



New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth and Families Policy Manual

1626 PERMANENCY PLANNING SUPPORTS

Chapter: **Out-Of-Home Placements**

Section: **Permanency**

Approved:

Joseph E. Ribsam, Jr., DCYF Director

Policy Directive: **21-51**

Effective Date: **December 2021**

References Of Note

Federal Authority: [42 USC 671](#), [42 USC 675](#), and [45 CFR 1356.21](#)

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

Administrative Rules:

Case Law:

This policy establishes DCYF’s practice of utilizing the Roadmaps to Reunification Program and specialized Permanency Planning Team (PPT) to assist in permanency planning for children in care.

Required Practices

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

- I. Permanency planning begins at the onset of placement in accordance with policy 1625 Permanency Planning.
- II. The Division’s formal permanency supports include:
 - A. Immediate supports through Roadmaps to Reunification for all children with a permanency goal of reunification who are placed with a relative, other child-specific caregiver, or foster home, including a step-down from a residential treatment program into one of these placements; and
 - B. PPTs assigned to each District Office to support all children in placement starting no later than 6 months after they entered care.
- III. The Roadmap to Reunification program is initiated upon placement with a relative, other child-specific caregiver, or foster home.
 - A. The Reunification Specialist must be notified within 24 hours of all placements and changes in placement applicable to the Roadmap to Reunification program and provided all known demographic information.
 - B. The Roadmap to Reunification program will run for 6 months until the case transfers to the PPT process, unless reunification is achieved, the child enters a residential treatment program, or the concurrent goal is adopted by the Court.
 1. The Reunification Specialist may remain involved or be brought back on for consultation or to assist in reunification efforts as necessary.

- C. The CPSW/JPPO must attend all reunification reviews.
 - D. The Reunification Specialist must be invited to any PPT meeting, case joining, or case transfer regarding a family they are working with.
- IV. All DCYF District Offices will have a PPT comprised of a Permanency CPSW and Permanency JPPO, Resource Worker, Adolescent Worker, and Permanency Supervisor, as well as other staff deemed appropriate by the PPT.
- A. Itinerant offices will have their PPT meetings with their assigned DO's Permanency Planning Team.
- V. The PPT will:
- A. Meet at least once per month to review selected placement cases;
 - B. Have a system in place for tracking all children in care to ensure PPT meetings occur in a timely manner;
 - C. Provide additional consultation on a case-by-case basis when requested; and
 - D. Facilitate matching meetings as appropriate, in accordance with policy 1784 Child Matching Process for Adoption and Permanent Placement of Children.
- VI. Each District Office will have a procedure in place for CPSWs/JPPOs to notify the PPT of initial placements (including commitment to SYSC) and changes in placement that impact the PPT schedule (reunification, or step-down from or up to a residential treatment program) within 24 hours.
- A. The Permanency CPSW will be invited to attend all CPS case joining and transfer meetings for children in placement.
 - B. The Permanency JPPO will be invited to attend all JJS case transfer meetings.
 - C. Both the Permanency CPSW and Permanency JPPO will be invited to attend any case joining or transfer meetings for children in placement when there is a joint CPS/JJS case.
- VII. PPT meetings must be held for all children in placement:
- A. At 3 months, and ongoing every 3 months from their initial placement, for any siblings not placed together, unless otherwise approved by a Field Administrator due to mitigating circumstances;
 - B. At 6 months from initial placement for all children, regardless of type of placement; or
 - C. Sooner than 6 months at the request of the CPSW/JPPO or Supervisor or, if after reviewing the initial PPT notes from the Roadmaps meeting, the Permanency

CPSW/JPPPO or Permanency Supervisor determine an earlier PPT meeting is warranted;

- D. At any point when it is appropriate to consider seeking an early permanency hearing (CPS specific);
 - E. At 11 months from initial placement;
 - F. At 30 days prior to the permanency hearing (if the hearing date does not align with the 11-month PPT);
 - G. At 30 days prior to any post-permanency hearing when the Court has ordered an extension;
 - H. Within 30 days of a dismissal of petitions to terminate parental rights; and
 - I. At 6 months before a youth's 18th birthday (age 17.5) or within 30 days for any youth entering care age 17.5 or older;
 - J. Every 6 months after the permanency hearing until permanency is achieved.
- VIII. Siblings must have their own individualized PPT meetings to review their specific permanency needs.
- IX. PPT meetings will be attended by:
- A. The CPSW/JPPPO or Supervisor assigned to the case;
 - B. At least 3 core PPT members:
 - 1. A Permanency CPSW or Permanency JPPPO;
 - 2. The Resource Worker;
 - 3. The Adolescent Worker (must be present for any PPT meeting regarding a youth age 14 or older);
 - 4. The Permanency Supervisor; and
 - 5. The SYSC Permanency Program Specialist for any PPT meeting regarding a child committed to SYSC;
 - C. Applicable Division staff based on case circumstances to include:
 - 1. The Human Trafficking Program Specialist when the child has been the victim of, or is at risk for, human trafficking;
 - 2. The Family Violence Prevention Specialist when domestic violence is a barrier to reunification;

3. The Licensed Drug and Alcohol Counselor (LADC) when drug or alcohol abuse is a barrier to reunification;
 4. The Nurse Consultant when the child has extensive medical needs that may impact permanency; and
 5. The DCYF Staff Attorney if available (CPS specific). The DCYF Staff Attorney must be present if the team is meeting regarding motioning the Court for an early permanency hearing; and
- D. Other DCYF staff may be invited to provide input when it is believed their area of expertise could assist in permanency planning.
- X. CPSWs/JPPOs must prepare for the PPT meeting by:
- A. Completing any paperwork requested by the PPT prior to the meeting;
 - B. Notifying the Permanency CPSW/JPPO when any of the circumstances noted above in section IX-C are present; and
 - C. Seeking input regarding permanency needs from parents/guardians, children, placement and treatment providers, and the CASA/GAL (as applicable) prior to the PPT meeting.
- XI. Any plan to recommend to the Court that reunification efforts cease must be discussed with the PPT.
- XII. The primary focus of all PPT meetings will be to consider the specific permanency needs of children and must include (as applicable) a review of both the permanency and concurrent goals, as well as:
- A. Parental engagement including locating and engaging missing parents;
 - B. Sibling relationships (as applicable);
 - C. Extended family and other important connections, including exploration of maternal and paternal relatives to reassess their ability to provide care or be a connection for the child;
 - D. Active and timely identification and engagement of individuals identified as potential guardians, adoptive parents, or Primary Caring Adults (PCAs);
 - E. Case plan goals and objectives as they relate to permanency;
 - F. The family's success towards the permanency plan and any barriers to achieving the permanency and concurrent goals;
 - G. Effectiveness of paid and community services (as applicable) in contributing to the stabilization of the permanency and concurrent goals;

- H. Appropriateness of the current placement to meet the child’s safety, permanency, and well-being needs; and
 - I. The child’s best interest.
- XIII. All initial Roadmap to Reunification meetings and all PPT meetings must be documented in the PPT screen in the DCYF electric information system in a timely manner.
- A. Documentation will include clearly defined tasks and who is responsible for completing each task.
 - B. A copy of the tasks must be provided to each person assigned a task and their Supervisor within 5 business days.

Standard Operating Procedures		
SOP	Title	Applicable Disciplines
1626.1	Roadmaps to Reunification	CPS and JJS
1626.2	Permanency Planning Team Responsibilities	CPS and JJS
1626.3	CPSW Responsibilities - PPT	CPS
1626.4	Jppo Responsibilities - PPT	JJS

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