



NH Department of Health & Human Services
Division for Children, Youth & Families

DCYF Standard Operating Procedure

1600.3 CHILD-SPECIFIC PLACEMENT

Policy Directive: **21-34**

Effective Date: **October 2021**

Implements Policy: **1600**

Approved:

Joseph E. Ribsam, Jr., DCYF Director

This SOP defines practice regarding a child-specific placement.

Procedure

The following information is to support the implementation of the above referenced policy. This document shall not preclude staff from using their professional judgement based on individual circumstances, consistent with the requirements of the policy.

- I. The CPSW/JPO engages parents/guardians and children (as developmentally appropriate) in identifying, potential relatives, fictive kin, and other non-relative connections. This includes:
 - A. Identification of potential caregivers by parents/guardians and the wishes of the child as to where they would want to stay if they could not be at home prior to placement; and
 - B. Assisting the parents/guardians with completing the Child/Youth Information Sheet (Form 1552) as soon as possible following placement, to gather information about potential child-specific placements.
 1. Information obtained from the child about their connections and persons they would like to be with is captured on the Child/Youth Information Sheet.
- II. Relatives and other connections identified by the family as potential placement options are contacted by phone and engaged in discussion around their possibly taking the child into their home.
 - A. It is optimal to obtain a release from the parent and child prior to this communication, but not required so long as only minimal information specific to the placement needs are shared.
 - B. If it has been determined that residential treatment is the most appropriate option for the child, efforts to identify and engage relatives are still made to support concurrent planning.
- III. All relatives are notified of their potential to be considered a placement in accordance with policy 1515 Identification and Notification of Relatives.

- A. All relatives who indicate an interest in providing placement for the child are considered.
 - B. Any decision to rule out relative placement is documented in the DCYF electronic information system and the relative is notified in writing of the decision.
 - 1. Unless there are identified safety concerns or the family has indicated they do not want the relative to have contact, the relative is encouraged to continue to be a support to the child.
- IV. If one or more relatives want to be considered as a placement resource for the child, the CPSW/JPPPO and Supervisor should consider:
- A. The parents/guardians' preferences;
 - B. Each relative's ability to:
 - 1. Ensure safety and stability for the child, including their educational stability;
 - 2. Cooperate with DCYF, the parents, and others on the child's team;
 - 3. Assist the family in reaching the permanency goals;
 - 4. Maintain siblings together; and
 - 5. Adhere to the boundaries established by DCYF or the Court;
 - C. Family relationships and how they may support/interfere with permanency goals;
 - D. Each relative's proximity to the child's community;
 - E. The child's preferences; and
 - F. Any other factors that might be in the child's best interests to be placed with one relative over another relative.
- V. Placement with a child-specific home should occur as soon as possible, but only when a preliminary safety assessment (as outlined policy 1615 Placement) can be completed before the child is placed in the home.
- VI. When non-safety related barriers to child-specific placement are identified, there is exploration of how to overcome the barriers. This may include:
- A. Working directly with the potential placement provider to identify needs and create a plan to meet the needs; or
 - B. Utilizing available services that could support placement (after consulting with a Supervisor).

- VII. When the potential child-specific placement in a CPS case is not a relative (within 6 degrees of kinship), the placement cannot occur without the expressed approval of the Field Administrator.
 - A. If approval is given, placement can occur up to 30 days while household members and the home environment are vetted to be issued a foster care license permit according to He-C 6446.
 - B. The permit can remain in place up to 6 months during the licensing process.
- VIII. Unless there are mitigating circumstances, ongoing efforts to identify child-specific placements are necessary until permanency is achieved. These efforts may include:
 - A. Continued conversations with parents/guardians and the child (as age and developmentally appropriate) about potential child-specific placements;
 - B. Checking back in with relatives or fictive kin who previously could not provide care;
 - C. Exploration during meetings with the family and the child (as age and developmentally appropriate), including at Roadmap to Reunification meetings; and
 - D. Discussion of efforts to identify and locate relatives at Permanency Planning Meetings (PPTs).
- IX. All efforts to identify, locate, and engage relatives and other child-specific placements are documented in the DCYF electronic information system.
 - A. Relative Notification Letters (Form 1515) are documented in accordance with policy 1515 Identification and Notification of Relatives.
 - B. Each relative or other potential child-specific placement is entered as a collateral and has their own contact that details efforts to engage them and their response.

Applicable Forms	
Form	Title
1515	Relative Notification Letter
1552	Child/Youth Information Sheet

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