

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

CHILDREN'S DIVISION

P. O. BOX 88

JEFFERSON CITY, MISSOURI

November 30, 2023

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: CHILDREN'S DIVISION AND CONTRACTED STAFF

FROM: DARRELL MISSEY, DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: Diligent Search Efforts Documents

DISCUSSION:

SB 186 modified Missouri statute sections 210.305 RSMo & 210.565 RSMo. These changes went into effect on August 28th, 2023.

The statute details specific documentation and Court reporting requirements which are outlined in [210.305 RSMo](#) and in [Section 4, Chapter 10, Sub-section 2.3 \(Documentation and Notice to the Court\)](#).

The Children's Division must provide the Court with detailed information about the diligent search efforts for parents, grandparents and relatives within 30 days from the date the child was removed from their home, at each review hearing, or as otherwise required by the Court.

A [Diligent Search Efforts Reporting Tool](#) has been developed to meet these specific requirements. The Reporting Tool can be filed with the Court within the initial 30 days and attached to the Court report for subsequent hearings, can be submitted as requested by the Court or utilized for internal CD documentation purposes.

The use of the Diligent Search Efforts Reporting Tool is highly recommended but not required unless determined otherwise by regional management. If this tool is not used, each circuit is responsible for ensuring the reporting mechanism you choose meets the specific requirements. It is further encouraged that modification of any currently used Court reports to capture this information be completed with Regional Director or Field Support Manager oversight, in conjunction with your Juvenile Office and Court to ensure all expectations are met.

The *CD-203 Relative Notification Letter* was revised in August 2023 and posted to e-forms. A *Relative Response Form* has been added to the CD-203. Revisions have been made to the *CD-70 Guide for Relative Resource Provider Brochure* which will accompany the CD-203. The CD-203 and CD-70 will be sent to relatives when identified.

The [CD-203 Relative Notification Letter](#) notifies relatives a child is in foster care and what their rights and opportunities are regarding placement of the child. The *Relative Response Letter* provides a means for the relative to report to the Case Manager their wishes regarding the child.

The [CD-70 Guide for Relative Resource Provider Brochure](#) provides the relative information about how to become a relative caregiver or how they can maintain connection and offer support in other ways.

Additionally, the previously used Placement Hierarchy tool located on e-Forms has been replaced with the [Placement Preference Decision Tree](#). Additional guidance may be found through the [Legal Aspects Diligent Search Placement Laws and Considerations Tip Sheet](#).

NECESSARY ACTION	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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: 	
PDS CONTACT Crystal Wenger crystal.d.wenger@dss.mo.gov	MANAGER CONTACT Heather Ford heather.d.ford@dss.mo.gov
CHILD WELFARE MANUAL REVISIONS	
FORMS AND INSTRUCTIONS Diligent Search Efforts Reporting Tool (new) CD-203 Relative Notification Letter and Response Form (revised) CD-70 Guide for Relative Resource Provider Brochure (revised)	
REFERENCE DOCUMENTS AND RESOURCES SB 186	
RELATED STATUTE 210.305 RSMo & 210.565 RSMo	