

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

Policy Guide 2018.07

**PROCEDURES 309 APPENDIX A
THE ADOPTION TIMELINE AND REVISED FORMS**

DATE: May 1, 2018

TO: All DCFS and Private Agency Permanency Workers and Supervisors,
Adoption Coordinators and Adoption Staff

FROM: Beverly J. Walker, Acting Director

EFFECTIVE: Immediately

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy Guide is to issue the Adoption Timeline in order to guide casework and adoption staff through the critical Permanency process of transitioning, in a timely manner, a child or youth in care who cannot return home, from the foster care system into a lifetime family and home. This timeline offers acceptable timeframes during each step of the way and outlines in chronological order the necessary casework activities to achieve permanency for children in care. Following the termination of parental rights (TPR), parents have sixty days to appeal the TPR decision however; workers must continue to work the case through this period in order to shorten the time that children remain in foster care. Even though guardianship cases follow a slightly different path, this timeline may be used for guardianship cases. Following the formal policy review process The Adoption Timeline will become Appendix A, of Procedures 309, Adoption Services for Children for whom the Department of Children and Family Services is Legally Responsible.

Attached with this Policy Guide are several forms that have been updated with the help of the Office of Legal Services and Adoption staff, supervisors, and administrators working through a process called “Lean Management,” whose goal is to find ways to streamline the permanency process for youth in care. To that end for Adoptions, the CFS 486 and CFS 411 have been combined and eliminated, and replaced with the CFS 411-A, Report of Investigation for Adoption. The CFS 411-A will be used to create both the Initial Report of Investigation and the Final Report to the Court. For Subsidized Guardianship, the CFS 486-G and the CFS 411 have also been combined and the CFS 411-G shall be used in the same manner as mentioned above.

II. PRIMARY USERS

The primary users of this Policy Guide are POS and DCFS permanency workers and supervisors, DCFS and POS adoption workers, coordinators, their supervisors and managers.



III. THE ADOPTION TIMELINE

a) Current Permanency workers (caseworkers) shall:

- Review the entire child file, family file and licensing file in preparation for legal screening, Termination of Parental Rights (TPR), and full disclosure;
- Ensure there is a current certified legible birth certificate (see Procedures 302.390 for assistance in obtaining a certified copy of the child's birth certificate) or proof of citizenship in the file;
- Ensure that all court orders are in the file (legible and name is as it appears on the child's birth certificate);
- Ensure documentation of all legal parents has been identified and paternity has been established through birth certificate, court order, paternity test, Voluntary Acknowledgment of Paternity, marriage, or some other means;
- If applicable, ensure that a copy of a death certificate for the child's parent(s) is in the file;
- If it has been determined that the child meets the criteria for the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), ensure that all required documentation of compliance with ICWA is in the case file;
- Ensure that a social security number has been secured for each child;
- Obtain all necessary medical, mental health, educational documentation for the child, and ensure that they are included in the hard copy file;
- Ensure that all needed services are in place;
- Ensure that the caregiver understands the importance of the Lifebook and assists the child in continuing to update their Lifebook.

b) The Court-set goal changes from return home to substitute care pending TPR (24) (Cook) or at Legal Screening (Downstate) - Current Permanency worker (caseworker) shall:

- Ensure the child is listed with Adoption Listing Services if an adoptive resource has not been identified, and it is in the child's best interest;
- Ensure the completion of a Permanency Commitment Meeting with Caregivers and document on the Permanency Commitment By Foster Parent / Relative Caregiver (CFS 1443);
- If the current caregiver(s) agree to adoption or guardianship of the child, complete and submit the CFS 906- E/906-1E in order to update the Living Arrangement (LIVAR) type to reflect the adoptive/guardianship placement (FHA or FHG);
- Ensure the caregivers' and all household members' background checks are updated as required per policy for licensed or unlicensed homes as applicable;
- Ensure the caregivers are referred to Adoption/Guardianship Certification Training;
- Ensure completion of the Initial CFS 411-A or CFS 411-G, Report of Investigation either for Adoption or Guardianship;
- Ensure completion of the CFS 1427, Legal Screening Form and the CFS 1427-A, Legal Screening Checklist;
- Ensure completion of the Legal Screening process.

- c) Case approved at legal screening - Current Permanency worker (caseworker) shall:**
- Ensure the completion of the Child Assessment for Adoption for children who do not have an adoptive resource (CFS 485);
 - Ensure -referral to the DCFS/POS Adoption Unit is completed by submitting a complete legal screening packet to the Unit within 10 business days of passing legal screening;
 - Ensure the prospective adoptive parents/guardians are referred to the DCFS website or the DCFS Advocacy Office for Children and Family Services for the adoption attorney list.
- d) Child is legally free for adoption**
- Parents sign consents/ surrenders to adoption and/or rights are terminated & court set goal is changed to adoption (25).
- e) Within 30 calendar days of a goal of Adoption (25) or Guardianship (26), Adoption Specialist shall:**
- Ensure child/children are legally free by voluntary or involuntary termination of parental rights and documentation is in the file;
 - Ensure full disclosure is completed and selection of the adoption/guardianship placement is confirmed by completion of the Affidavit of Information Disclosure for Adoption/Guardianship (CFS 470-H);
 - Ensure prospective parents or guardians contact their adoption attorney;
 - Ensure confirmation of subsidy eligibility, complete CFS 1800A-A;
 - Ensure completion of CFS 1800 B-A, subsidy application with prospective adoptive parent (s) or guardian (1800 B-G);
 - Ensure completion of the subsidy agreement including all supporting documentation (CFS1800 C-A, or CFS 1800 C-G);
 - Ensure the completion of the Final Report of Investigation (CFS 411-A, or CFS 411-G);
 - Ensure all draft subsidies and supporting documents are submitted to the attorney.
- f) Within 30 calendar days of receipt of the subsidies, Attorney shall:**
- Review subsidy w/clients;
 - Sign the Payment to Attorney form (CFS 1800-D);
 - Notify agency of requested changes/ corrections;
 - After changes are made, attorney approves subsidy;
 - Ensure the family signs the subsidy.
- g) Adoption worker shall ensure completion of subsidy packet using the CFS 1800-T-A, or CFS 1800 T-G.**
- h) Responsible Agency submits subsidy to the DCFS Adoption Unit for Approval no later than 60 days after receipt**

i) Within 30 calendar days of receipt of the subsidy packet

- DCFS Adoption Unit reviews and requests corrections;
- Responsible Agency makes corrections;
- DCFS Adoption Unit reviews and approves within 30 calendar days of receipt of packet;
- DCFS Adoption Unit sends to the Federal Financial Participation Unit (FFP) for review and approval;
- Packet is reviewed by FFP and requests corrections if necessary;
- Once packet is complete, an approval notification is sent to the DCFS Adoption Specialist and Supervisor;
- Adoption Specialist returns partial legal subsidy packets back to agency to move forward with adoption finalization;
- Responsible Agency notifies Attorney and provides legal documents (i.e.: consents, CFS 411-A, CFS 411-G).

j) Family goes to Adoption Court

- The adoption or guardianship is finalized in the court!
- Adoption worker ensures the required case closing and opening paperwork is submitted to the appropriate DCFS Adoption Unit within working 10 days of finalization;
- DCFS Adoption Unit sends a copy of the Adoption Decree to FFP;
- DCFS Adoption Unit sends a letter to the adoptive family identifying the DCFS Post-Adoption Specialist assigned to the case.

k) DCFS opens a Subsidy Case

- The DCFS Adoption Unit ensures the Adoption Assistance case is opened;
- The DCFS Adoption Specialist monitors the case throughout the life of the subsidy to ensure that the child is receiving all needed services and that the family is receiving any needed adoption preservation services.

V. NEW OR REVISED FORMS

CFS 411-A, Report of Investigation for Adoption (New)

CFS 411-G, Report of Investigation for Guardianship (New)

CFS 470-H, Affidavit of Information Disclosure for Adoption/Guardianship (Revised)

CFS 1427, IDCFS Statewide Legal Screening for Termination of Parental Rights or Expedited Adoption (Revised)

CFS1427-A, Statewide Legal Screening Packet (Revised)

CFS 1800 T-A, Adoption Assistance Case Record Checklist (Revised)

CFS 1800 T-G, Subsidized Guardianship (KinGAP) Case Record Checklist (Revised)

CFS 1800-U 60+ Subsidy Checklist (Revised)

Staff should start using the new combined forms, **CFS 411-A** and **CFS 411-G**.

VI. OBSOLETE FORMS

CFS 411, Report of Investigation (Rev 8/2013)

CFS 486, Adoption Conversion Assessment (Rev 6/2012)

CFS 486-G, Subsidized Guardianship Conversion Assessment (Rev 6/2012)

CFS 426, Adoption Placement Agreement (Rev 3/98)

Staff should start using the new combined forms, **CFS 411-A** and **CFS 411-G**.

VII. QUESTIONS

Questions regarding this Policy Guide may be directed to the Office of Child and Family Policy at 217-524-1983 or e-mail to OCFP on Outlook. Persons and agencies not on Outlook can e-mail questions to cfpolicy@illinois.gov.

VIII. FILING INSTRUCTIONS

Please file this Policy Guide immediately following Procedures 309.170.

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