

# Resource Family Approval Written Directives



**VERSION 7**

EFFECTIVE DATE: 01/13/2021

Prepared by:

California Department of Social Services



## RESOURCE FAMILY APPROVAL PROGRAM

Single-underlined text with yellow highlights – Reflect changes made to the Written Directives in Version 7.

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### **SECTION 4-07: Out of County Resource Family Approval Assessments**

- (a) When a county placement agency places a child or nonminor dependent with a relative or nonrelative extended family member who resides in another county on an emergency basis, the County may choose any of the following options regarding the Resource Family Approval assessments:
- (1) The County may assess the relative or nonrelative extended family member for Resource Family Approval.
  - (2) The County may request the County of residence to assess the relative or nonrelative extended family member for Resource Family Approval. The County of residence shall proceed with the Comprehensive Assessment in accordance with Article 6 and the protocols adopted by the County Welfare Director's Association or Chief Probation Officers of California.
  - (3) The County may join with the County of residence to establish an agreement that clearly outlines the assessment responsibilities for each County and which County will be responsible for the approval and monitoring of the Resource Family.
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#### **Handbook Begins Here**

For RFA program staff in the child welfare agency, the County Welfare Director's Association (CWDA) has established a Statewide Intercounty Protocol to provide consistency and agreement with how to assess families who live out of county. This protocol may be found on the CWDA website at <http://www.cwda.org/childrens-services-0> and on the CDSS RFA website at <http://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/Resource-Family-Approval-Program>.

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#### **Handbook Ends Here**

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- (b) A County that approves a Resource Family, or a County that agrees to be responsible for the approval and monitoring of a Resource Family pursuant to paragraph (3) of subsection (a), shall comply with the requirements applicable to a County as specified in the Written Directives.

### **SECTION 4-08: Placement Prior to Approval – Emergency Placement**

- (a) A County welfare agency or probation department may place a child or nonminor dependent with a relative or NREFM, through a County RFA program or Foster Family Agency, on an emergency basis, pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code section 309 or 361.45, and 727.05, respectively.
- (1) In the case of an Indian child, a County shall comply with placement preferences as required by Welfare & Institutions Code section 361.31 and the Federal Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978 (25 U.S.C. Sec. 1901 et seq.).
- (b) Prior to the emergency placement of a child or nonminor dependent with a relative or NREFM, a County welfare agency or probation department shall follow the process described in Welfare and Institutions Code section 361.4 or 727.05.
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- (1) Criminal record exemption decisions made pursuant to section 6-03B shall be made following the receipt of LiveScan fingerprint responses from the Department of Justice and the RFA 01B. Criminal record exemption decisions shall not be based on CLETS information received for purposes of making emergency placement decisions pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code section 361.4 or 727.05.
- (c) Within 10 calendar days following the criminal records check conducted through the CLETS, or five business days after a child or nonminor dependent is placed with a relative or NREFM pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code section 309, 361.45 or 727.05 whichever is sooner, a County shall:
  - (1) Ensure the relative or NREFM completes form RFA-01(A): Resource Family Application and RFA-01(B): Resource Family Criminal Records Statement.
  - (2) Initiate a Home Environment Assessment, including a background check, as specified in Sections 6-02 and 6-03A.
    - (A) A County shall document the date on which the health and safety assessment of the home and grounds, outdoor activity space, and storage areas of the home is conducted by using form RFA-03: Resource Family Home Health and Safety Assessment Checklist.
  - (3) Discuss funding available to a relative or NREFM prior to approval as a Resource Family.
- (d) A County shall complete a Comprehensive Assessment of an applicant, as specified in Section 6-01, and prepare a Written Report, as specified in Section 6-07, within 90 calendar days of the date a child or nonminor dependent was placed with the relative or NREFM.
  - (1) If a County is unable to complete the Comprehensive Assessment within 90 days, the County shall document the reasons for the delay, if the delay was due to a good-cause reason, and generate a timeframe for completion.
    - (A) A good cause reason for delay is created when the circumstances for the delay are outside the direct control of the county.
- (e) A relative or NREFM is not eligible to receive an Aid to Families with Dependent Children-Foster Care payment on behalf of a child or nonminor dependent until the applicant receives Resource Family Approval and the child or nonminor dependent meets all other eligibility criteria.
  - (1) A relative or NREFM shall receive emergency caregiver funding effective the date of placement pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code section 11461.36.
- (f) The emergency placement of a child or nonminor dependent with a relative or NREFM pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code section 309, 361.45, or 727.05 does not ensure approval as a Resource Family.

### **SECTION 4-09: Placement Prior to Approval – Compelling Reason**

- (a) A County welfare agency or probation department may place a child or nonminor dependent with an applicant of a County RFA program or Foster Family Agency prior to Resource Family Approval based on a compelling reason, pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code section 16519.5(e).