



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

DCYF Standard Operating Procedure

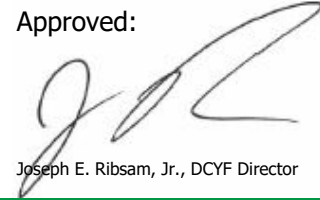
1570.2 JUVENILE JUSTICE PERMANENCY HEARINGS

Policy Directive: **21-51**

Approved:

Effective Date: **December 2021**

Implements Policy: **1570**


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This SOP defines how JPPOs prepare for and engage in permanency hearings.

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. JPPOs use the Hearing Notice for Placement Provider (Form 1630) to notify the foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, or relative caregivers of permanency hearings.
 - A. JPPOs document Form 1630 in the DCYF electronic information system by typing the phrase "Hearing Notice Sent" in the narrative of the contact log.
 - B. A hard copy of Form 1630 must be placed in the case file.
 - C. If a child changes placement before the hearing happens, a new Form 1630 is drafted and given to the new caregiver.
 - D. If there is insufficient time (less than 48 hours) to provide the foster parents, pre-adoptive parents and relative caregivers with Form 1630, the JPPO must notify them via telephone.
 - E. The JPPO shall be available to answer any questions the foster parents, pre-adoptive parents and relative caregivers may have regarding the hearing.
- II. JPPOs engage youth about the permanency hearing, by:
 - A. Notifying them in person, in writing, or by telephone, of the date and time of the scheduled hearing; and
 - B. Being available to answer any questions they may have regarding the hearing, roles of the parties who attend, and what they can expect.
 - C. Notification to the youth of the hearing date is documented in a contact in the DCYF electronic information system.
- III. When preparing the permanency hearing court report, the JPPO will provide detail about:
 - A. The youth's compliance with the outstanding dispositional order(s) or Case Plan:

- B. What action the youth has taken and whether meaningful participation has occurred concerning each dispositional order;
 - C. Whether the conditions or circumstances leading to the child's removal have been corrected;
 - D. A review of the child's removal and case history;
 - E. The recommended permanent placement for the child and the reasons other permanent placements are inappropriate for the child including a review of each of the following alternatives to reunification, as applicable:
 - 1. Adoption;
 - 2. Legal guardian; or,
 - 3. Another planned permanent living arrangement, if 16 or older;
 - F. Efforts toward the concurrent goal of adoption, legal guardianship, or APPLA if it will become the primary permanency goal, including:
 - 1. Exploration of a voluntary surrender of parental rights; or
 - 2. Filing a petition for termination of parental rights; and
 - 3. Consideration of a Voluntarily Mediated Adoption Agreement;
 - G. Good cause why any person(s) chosen by the youth (14 years of age or older) as part of their permanency team was rejected by DCYF, if applicable; and
 - H. For a youth with a permanency goal of APPLA (or on a case-by-case basis as applicable) identify:
 - 1. Intensive, ongoing, and unsuccessful efforts made by DCYF as of the date of the hearing, to return the youth home or secure a placement with a legal guardian or an adoptive parent;
 - 2. Ongoing efforts utilizing technology (including social media) to search for relatives and connections for the youth;
 - 3. Regular ongoing opportunities for the youth to engage in age or developmentally appropriate activities; and
 - 4. The youth's input about the opportunities to participate in the activities.
- IV. During the hearing, the JPPO:
- A. Provides information about the plans and services for the child;

- B. Requests the court to determine if the Division has made reasonable efforts to finalize a permanency plan for the child; and
- C. Makes a recommendation concerning the child’s permanent placement.
- D. For a youth with a permanency goal of APPLA, the JPPO requests the court (if the court has not already done so) to:
 - 1. Ask the youth about their desired permanency outcome; and
 - 2. Make a judicial determination explaining why APPLA is, or continues to be, the best permanency goal for the youth and provide compelling reasons why it is not in their best interests to:
 - (a) Return home;
 - (b) Be placed for adoption; or
 - (c) Be placed with a legal guardian.

Applicable Forms	
Form	Title
1630	Hearing Notice for Placement Provider

Frequently Asked Questions

Q1. Does a permanency hearing have to be scheduled separate from a reasonable efforts determination hearing?

A If all the parties are prepared, the court may conduct the permanency hearing at during the hearing in which the reasonable efforts determination has been made. This will meet the requirement for having a permanency hearing within 30 days.

Q2. Do I include time that a child is missing in calculating time in placement?

A Yes, in determining the full length of time that a child has been in placement, include time that the child was missing.

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

