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## Appropriate Permanency Goals

The Child Welfare Manual – Section 4, Chapter 8 (Permanent Outcomes) provides details regarding the different permanency goals that a foster youth can have. A primary goal must be established within the first 30 days, most commonly established at the 72 hour FST. Below is a quick overview regarding the permanency goals, and the appropriate use of each goal.

### Reunification

Reunification is generally the first choice and should occur as soon as the parents have been able to resolve or reduce the problem(s) which necessitated the child's placement to a minimally acceptable safe level.

### Adoption

Adoption offers the most stability to the child who cannot return to their parent(s) and is the second most legally binding permanency plan. Adoption should be considered an appropriate permanent plan when reunification has been ruled out.

### Guardianship

Guardianship is a permanency option for children for whom reunification or adoption is not feasible. Guardianship requires the caretaker to assume a high level of responsibility and authority over the child.

### Placement with a Fit and Willing Relative

If a child is in CD custody and placed with a relative who wishes to care for the child long-term, adoption or guardianship should continue to be explored as they offer a stronger permanency option for the child. Placement with a Fit and Willing Relative is not a legally secure permanency option. Therefore, the court must continue to hold annual permanency hearings until such time that the court enters a legal final permanency order, or the child reaches age 21. **Efforts should be made to ensure this option is the best plan and that more permanent options have not been overlooked.**

### Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement

Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA) is meant to be a planned permanent placement with a person that has a strong connection and bond with the child. The child must be 16 years of age or older to choose this permanency option. Choosing this option is appropriate when there is a specific, long-term placement for the child and when it has been documented to the court that compelling reasons exist which make the other permanency options unacceptable. The compelling reasons must be clearly identified and documented in FACES. APPLA is not a legal final permanency option. Therefore, the court must continue to hold annual permanency hearings until such time that the court enters a legal final permanency order, or the child reaches age 21.