin) without a preliminary safety assessment as indicated in policy 1615 Placement.
- IX. Placement with fictive Kin (non-relatives) for children placed through RSA 169-C may occur with Field Administrator approval, with the following conditions:
 - A. The preliminary safety checks have been completed;
 - B. The caregiver must be permitted within 30 days; and
 - C. The caregiver must be licensed as soon as possible, but no longer than within 6 months of placement.
- X. Relatives in CPS cases and all child-specific placements for JJS cases will be encouraged to become licensed.
- XI. Placement of a young adult in the HOPE program (age 18 or older, whose RSA 169-B, C, or D case has closed) must be in accordance with policy 1977 Hope Program - Voluntary Extended Foster Care.
- XII. When the child's needs indicate that a treatment episode in Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP) should be considered, the CPSW/JJPO must make a referral for a Comprehensive Assessment for Treatment (CAT):
 - A. The day of placement when the Court has ordered residential placement due to safety considerations; or
 - B. Within 30 days of the expected entry into placement for non-emergency placements.
- XIII. Placement of the child will align with the level of care (LOC) recommendation indicated by the CAT and will be continually assessed for appropriateness.

- A. This includes consideration of community services that may be able to provide the necessary support needed to provide the recommended level of care in a less restrictive environment.
- XIV. For each child placed in a QRTP, the CPSW/JPPPO must report on the ongoing appropriateness of the placement at the periodic court reviews.
- XV. No placement shall be made outside of New Hampshire without the expressed approval of the appropriate Compact Administrator or their designee.
- A. All available in-state residential and community resource options must be explored and exhausted prior to seeking an out-of-state residential treatment program.
- XVI. The placement of a child must not be delayed or denied on the basis of race, color, creed, ethnicity, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, or disability.
- XVII. Once a placement resource has been identified, the name and address of the placement, as well as the reason for that placement choice, must be documented in the DCYF electronic information system within 24 hours.
- XVIII. As applicable, efforts to identify less restrictive placements, or placements that can support the concurrent goal, must be documented in the DCYF electronic information system and case record.

Standard Operating Procedures		
SOP	Title	Applicable Disciplines
1600.1	Determining Most Appropriate Placement	Field Services
1600.2	Placement Options	Field Services
1600.3	Child-Specific Placement	Field Services
1600.4	Foster Home Placement	Field Services
1600.5	Residential Treatment	Field Services

Glossary and Document Specific Definitions

A - B C - D E - F G - I J - L M - N O - Q R - S T - V W - Z

Document Change Log

PD	Modification Made	Approved	Date
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