

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

CHILDREN'S DIVISION

P. O. BOX 88

JEFFERSON CITY, MISSOURI

May 5, 2006

What's Inside:

Clarification of Services to children in custody and/or under supervision of CD

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: REGIONAL EXECUTIVE STAFF, CIRCUIT MANAGERS, AND CHILDREN'S DIVISION STAFF

FROM: PAULA NEESE, INTERIM DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: CLARIFICATION OF SERVICES TO CHILDREN IN CUSTODY AND/OR UNDER SUPERVISION OF THE CHILDREN'S DIVISION

REFERENCE: CHILDREN'S DIVISION

DISCUSSION:

The purpose of this memorandum is to inform staff of updated policy which clarifies services provided to children in all legal statuses whether in Children's Division (CD) custody or under CD supervision.

2005 RANDOM REVIEW

Last year the Children's Division completed a random review of cases of children in temporary custody with adoptive parents, (legal status [LS]-2), court-ordered supervision only by CD (LS-3), and care and custody with juvenile court or other agency (LS-4), as required by the Program Improvement Plan (PIP) to address permanency needs of children in each of these legal statuses. The review results indicated the need to strengthen policy and to examine the Division's current practice in addressing permanency for children. Establishing permanency is a guiding principle of the Division and a federal requirement. Staff must remember that until a child is in a legal final permanent placement and the court has relieved the Division of custody and supervision, ongoing case management is required per CD policy.

Manual revisions have been made in accordance with what was learned from the random review.

FAMILY SUPPORT TEAM MEETINGS AND CASE PLAN

Family Support Team (FST) meetings must be held according to policy and at required timeframes. Section 4 Chapters 7 and 9 of the Child Welfare manual describes the necessary activities staff are to follow when a child is placed in out-of-home care. It has

been updated to clarify the differences between a FST and PPRT. In addition, staff are required to establish of a case plan for each child within 30 days of the child coming into the Division's custody.

PERMANENCY PLANNING REVIEW TEAM MEETINGS

A Permanency Planning Review Team (PPRT) meeting may occur any time after the case plan has been implemented but **MUST be held prior to 6 months from the date the child entered care and then every 6 months thereafter for as long as the CD maintains custody.** PPRT meetings **must** be held as there are no exceptions per policy. Section 4 Chapters 7 and 9 have been updated to clarify the criteria for a meeting to be considered a PPRT.

PERMANENCY HEARINGS

In order to establish procedural safeguards for each child in care, CD staff must assure that a **permanency hearing** be held in a family court, juvenile court or another court of competent jurisdiction **no later than 12 months after the date the child is considered to have entered foster care and not less frequently than every 12 months thereafter during the continuation of care** per 210.720 and 211.032 RSMo, and clarified in Section 4 Chapter 9. FST/PPRT meetings are optimum times to discuss a child's permanency needs in preparation for the permanency hearing.

VISITATION WORKGROUP:

In addition to the random review, a Visitation Workgroup comprised of staff from each region met to analyze the Division's visitation and safety policies. The workgroup's recommendations were reviewed by the National Resource Center for Child Protective Services to assess whether child safety was adequately addressed. The workgroup identified many strengths in current policy and made recommendations to address areas needing improvement in order to better meet the safety needs of the child throughout the continuum of services.

Based on the results from the review of cases and recommendations from the Visitation Workgroup, the following areas were identified as needing clarification in policy and improvement in practice:

- Regular and timely Family Support Team and Permanency Planning Team meetings are required,
- Case plans (CS-1) with goals and concurrent plans documented,
- SS-61 and SS-63 need to be updated correctly and timely,
- The implementation, follow through and documentation of parent/child visitation plans, sibling visitation plans, and worker visits with the child, parent and placement provider,
- Staff need to better document all services provided to children and parents ,
- Barriers to finalizing adoption for children need to be decreased.

Changes are being implemented in the manual regarding permanency and visitation guidelines. Visitation guidelines for parent/child/sibling and placement provider are changing. This is the first of several memos reflecting changes in CD's visitation policy

and practice. Staff should review the Child Welfare manual sections listed in the matrix at the end of this memo to familiarize themselves of the new policy.

FOR CHILDREN IN CD’S PHYSICAL CUSTODY AND/OR LEGAL CUSTODY:

All children in CD’s physical and/or legal custody, regardless of their permanency goal, must be addressed as a Family Centered Out-of-Home case until a legal final permanency plan is court ordered and the CD is released from jurisdiction. This means that current Family Centered Out-of-Home policy and practice must be followed for these children including the requirements for FSTs, PPRTs, and Permanency hearings.

FOR CHILDREN NOT IN CD CUSTODY BUT UNDER SUPERVISION ONLY:

As an agency the CD has the legal authority to provide services to the child and parent in order to prevent removal, per the Adoption and Safe Families Act. For those children under court-ordered supervision, the following services must be provided:

- Face-to-face in-home visits no less than once a month or more as needed to assure the safety of the child and to achieve the case goal,
- The frequency of visits should be identified in the case plan and court reports,
- Reports to the court every 6 months to provide updates on the child’s progress,
- Family Support Team meetings as per Section 4 Chapter 9
- The follow through with any services identified by the FST.

Services should continue until the child and CD are released from the jurisdiction of the court.

NECESSARY ACTION:

1. Review this memorandum with all Children’s Division staff.
2. Review revised Child Welfare Manual chapters as indicated below.
3. All questions should be cleared through normal supervisory channels and directed to:

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CHILD WELFARE MANUAL REVISIONS:

- [Section 4 Chapter 6](#)
- [Section 4 Chapter 7](#)
- [Section 4 Chapter 8](#)
- [Section 4 Chapter 9](#)
- [Section 4 Chapter 23](#)
- [Section 4 Chapter 27](#)
- [Section 4 Chapter 28](#)
- [Section 4 Chapter 29](#)
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<p>FORMS AND INSTRUCTIONS: N/A</p>
<p>REFERENCE DOCUMENTS and RESOURCES: P.L. 105-89 Adoption and Safe Families Act</p>
<p>RELATED STATUTE: Section 210.110 RSMo Section 210.112 RSMo Section 210.292 RSMo Section 210.565 RSMo Section 210.720 RSMo Section 211.032 RSMo</p>
<p>ADMINISTRATIVE RULE: 13 CSR40-30.010 Case Plan</p>
<p>COUNCIL ON ACCREDITATION (COA) STANDARDS: G8 Intake, Assessment and Service Planning G9 Service Delivery S10 Child Protective Services S14 Adoption Services S21 Foster and Kinship Care Services</p>
<p>PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT PLAN (PIP): P1.8.1 Address permanency service needs of children in LS-2, 3 and 4. S1.2.2 Implementation of Confirming Safe Environments (CSE) Process S1.2.3 Strengthen policy regarding assessment of safety at and throughout placement 27.3.i Increase the timeliness of 12 Month Permanency Hearings</p>
<p>SACWIS REQUIREMENTS: N/A</p>

PN/BL:js