

	Division of Family and Children Services Child Welfare Manual	Chapter: Out of Home Care
		Section: Effective Date:
		Previous Policy #:

Identifying Concurrent Planning Resource Parents

POLICY NUMBER:

CODES

Georgia Code 15-11-58
O.C.G.A. Section 15-11-55 and 49-5-3
Public Law 96-272 (Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act) and Public Law 105-89 (Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997)

REQUIREMENT

The Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) will identify resource parents¹ for the placement of children with concurrent permanency plans within 30 days of a decision to pursue concurrent planning, but no later than 60 days of a child entering out of home care.

PROCEDURE

The Permanency SSCM will:

1. Explore all possible maternal and paternal relative resources as the preferred resource parents:
 - a. Review diligent search information obtained from CPS and/or Family Preservation Services
 - b. Continue diligent search efforts and document in Georgia SHINES
 - i. Request that the family provide information regarding relatives and committed individuals.
 - ii. Ask the child (ren) to provide information regarding any absent parent/caregiver, relatives and committed individuals (as age appropriate).
 - iii. Identify, locate and contact all alleged, putative, legal fathers using all available databases and information systems.
 - iv. Identify, locate and contact all relatives and committed individuals using all available databases, and information systems.
 - v. Assess the suitability of relatives who express a willingness to be a permanency resource.
 - c. Discuss concurrent planning with the child's family and potential

¹ See Practice Guidance "Resource Parents"

relative resource parents.

- d. Discuss assistance and supports available for relatives. (Social Services Manual Section 1004.1.9 – 1004.2.29)
- e. Complete a relative care assessment/home evaluation and all relevant background checks. (Social Services Manual Section 1004.1.2 -1004.1.8); See Practice Guidance- Diligent Search; CPS Assessment Policy- Diligent Search)
2. Assess the current placement resource's (relative/non-relative or partnership parent) suitability to become resource parents
 - a. Confer with placement resource regarding their interest in becoming resource parents for the child, should reunification fail.
 - b. Discuss relevant family and child history, and other information (as appropriate) to communicate needed level of commitment necessary to achieve permanency for the child.
3. If the current placement is not an appropriate resource parent:
 - a. Re-direct efforts to locate resource parents that are an appropriate match for the child and family.
 - i. Solicit assistance from Resource Development staff; review home studies and meet with resource families.

Upon identifying prospective resource parents, the Permanency SSCM will:

1. Discuss the potential resource parents with the child and family;
2. Prepare the child/family for any pending placement change
 - a. Provide the child/family with opportunities to meet with the resource parents (if not the current placement), to ensure appropriate matching. (Social Services Manual, Section 1009.16 and 1008.1-1008.2; Practice Guidance)
3. Provide full disclosure with the resource parents, which involve having an in depth, open/honest discussion with the resource parents regarding the expectations and requirements of concurrent planning. This should include:
 - a. The manner in which the resource parents works with the birth family to support reunification, while at the same time being willing to provide a permanent home should reunification efforts fail;
 - b. Relevant family and child history, and other information (as appropriate) to communicate needed level of commitment necessary to achieve permanency for the child. (See HIPAA policy regarding protected health information and necessary authorization for release of information)
 - c. Discussion of alternative permanency options which may include Adoption, Permanent Guardianship or Permanent Custody with a Fit and Willing Relative; (Social Services Manual, Section 1006.2 -1006.7)
 - d. Inherent risks and responsibilities of becoming concurrent planning resource parents;
 - e. The possibility that parental rights may not be terminated and the child may not be free for adoption;
 - f. The intensive services and enhanced level of visitation required; and that contact with the birth family is required;

- g. The benefits of post-permanency communication with the birth family, including siblings; (see Concurrent Planning Practice Handbook, Chapter 5)
 - h. Supports and training provided by DFCS
(See Concurrent Planning Practice Handbook Appendix C: Full Disclosure Checklist)
4. Convene a Parent to Parent Meeting. (Meeting must occur within 5 days of any change in placement. (See Practice Guidance)
 5. Initiate a Family Team Meeting:
 - a. Meeting should be held a minimum of two (2) weeks prior to placement change, or within 48 hours of placement change (when placement change is done on an emergency basis);
 - b. Discuss reason for placement change, visitation plan and services/review of both the primary and alternative permanency plans;
- NOTE:** This meeting can be combined with the 60 day Review of the Family Case Plan.
6. Provide written notice to the court and all parties the court regarding placement change (Refer to Foster Care policy 1009.11-1009.12, 1004.13, 1009.14, 1009.15)
 7. Update Georgia SHINES- Placement Tab for all placement changes within 72 hours,
 8. Document in Georgia SHINES efforts to identify resource parents, results, barriers and placement changes in Georgia SHINES, Contacts/Summaries Tab, FTM Tab and Family Plan Tab, within 72 hours.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

Documenting Efforts to Identify a Resource parents

If the resource parents cannot be identified within 60 days of the initial placement in out of home care, the Permanency SSCM must document all efforts to locate resource parents. The documentation should be detailed and include the following:

1. Contacts (phone, mail, email, face to face correspondence) with the parents, relatives, resource development, regarding exploring permanency resources,
2. Review of home evaluations,
3. Contacts with potential resource parents (including relatives and committed individuals),
4. Reasons why prospective resource parents were not appropriate,
5. Other relevant information regarding efforts.

Matching Birth and Resource Families

Family centered practice requires that children/birth families and resource parents are appropriately matched to ensure successful permanency outcomes. This requires a review of the characteristics of the child, birth family and resource parents, discussions with each regarding the potential placement and providing opportunities for the child and family to meet the resource parents prior to the

actual placement. Adequate planning is necessary to allow the child to spend quality time with the potential resource parents, to learn about each other, and address any concerns/potential issues.

Diligent Search

Refer to CPS Policy- Assessment (Investigations) Section for Diligent Search requirements, Diligent Search Notification and Available Supports for Relatives/Committed Individuals.

Full Disclosure

Full disclosure is an important element in the placement and ongoing work with resource and birth parents. Full disclosure means open, honest, respectful discussions about rights, roles and responsibilities, child and family circumstances, timeframes, consequences, and other important issues. (Refer to the Full Disclosure Checklist for additional information.)

Parent to Parent Meeting

Within 48 hours of a placement, the birth parents and resource parents are introduced. The parent to parent meeting is held within 5 days of the change in placement.

Partnership Parents

Provides care for children with the full expectation that the placement is temporary. They are expected to engage in varying levels of partnership with the birth parents.

Resource Parents

Partnership parents or relatives who also agree to adopt or provide another form of permanency for the child **IF** reunification is not successful. Resource parents can be related or non-related individuals. For additional information regarding Resource Parents refer to the Concurrent Planning Practice Handbook, Chapter 6, Resource Parents.

REFERENCES