

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

POLICY GUIDE 2020.05

**Procedures 302.360, Health Care Services; and
Procedures 315, Permanency Planning**

DATE: January 9, 2020
TO: All DCFS and Purchase of Service (POS) Permanency Workers, Permanency Supervisors and Administrators
FROM: Marc D. Smith, Acting Director
EFFECTIVE: Immediately

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy Guide is to issue revisions to Procedures 302.360, Health Care Services and Procedures 315, Permanency Planning to implement **Public Act 101-0237**. These revisions are effective January 1, 2020. This Policy Guide also replaces Policy Guide 2019.04, Requirements for Reunification and After Care Services, and incorporates its requirements pending revision of Procedures 315.

To the extent that any of the required activities in Section IV differ from Procedures 302.360 or Procedures 315, this Policy Guide controls.

Amendments to Procedures 302.360 and Procedures 315 are being prepared and will be issued soon.

II. PRIMARY USERS

The primary users of this Policy Guide are all DCFS and Purchase of Service (POS) Permanency Workers, Permanency Supervisors and Area Administrators.

III. BACKGROUND

Public Act 101-0237 adds Section 7.8 of the Children and Family Services Act [20 ILCS 505/7.8], that adds requirements regarding completion of the home safety checklist, after care services, well-child exams and immunizations in order to ensure the health and safety of youth in care as they are returning home to their parents/guardians.

Section 7.8 requires:

- *Whenever a child is placed in the custody or guardianship of the Department or a child is returned to the custody of a parent or guardian and the court retains jurisdiction of the case, the Department must ensure that the child is up to date on his or her well-child visits, including age-appropriate immunizations, or that there is a documented religious or medical reason the child did not receive the immunizations. [20 ILCS 505/7.8(b)]*



- When the court determines that a youth in care can return to the custody of his or her parent/guardian, the Department must complete, prior to the child's discharge from foster or substitute care, a home safety checklist to ensure that the conditions of the child's home are sufficient to ensure the child's safety and well-being. At a minimum, the home safety checklist shall be completed within 24 hours prior to the child's return home and completed again or recertified within 5 working days after a child is returned home and every month thereafter until the child's case is closed-pursuant to the Juvenile Court Act of 1987. [20 ILCS 505/7.8(c)]
- When a court determines that a child should return to the custody or guardianship of a parent or guardian, after care services provided to the child and family shall commence on the date the child is returned to the custody or guardianship of a parent/guardian. If children are returned to the custody or guardianship of a parent or guardian at different times, a minimum of 6 months of after care services shall be provided to each child commencing on the date each individual child is returned home. [20 ILCS 505/7.8(d)]

In Procedures 302.360, Health Care Services, the instructions below apply to the following subsections:

- c) Health Passport;
- d) School Health Examination and Immunization Requirements;
- e) Well Child Physical Examinations; and
- h) Immunization Requirements.

In Procedures 315, Permanency Planning, the instructions below apply to:

- Procedures 315.130(c), Interventions and Contacts Following Reunification;
- Procedures 315.160, Developing the Reunification Service Plan;
- Procedures 315.165, Developing the After Care Service Plan; and
- Procedures 315.250(a), Reunification, Planning for After Care and Termination of Services.

IV. INSTRUCTIONS FOR DCFS AND POS PERMANENCY STAFF

These instructions apply in all placement cases and must be followed prior to and after reunification.

Procedures 302.360, Health Care Services

Permanency Workers shall ensure that, prior to reunification, every child in DCFS custody or guardianship:

- is up to date on his/her well-child physical examinations; and
- is immunized according to the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the American Academy of Pediatrics unless there is a documented religious or medical reason the child did not receive one or more immunizations.

Permanency Workers shall ensure that each child's Health Passport contains up to date documentation of the child's physical examinations and immunizations. Religious or medical reasons for not receiving any one or more immunizations shall be documented on the Health Passport and in case notes.

Procedures 315, Permanency Planning

- a) DCFS and POS Permanency Workers are required to provide services to the family **for at least 6 months following return home of each child** from substitute care.
- b) The Permanency Worker shall perform each of the following duties within the time frames established in this Policy Guide or more frequently when directed by the Permanency Supervisor.
 - 1) **Develop Reunification and After Care Service Plans for the family.** The Permanency Worker and Permanency Supervisor shall ensure that these Service Plans include the requirement that the Permanency Worker will provide services to the family **for at least 6 months** following return home of **each child**. **The 6-month time period shall begin on the day the child is returned home.**

When more than one child in a family is in substitute care and the children are not returned home on the same day, **the 6-month period shall restart** on the day each additional child is returned home to that parent.

Example: Child 1 is returned home on March 1. The 6-month period starts March 1. If on April 1, Child 2 is returned home, the 6-month period for the family restarts on April 1. If Child 3 returns home on July 1, the 6-month period for the family restarts on July 1.

When eligible, the Permanency Worker shall refer the family for Norman and TANF services.

A Child and Family Team Meeting must be held approximately 30 days prior to reunification and/or case closure to develop the After Care Service Plan (see Procedures 315.125).

When a court determines a child in substitute care may be returned to the custody of a parent or guardian, the Permanency Worker must complete, **prior to the child's discharge from foster or substitute care, and within 24 hours prior to the child's return home, a CFS 2025, Home Safety Checklist** to ensure that the conditions of the child's home are sufficient to ensure the child's safety and well-being.

- 2) **Face-To-Face Contact Required with Parents and Each Child.** The required time frames for **face-to-face interventions and contacts** after reunification are set out in (A) through (C), below. Face-to-face contact is required with the parents and each child. The Permanency Worker must see and spend some time with each child outside the presence of the parents.

The Permanency Worker must document each intervention and contact in a contact note within 48 hours.

Additionally, a permanency worker must photograph each child and upload the photos to SACWIS immediately prior to returning the child home.

Each of these required time frames must be met for each child returned home.

Example: Child 1 returns home on March 1. Child 2 is returned home 3 months later (June 1). The Permanency Worker will be performing all required “First Month” interventions and contacts for Child 2 as well as the “Ongoing” interventions and contacts for Child 1. When Child 2 has been home at least 1 month, the Permanency Worker will perform “Ongoing” interventions and contacts for both children for no less than 6 months of after care contact and services.

- 3) **Initial Intervention and Contact.** Within 24 to 72 hours after the return home of each child from substitute care, the assigned Permanency Worker must conduct an initial face-to-face intervention with each child and the parent in the home. The timing of the visit will be based upon the CERAP completed when each child is returned home. If the family (child and parent) is unavailable, the Permanency Worker must make a second attempt within one working day after the failed attempt. If the second attempt is also unsuccessful, the Permanency Worker shall conduct a diligent search for the family.

At that visit (no later than within 5 working days after a child is returned home), the Permanency Worker shall also review the **CFS 2025, Home Safety Checklist** completed immediately prior to the child’s return home to ensure that the conditions of the child’s home continue to be sufficient to ensure the child’s safety and well-being. Any changes in the condition of the home shall be documented on the Home Safety Checklist. The Permanency Worker shall document this review in a contact note.

- 4) **First Month.** Following the initial visit, weekly or more frequent intervention and contact, as determined by the Permanency Supervisor, with each child and parent in the home is required for the first month following each child’s reunification. At least two of these visits during this first month after each child’s reunification must be unannounced.

The Permanency Worker shall also complete a **CFS 2025, Home Safety Checklist** at the end of the first month following each child’s reunification.

- 5) **Ongoing.** After the first month, the frequency of intervention and contact for each child shall be at least monthly. The Permanency Worker shall photograph each child and upload the photos to SACWIS after each monthly visit during the 6 months of after care services. The Permanency Worker shall also complete a **CFS 2025, Home Safety Checklist** at each monthly home visit to ensure that the conditions of the child's home continue to be sufficient to ensure the child's safety and well-being.

When each child returned from substitute care has been home at least 6 months, the Permanency Worker and Permanency Supervisor shall conduct a Risk Assessment to determine whether there are sufficient Risk Factors present to require continued contact. If the Risk Assessment indicates there are no longer sufficient Risk Factors present to warrant ongoing contact and interventions, the Permanency Supervisor may instruct the Permanency Worker to initiate steps to close the case and discontinue contact.

If a paramour was the indicated perpetrator, the frequency of contact for each child must be weekly for the first three months, regardless of whether or not the paramour resides in the home.

- 6) **After Care Service Plan and Casework Activities.** The Permanency Worker must comply with all child safety review requirements listed in Procedures 315.250(d), After Care Service Plan and Casework Activities in preparation for case closing. In addition:
- the required interviews, photographs, observations and assessments must be conducted of/for each child;
 - the child safety review must include a walk-through assessment of the home as well as completion of the **CFS 2025, Home Safety Checklist**; and
 - a completed CANS is required prior to case closing. The CANS is only considered completed when the child items and adult items are scored.
 - After the child returns home, while the court case is still open and the court still has jurisdiction, the Permanency Worker must ensure that the child is up to date on their well-child visits and immunizations.

V. NEW, REVISED AND/OR OBSOLETE FORMS

No new or revised forms.

VI. QUESTIONS

Questions concerning this Policy Guide should be directed to the Office of Child and Family Policy by emailing the DCFS.Policy on Outlook. Persons and agencies not on Outlook can e-mail questions to DCFS.policy@illinois.gov.

VII. FILING INSTRUCTIONS

Place this Policy Guide behind page 6 in Procedures 302.360.

Policy Guide 2019.04, Requirements for Reunification and After Care Services has been rendered obsolete. Remove Policy Guide 2019.04 after the following Sections in Procedures 315, Permanency Planning and replace with this Policy Guide 2020.05:

- Procedures 315.130(c), Interventions and Contacts Following Reunification;
- Procedures 315.160, Developing the Reunification Service Plan;
- Procedures 315.165, Developing the After Care Service Plan; and
- Procedures 315.250(a), Reunification, Planning for After Care and Termination of Services.