



Practice Points

ADOPTION STAFFINGS

The purpose of this Practice Point is to provide a reminder to staff regarding the importance of inviting all appropriate team members to attend the adoption staffing and to provide reference to best practice standards pertaining to the Adoption Staffing process.

The Adoption Staffing is an important aspect of selecting suitable adoptive resources for the children in the care and custody of the Children's Division. It is important to have team members present so that all pertinent information regarding the child as well as the prospective adoptive family's needs and desires are shared and taken into consideration.

[The Child Welfare Manual in section 4.28.4](#) lists the appropriate members of the adoptive staffing team. The following persons are considered mandatory members of the Adoption Staffing team: Child's Children's Service Worker and his/her supervisor; Case Manager and his/her supervisor; Adoption Specialist and his/her supervisor; Child's Placement Provider (if provider is not an adoptive applicant for the child); Other foster or adoptive parents of special needs children; CASA/GAL; Juvenile Officer; Child's Counselor/therapist/psychologist/etc.; Community Representative; Any other person who has vital significance in the Child's life and the Adoptive Family Workers.

The Children's Service Workers for the prospective families should attend whenever it is geographically feasible. If they are unable to attend, their opinions should be sought about their first, second and third choices. Their participation may be obtained by a variety of techniques such as conference calls, telephone calls during the meeting, etc. If they are unable to participate, their agreement with the committee's deliberations/decision must be sought before proceeding with placement implementation.

[The Child Welfare Manual in section 4.28.2](#) indicates that an Adoption Staffing is utilized to make an informed decision regarding the best adoptive resource to meet an individual child's needs. Policy also indicates that the practice of holding an Adoption Staffing is mandatory for a child being placed with a new family; however it is an optional process for the selection of the current foster/kinship family as the adoptive resource. However, it is a Best Practice Standard to hold an Adoption Staffing in all cases and is strongly recommended that an Adoption Staffing be held for every child for whom Adoption is the permanency goal.

[RSMo 210.566](#) discusses The Foster Parent Bill of Rights and states that the Children's Division and its contractors have the responsibility to recognize that foster parents are colleagues not clients and that their input is valuable. The Children's Division and contractors also have the responsibility to provide foster and adoptive parents with a full disclosure of all medical, psychological and psychiatric conditions of the child at the time of placement. Foster parents are to be informed in a timely manner of all meetings and staffings concerning the children placed in their home. The child's foster parents have the responsibility to notify the Children's Division within 60 days of a child's case plan changing to adoption if they desire to adopt the child. The Children's Division has the responsibility to provide information and training to foster/adoptive parents with regard to the adoption process.

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