

State of Illinois
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

NEW RELATIVE PLACEMENT PRACTICE GUIDE

Child's Name: _____ Child's Case ID Number: _____

Child's Birth Date: _____ Child's Age: _____

Caregiver's Name: _____

Caregiver's Address: _____

Date of In-home Visit with Caregiver and Child: _____

Instructions

When a child is placed with a new relative caregiver who has not previously cared for related children and who has no prior foster home licensing history with DCFS or a POS agency, the caseworker shall make an in-person visit to the caregiver's home within one week of the date on which the Department received temporary custody of the child.

The purpose of the visit includes:

- Assessing the adjustment of the child and the caregiver to the child's placement, including but not limited to determining whether the child or the caregiver is experiencing any problems that require the caseworker's attention and response;
- Discussing with the caregiver the Department's overall goals of safety, permanency and well-being and the possible outcomes for the child; and
- Discussing in a preliminary way the benefits to the caregiver and the child of the caregiver becoming licensed as foster parent.

ASSESSING ADJUSTMENT OF CHILD AND CAREGIVERS TO CHILD'S PLACEMENT

Child's Adjustment

The caseworker shall talk with the child **(if age and developmentally appropriate)** about how she/he is feeling about living with the caregiver and, conversely, how the child is feeling about not living with her/his parents. In doing so, the caseworker needs to assure the child that she/he will be able to have contact with her/his parents and should inform the child of what the plans are for parent-child and, if applicable sibling visits.

The caseworker shall document by writing her/his initials in the space provided that the caseworker talk with the child about each of the following topics at a minimum. If any topic is not applicable based on the child's age or developmental status, enter "N/A".

Initials

____ How is the child feeling generally (e.g. happy, sad, scared, safe, etc.)?

____ How is the child eating?

- ___ How is the child sleeping?
- ___ Has the child been sick?
- ___ Does the child have adequate clothing;?
- ___ Does the child have with them any favorite toys, stuffed animals, etc.?
- ___ Is the child attending pre-school, day care or regular school?
- ___ Has the child had any contact with her/his parents or siblings and, if so, how did the contact make the child feel?
- ___ Has the child had contact with any other significant person (e.g grandparents, et al)? If so, how did the contact make the child feel?

The caseworker should also talk with the caregiver about how she/he and other family members are adjusting to having the child placed with her/him and how the child is adjusting to the placement.

Regarding the child's adjustment, the caseworker should discuss with the caregiver the following topics at a minimum. The caseworker shall document by writing her/his initials in the space provided that the caseworker talked with the caregiver about each of the following topics at a minimum. If any topic is not applicable based on the child's age or developmental status, enter "N/A".

Initials

- ___ How is the child feeling generally (e.g. happy, sad, scared, safe, etc.)?
- ___ How is the child eating?
- ___ How is the child sleeping;?
- ___ Has the child been sick? If so, what action did the caregiver take?
- ___ Does the child have adequate clothing?
- ___ Does the child have with them any favorite toys, stuffed animals, etc.?
- ___ Is the child attending pre-school, day care or regular school?
- ___ Has the child had any contact with her/his parents or siblings and, if so, how did the contact make the child feel?
- ___ Has the child had contact with any other significant person (e.g. grandparents, et al)? If so, how did the contact make the child feel?
- ___ Does the child need anything that has not as yet been provided?

Caregiver's Adjustment to Child

Regarding the caregiver's adjustment to the child's placement, the caseworker should discuss with the caregiver the following topics at a minimum. The caseworker shall document by writing her/his initials in the space provided that the caseworker talked with the caregiver about each of the following topics at a minimum. If any topic is not applicable based on the child's age or developmental status, enter "N/A":

Initials

- ____ How has the child's placement impacted the caregiver and the caregiver's family (i.e. how has the child's placement affected the day-to functioning of the family)? How are other family members impacted by and/or adjusting to the child's placement?
- ____ Has the caregiver experienced any problems in caring for the child? If so, what are the problems being experienced and does the caregiver need any assistance from the caseworker to solve one or more of the problems?
- ____ Are there any specific services and supports the caregiver thinks the child or caregiver needs in order to ensure the stability of the placement?

Discussing with the Caregiver Possible Outcomes for the Child

The caseworker should explain and discuss with the caregiver the outcomes that might occur for a child depending on the progress of the child's parents in resolving the issues that caused the child to be unsafe at home.

The caseworker should at a minimum provide the caregiver the following information. The caseworker shall document by writing her/his initials in the space provided that the caseworker talk with the caregiver about each of the following topics at a minimum.

Initials

- ____ The overall goals for the child are safety, permanency and well-being, with permanency being achieved in 1 to 2 years at the maximum
- ____ The preferred goal is having the child reunified with her/his parents if it can be **safely** accomplished;
- ____ If the child is not returned home before 1 year, the caseworker must recommend to the court what the permanency goal for the child should be. If the child's parents are making good progress, it's likely that the caseworker will recommend a permanency goal of return home.
- ____ If the parents are not making good progress, it's possible that the caseworker will recommend another permanency goal such as adoption or that guardianship be given to someone other than the Department.
- ____ If and when it's determined that the child cannot return home, the caregiver will be asked if she/he is willing to consider adopting the child or becoming the child's guardian, depending on what permanency goal is chosen for the child. The caseworker should inform the caregiver that if caregiver adopts the child or becomes the child's guardian the caregiver would be eligible for a monthly subsidy payment in an amount equal to the applicable foster care board payment based on the child's age and needs.

____ The caseworker will talk further with the caregiver about the permanency plan for the child during all future in-person visits with the caregiver and all family meetings, which will involve the child's parents, the caregiver, other persons significant to the child or her/his family, and the caseworker.

DISCUSSING THE BENEFITS OF BECOMING LICENSED

The caseworker shall also discuss preliminarily with the caregiver each of the following topics related to the caregiver possibly pursuing licensure as a foster home. The caseworker shall document the discussion that the caseworker talked with the caregiver about each of the following topics at a minimum by writing her/his initials in the space provided.

Initials

____ The amount per month the caregiver will receive for caring for the child as an unlicensed relative caregiver is not the same as the amount the caregiver would receive as a licensed foster parent. The caseworker should use the **CFS 578-5, Comparison: Standard of Need vs. Foster Care Board Rate**, to inform the caregiver of the monthly payment the caregiver will receive as an unlicensed caregiver.

____ The caseworker will also explain to the caregiver that she/he might want to consider becoming licensed as a foster parent as the Department's payment to a licensed foster parent for caring for a child is substantially higher than the payment to a relative caregiver who is not a licensed foster parent. The caseworker will complete with the caregiver the **CFS 578-3, Payment Comparison Worksheet**, to illustrate the payment differential.

____ The caseworker should inform the caregiver that a foster home licensing staff person will be contacting the caregiver to schedule an appointment to further discuss foster home licensing requirements and whether the caregiver is able and willing to pursue licensure as a foster parent.

CASEWORKER INFORMATION

I hereby attest that I completed all work documented on this form.

Caseworker Name: _____ Caseworker ID: _____

Caseworker's Signature: _____ Date: _____

SUPERVISORY REVIEW

Supervisor Name: _____ Supervisor ID: _____

Supervisor Signature: _____ Date: _____

Note: This form should be filed in the child's case record following supervisory review.